

THE MODEL PRAYER

*Jesus Said,
"Be Praying In This Manner"*



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The choice of this cover image was inspired by Revelation 5:8:
“...the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before
the Lamb, each holding a harp, and *golden bowls* full of incense,
which are the prayers of the saints.”

Be encouraged, beloved: He hears us and remembers.

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TECHNOLOGY NOTE: For quicker and easier study, the free PDF online contains links embedded in every Scripture reference, which open a webpage displaying the text of that Scripture (ProjectOne28.com/prayer).

INTRODUCTION

Jesus is building His Church as a spiritual house of believers, in whom He dwells (Mt. 16:18, 1 Pet. 2:5). One of its defining characteristics is prayer, and He has promised there will be joy in His “house of prayer” for all peoples (Mt. 21:13, Isa. 56:7). What grace that the Creator God has invited us into such a relationship. Amazing promises about prayer in His Name await our activation.¹ God has invited us, through prayer, to share in His running of the universe!² What privilege!

Unfortunately, less than four percent of churches list prayer as one of their top three priorities.³ Some believers excuse themselves by assuming they do not have a “gift of intercession.” Yet no such spiritual gift is listed in the Scriptures. Every disciple is called to pray always without ceasing and not become discouraged (1 Thess. 5:17, Lk. 18:1). We often feel guilty that we do not pray enough. Please shake off these religious, condemning feelings. “There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:1). The Greek behind this word translated “condemnation” includes the meaning that there is no “powerlessness” for those who are in Christ.⁴ Yes, we do not pray enough; no, we are not condemned; and no, we are not powerless. Remember the promise of joy.

THE SPIRIT’S HELP

We actually want to pray more than we know that we want to pray⁵ because Christ lives in believers, and He always lives to intercede (Rom. 8:34, Heb. 7:25). We want to pray more than we know because the Spirit of Christ is praying perfectly inside of us:

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God (Rom. 8:26-27).

¹ E.g. Mk. 11:22-24; Jn. 14:13; Mt. 18:19-20; 1 Jn. 3:21-23, 5:14-15. “In His Name” means more than tacking “in Jesus’ Name” at the end. It means in His Person, His character; see pg. 7.

² John Piper, “Pray Like This: Hallowed Be Your Name,” 30 Dec 2007 (DesiringGod.org). Consider the positive verses in the footnote above and the histories in Ex. 32:9-14, Am. 7:1-6, Dan. 10:12. Conversely, if we do *not* ask God for some things, then they do not happen (Jas. 4:2-3, the context of Piper’s comment).

³ The Barna Group, Ltd., “Church Priorities for 2005 Vary Considerably,” Barna.org.

⁴ Sam McVay, Jr., “The Full Meaning of No Condemnation,” NewLifeEquip.com/?p=551.

⁵ Sam McVay, Jr., “House of Prayer,” NewLifeEquip.com/?p=260.

Under fresh conviction to pray more often, we miss the mark if we turn to legalistic, soulish resolve to improve ourselves. Our goal is to live no longer out of Self, but to agree with the life of Christ in us (Gal. 2:20). We want to align ourselves with the praying Spirit in us (Gal. 5:16, 25). Often, we can begin our prayers with, "Spirit, teach us to pray."

WHAT WORDS TO PRAY

Many believers do not know how to pray. They lack confidence to pray alone and especially with others. First, exact words do not matter as much as our hearts. Secondly, the Bible is our prayer manual. We can pray the Scriptures and sense the Spirit's excitement because He breathed out those Scriptures in the first place! What words should we use? All kinds! Paul exhorted us to be "praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication" (Eph. 6:18). Prayer is essentially communicating with God, and the Scriptures (especially the Psalms) illustrate many kinds of prayers: praise, thanksgiving, confession, lament, petition, intercession, etc. Communicate to God whatever is in your heart at the moment, allow His Spirit to hone you in on His will, and listen for His response.

