



## The Lord's Prayer

### Part 9 – The Power and the Glory

1 Chronicles 29:11

Matthew 6:13b\*

*Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory...*

Psalm 115:1

As we noted at the beginning of our series through the Lord's Prayer, the closing doxology does not appear in the oldest manuscripts in our possession. However, the doxology does belong to the oldest Christian tradition. It is found in the *Didache*, an ancient collection of Christian teachings and

selections from the Bible which dates to as late as the 200's AD and as early as the first century during the days of the Apostles. The *Didache*, being a collection of teachings that the early Christians considered necessary for disciples to believe and practice, includes the Lord's Prayer from Matthew 6. That early copy of the Lord's Prayer, which pre-dates our oldest manuscripts of Matthew's gospel, includes the doxology. In addition, it does not seem likely that Jesus, a pious Jew, would teach his disciples to pray and not include a doxology which was the uniform practice of Jewish prayer. So we gladly continue the ancient Christian practice of reciting the doxology as part of the Lord's Prayer.

A doxology is a word of praise; a statement attributing glory and honor to God. Doxologies are found throughout the Scriptures. For instance, doxologies are standard features in the prayers of the prophets and apostles. They are common in the Psalms and the public statements and prayers of godly kings. The Apostle Paul typically included doxologies in his epistles.

Doxologies were often offered as the people of God acknowledged their needs and then gave praise for the meeting of those needs. They were also regularly offered in response to God for his perfections. J.I. Packer states that "praise for what God is, and does, is the strong support of hope in what he can and will do. So the more you praise, the more vigor you will have for prayer; and the more you pray, the more matter you will have for praise."

The doxology which concludes the Lord's Prayer seems to correspond with the first three petitions of the prayer: "Yours is the kingdom" (*Your kingdom come*), "...and the power" (*Your will be done*), "...and the glory" (*Hallowed be your name*). The thing which the devil and the world and the sinful desires of our own hearts push us to claim for our own belongs to God alone. To those evil temptations to claim glory we must reply with a collective, "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and faithfulness" (Psalm 115:1).

**Main Idea:** Christians may approach their Heavenly Father confidently in prayer because to him belongs the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever.

### 1. A prayer that warns of real danger.

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. *For yours is the kingdom...*"

- The word "for" connects the final petition with the doxology. It is a word which implies a purpose. The significance of this connection is found in the nature of the final petition that the Lord would lead us in the opposite direction of temptation and away from the evil one. *For* things like kingdom, power, and glory hold temptations to great evil in the human heart.
- Certainly, humans throughout history have possessed kingdoms, wielded power, and been given glory by man. But all of these kings and kingdoms – even those that strove to be just –

have become footnotes in history. Man's kingdoms, his power, and whatever glory he is given will be temporal. Were God to hand over eternal kingship, power, and glory to any man, it would be an act of cruelty for man has not been created to possess such greatness. The final words of the prayer are in the form of a doxology. In praying this way, we are caused to celebrate the fact that the kingdom, the power, and the glory do not belong to us.

## 2. A prayer that acknowledges rightful ownership.

"For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever."

- "For yours" is a meaningful qualifier. Indeed, it would be difficult to imagine a more necessary qualification at this point in the prayer. The kingdom, power, and glory of God are not ours to possess, build, or manipulate. God is rightful owner of his kingdom. He alone wields power without any risk of sinful malice. And only God is worthy to be glorified. God's possession of these things is not circumstantial but essential. In other words, God does not possess the kingdom, the power and the glory because he gained that possession at some point in time. Rather, these things are his *inherently*, they issue from his eternal nature as the Creator Lord of all there is.
- God's rightful possession of the kingdom and the power is the reason we can pray to Him with confidence. Jesus teaches us to pray to God alone for daily provision, forgiveness of sins, and protection from the evil. For it is God alone to whom belongs the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.
- Glory comes from a word which means *weightiness*. To speak of God's glory is to make reference to his inherent consequentialness. Nothing matters more or is of greater consequence than God. But God's glory is not an abstract thing. His glory is found in the reality of his perfections. God is glorious because he is God. He is the Creator of all things, holy, good, unchanging, and eternal. God is not only the Author of creation but is also the architect of our salvation having given his only begotten Son for the salvation of all his chosen.
- Glory is also something God's creation gives to him. The cosmos glorifies God in that all things point to his power and goodness. Only God's human creatures glorify God through intelligible words and actions. The corporate worship of God's people is designed to give him glory. When the church prays the Lord's Prayer we are acknowledging God's rightful possession of all the glory there is to give.

## 3. A prayer that voices the required response.

"Amen"

- It seems inconceivable to not conclude prayer with an "amen." Unfortunately, that little word seems to function merely as a signal to everyone else that the prayer is officially over. But there is great significance to that little word. Amen literally means "true" or "this is true." When we say *amen* to conclude a prayer we are confessing that the words spoken are faithful and true. But more than that is at work in our *amen*. When we exclaim, "this is true," at the end of our prayer we are expressing a desire for a growing correspondence between the confessions of our prayer and the way that we live. May our *amen* declare that desire within our hearts.
- The final word of the Bible ends with "Amen." How fitting that God's book, written over a period of about 1500 years by dozens of human authors all "carried along" by the Holy Spirit; a book which records the great drama of creation, corruption by sin, redemption through Christ, and the hope of the new creation should end with a loud *Amen!*

*He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!  
The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen. - Revelation 22:20-21*