In this booklet, we specifically focus on one section of Scripture among its many passages on prayer. Jesus was always praying - sometimes all night (Lk. 6:12), sometimes early in the morning (Mk. 1:35), often alone (Lk. 5:16), and often in front of His followers. Do we believe the Son of God was good at praying? The disciples were slow to catch on to much of Jesus' teaching, but they did notice His power in prayer: "It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, 'Lord, teach us to pray...'" (Lk. 11:1 NASB). We do not need to wonder how to pray. Jesus told His disciples how to pray. His answer traditionally has been called "the Lord's prayer."⁶

Many of us have experienced this prayer in church services as something rote and religious, devoid of heart-felt life. We have merely recited the words as part of the ritual. We should note carefully that Jesus did not teach us to repeat these words and only these words. Jesus taught us the *manner* in which to be praying. He said, "Therefore, *you* be praying in this manner" (Mt.⁷ 6:9, lit.). The Lord commanded emphatically that our prayers be personal, collective, and continual.⁸ We should be learning from the Spirit to pray in this manner in our

⁶ This is somewhat of a misnomer. John 17 would fit better as "the Lord's prayer" because it is the longest of His recorded prayers. This prayer could be called "the Lord's model prayer" or "the disciples' prayer" because it is *for us*.

“closets,”⁹ so that we can pray it together: “Our Father....”

THE STRUCTURE OF THE MODEL PRAYER

Jesus gave us this prayer as a model, a track to run on. The movement is important because it shows priority:

1. Identity and Position: “Our Father, who is in the heavens”
2. Three-fold Priority of the Glory of God on Earth
 - a. Your Name
 - b. Your Kingdom
 - c. Your Will
3. Physical and Spiritual Provision: Food and Forgiveness
4. Protection from Temptation and the Evil One
5. Three-fold Praise of God’s Eternal Reality¹⁰
 - a. Yours is the Kingdom
 - b. Yours is the Power
 - c. Yours is the Glory

The exact words are powerful, but we should not say only those phrases and finish in fifteen seconds. We should spend time on each phrase, allowing the Spirit to develop a current prayer in our hearts based upon the truth of that phrase. In this booklet, we unpack each of these phrases to model this model prayer.

In the context of calling His chosen ones to day and night prayer for justice against the adversary, Jesus asked, “When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?” (Lk. 18:8). We want to answer, “Yes!”

⁷ This booklet will focus on Matthew’s version of this model prayer because it is longer. Examining similarities and differences, “the simplest comprehensive explanation is that Jesus himself taught this form of prayer on more than one occasion” (D. A. Carson, *Matthew, The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Vol. 8, Ed. Frank E. Gæbelein [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984] 168). Luke, the historian (Lk. 1:1-4), seems to present the prayer chronologically in response to a disciple’s question (Lk. 11:1). Matthew, who regularly rearranged material by content, rather than chronology, placed it in “the Sermon on the Mount.” Matthew probably recorded a form of Jesus’ words from a different occasion.

⁸ Most literally: “you - you be praying.” The emphatic “you” (*humeis*) and the “you” included in the verb (*proseuchesthe*) are both plural. The verb is present active imperative, and the aspect of the Greek present tense is continual action: “you be praying.”

⁹ Mt. 6:5-6. The word meant an inner room with no windows (like a storehouse or bedroom). We need to pray in secret to purify our hearts, so that when we pray with “two or three” (Mt. 18:19-20), we are not seeking their approval, but God’s glory.

¹⁰ Page 21 explains why this portion is placed only in footnotes in most Bibles.

Scripture and church history testify that prayer precedes powerful moves of God. And oh, how we need a powerful move here and in the earth! What is at stake here is the glory of God in the testimony of the Church, the salvation of souls, and the destruction of God's enemy. The power is here to accomplish all things; the only question is our resolve to lay hold of it in this war zone. So here we go, crying, "As it is in heaven, let it be here on earth!"

OUR FATHER

The Son knew He was to be the firstborn among many brothers (Rom. 8:29, Jn. 20:17), so He taught us to begin with, “Our Father, who is in the heavens...” (Mt. 6:9, lit.).¹¹ Addressing prayer to God as “Father” was an unprecedented practice; there is no evidence of it in Jewish writings before Jesus.¹² Earlier prayers emphasized God’s transcendence and sovereignty (still necessary for us, who pray to the One “in the heavens”). Yet in all but one of Jesus’ recorded prayers, He addressed God as Father.¹³ Jesus’ openness that God was His Father got Him killed (Jn. 5:18, Mk. 14:61-64), and His death opened our access to God as adopted children of an intimate, caring Father (Gal. 4:4-6, Eph. 1:3-8).

Jesus Himself prayed, “Abba, Father” (Mk. 14:36, *abba* is Aramaic for “father”). His Spirit is praying this in us now: “And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, ‘Abba! Father!’” (Gal. 4:6). We believe it is vital for us to meditate on this reality before rushing to other petitions, because otherwise we have a tendency to pray as if we are far off, to pray as beggars instead of sons. Romans 8:14-17 reads:

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

Pause and allow the Spirit to bear witness that you are a son or a daughter, a co-heir with Christ. Let thanksgiving well up. *Father, thank you that even though I was far off, You brought me near by the blood of Your Son (Eph. 2:13). But I still feel far off sometimes. Release to me revelation that I*

¹¹ *Tōn ouranōn* has the definite article (“the”) and plural “heavens.” Remember Genesis 1:1 describes the plural “heavens,” too. Paul was caught up to the *third* heaven, which is the paradise of God (2 Cor. 12:2-4, cf. Rev. 2:7), so there are at least three heavens (probably only three, assuming God’s throne is the “highest,” greatest.)

¹² Joachim Jeremias, *New Testament Theology: The Proclamation of Jesus*, trans. J. Bowden (New York: Scribner, 1971) 61-68, cited in Grant R. Osborne, *Matthew, Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*, Ed. Clinton E. Arnold (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010) 227. We should add somewhat of an exception: Psalm 89:26, which is not a prayer of the psalmist, but a prophecy of what the Messianic Son of David (Jesus) would pray.

¹³ Osborne, *op. cit.*, 227. That one prayer was on the Cross: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Mt. 27:46, quoting Ps. 22:1). Yet He finished with, “Father, into Your hands I commit my spirit” (Lk. 23:46, from Ps. 31:5).

am no longer a slave (Gal. 4:7). I am in Your Son, and now I have the privileges of a son. Empower my inner man to know how high and wide and deep and long is Your love (Eph. 3:14-21), to experience how great the love You lavished on us that we may be called the children of God (1 Jn. 3:1).

Remember that God's Fatherhood means He created our spirits, adopted us, birthed us anew, loves us, has compassion on us, carries us, protects us¹⁴ – and also that He disciplines us in love for our good (holiness) because He deserves our obedience.¹⁵ We must posture ourselves as children willing to be obedient in order to follow the movement of Jesus' model prayer, without hypocrisy, for our Father's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. *Father, I thank you for the ultimate Son, who did only what He heard and saw in You (Jn. 5:19); I want to see what You are doing and hear what You are saying. Form Your Son in me (Gal. 4:19, Rom. 8:29, 2 Cor. 3:18) that I may learn obedience (Heb. 5:8) and be brought into glory (Heb. 2:10-11).*

¹⁴ Respectively, Heb. 12:9; Eph. 1:5; Jn. 1:12-13, 26:17; Ps. 103:8-14; Deut. 1:30-31; Ps. 68:4-6.

¹⁵ See Heb. 12:5-11, quoting Prov. 3:11-12; also Jn. 14:23, 2 Jn. 1:4. Christopher J. H. Wright teaches the fatherhood/sonship metaphor "has a double purpose: to emphasize God's love (i.e. his unbreakable commitment) on the one hand, and the requirement of obedience (the primary duty of sonship) on the other" (91). "Obedience was a requirement of sonship which Israel prized – literally, for actual children, and metaphorically when describing themselves as the son or sons of Yahweh (e.g. Mal. 1:6)" (*Knowing Jesus through the Old Testament* [Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1992] 109).

HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME

The first three petitions taught by Jesus prove that God's glory must be our priority. All three are connected to the location of our desire, so that we pray, "Hallowed be Your Name...on earth even as in heaven" (Mt. 6:9-10, lit.). We might assume this to be an indicative statement, "Holy is Your Name," but it is an imperative, "Holy be Your Name." The verbs in this model prayer are called "imperatives of entreaty,"¹⁶ since we do not command God (Isa. 45:11), but we entreat Him. We earnestly request: *Father, we want Your Name to be made holy on earth, and You are the One to make it happen!*

The reality is God's Name is holy everywhere, but fallen angels and fallen men do not regard it as holy (otherly, transcendently, beautifully perfect). In heaven, the angels sing without ceasing, "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!" (Isa. 6:3, cf. Rev. 4:8).¹⁷ But we must pray for the earth to be filled with the *knowledge* of the glory of the LORD (Isa. 11:9, Hab. 2:14).

An overwhelming number of Scriptures show God does everything (and so should we) for the glory of His Name¹⁸ - that all would know who He is, the only true God, and honor Him as He deserves. Symbolically, a name designates the whole person and his character; the name carries his reputation. But we should know, first, that God's Name is literally *Yahweh*. In each place that your English Bible translates "LORD" or "GOD" in capital letters (over 6,000 times), it indicates the original Hebrew was *Yahweh*.¹⁹ "Lord" and "God" are titles, but *Yahweh* is a personal Name given to His people ("throughout all generations,"

¹⁶ Daniel B. Wallace lists John 4:31 as an example of an imperative of entreaty ("eat") preceded by an introductory verb ("asking"). *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996) 488. The exception to the imperative verbs is "do not lead us into temptation" (Mt. 6:13), because all second person aorist prohibitions use the subjunctive mood (Wallace, 723).

¹⁷ J. Alec Motyer taught that Hebrew language used double repetition "to express superlatives or to indicate totality." E.g., Genesis 14:10 is literally "pits, pits," and 2 Kings 25:15, "gold, gold." "Only here is a threefold repetition found. Holiness is supremely the truth about God, and his holiness is in itself so far beyond human thought that a 'super-superlative' has to be invented to express it." "God's 'name' is qualified by the adjective 'holy' in the Old Testament more often than by all other qualifiers put together" (*The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary* [Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1993] 76-77). Many believe "holy" is repeated by the angels three times because God is Three in One. This is supported by John 12:41, which says Isaiah (in Isa. 6:1, 5) saw Jesus' glory. Also, the angel Gabriel said the baby Jesus would be called "holy" (Lk. 1:35). Obviously, the Spirit Himself is called the *Holy Spirit*.

¹⁸ ProjectOne28.com/glory

¹⁹ For more teaching on *Yahweh* and why it is (mis)translated as "LORD" and "GOD," see Exodus in Spencer Stewart's Old Testament Survey (DiscipleNations.net/OTsurvey).

“forever,” Ex. 3:15) to set Him apart from false gods. He defined the Name to Moses as “I AM WHO I AM” (Ex. 3:14-15), with an emphasis on His personal, redeeming presence (Ex. 3:12, 34:5-7; cf. Gen. 22:14).

Jesus said He came in His Father’s Name (Jn. 5:43, cf. 10:25). His Hebrew Name, *Yeshua*, means *Yahweh is salvation*. Jesus claimed to be Yahweh in flesh in many ways, especially in John 8:58: “Amen, amen, I am saying to you: before Abraham was born, I, I am” (lit., quoting the Greek Ex. 3:14). Jesus said He manifested God’s Name to His disciples (Jn. 17:6, 26) – literally saying “Yahweh,” but also demonstrating the fullness of what Yahweh means: the I AM with us to save us. Therefore, Jesus has been exalted with the Name above every name (Phil. 2:9-11), the only Name by which people may be saved (Acts 4:12).

Father, Your beautiful Name is used mostly as a curse word in our city. Change that in our day! Great King, Yahweh of hosts, fulfill Your promise to make Your Name great in every place (Mal. 1:11). May the Name of Jesus be the most famous name in our city and in the earth. May people be saved by confessing, “Jesus is Lord,” to the glory of God the Father (Rom. 10:9, Phil. 2:9-11). Make us true worshipers (Jn. 4:23-24), who cry out, “Holy, holy, holy!”

We ourselves must be answers to these prayers. Let us worship God on earth even as He is worshiped in heaven. We encourage intercessors to sing with instruments or even iPods. We should be mindful of the time and discern when the Spirit wants us to stop singing and move on to praying through the other phrases. But it is altogether fitting to praise in song. We will agree with the Spirit in us, who is given to glorify Jesus (Jn. 16:14).

Along with songs and the overflow of our hearts, we encourage intercessors to praise and pray the content of Scripture. The Spirit greatly endorses what He has already written! Here are a few suggestions:

Ps. 1 - Ps. 150	1 Chr. 16:7-36	1 Tim. 1:17
Ps. 138:2	1 Chr. 29:11-13	1 Tim. 6:15-16
Isa. 6:3	2 Chr. 20:21-22	Heb. 1
Isa. 11:9	Rom. 11:36	Rev. 1:5-6, 13-18
Isa. 26:8	Rom. 15:6, 9	Rev. 4:8, 11
Hab. 2:14	Col. 1:12-20	Rev. 5:9-10, 12-13
Mal. 1:11, 14	Jude 25	Rev. 15:3-4

We want to become deeper lovers of God (Mk. 12:30) and pray against an age in which love of God is growing cold (Mt. 24:12, 2 Tim. 3:1-5). As we gaze upon His beauty, His Spirit transforms us into His Image from glory to glory (2 Cor. 3:18, Ps. 27:4). *Get Your glory, Lord!*

YOUR KINGDOM COME

The “kingdom” of God means the “rule” and “reign” of God. God rules from heaven now and always: “Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations” (Ps. 145:13, cf. Dan. 4:34, 7:14). But fallen angels rebelled against His Kingdom and were cast to earth. God created Man to subdue and *rule* over the earth (Gen. 1:26-28, Ps. 8:2), but now Man is rebelling with the demons, as well.

“The reality of the Kingdom of God is what gives coherent meaning to Christ’s birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, outpouring, and return.”²⁰ Every aspect of Jesus’ ministry was related to manifesting the Kingdom to defeat enemies: Satan, demons, sin, sickness, and death. “The reason the Son of God appeared was to undo the works of the devil” (1 Jn. 3:8, lit., cf. Gen. 3:15, Heb. 2:14). Jesus said, “But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you” (Mt. 12:28). Through the Cross and His resurrection, Jesus triumphed over His enemies (Col. 2:15) and defeated death. *Hallelujah!*

Now the Kingdom is forcefully advancing (Mt. 11:12 NIV, Lk. 16:16), but it will not come in fullness until the return of the King. At the last trumpet, it will be said loudly: “The kingdom of the world has become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign into the ages of the ages” (Rev. 11:15, lit.). The ultimate justice against our adversary will come only at the appearing of the glory of Jesus Christ, who will destroy every enemy, even death (1 Cor. 15:24-28; Ps. 45, 110), making all things new (Acts 3:21; Rev. 19-21). May God make us a people who love His Son’s appearing (2 Tim. 4:8). We want Him to hear our voice (S.S. 8:13), wooing our Bridegroom to come back to marry us.

We cry out, “Come, Lord Jesus!” (1 Cor. 16:22, Rev. 22:20). Come reward Your saints and destroy Your enemies (Rev. 11:15-18). We long to see Your Face! We groan for the redemption of our bodies (Rom. 8:23). We want to be transformed like Your glorious body to see You and know You as You are (Phil. 3:21, 1 Jn. 3:2). In our light and momentary trials, give us perspective of the hope that they are producing and the glory that they are achieving for us at Your return (Rom. 5:2-5, 8:17-18; 2 Cor. 4:17).

Until that day, let the Church receive your Kingdom like children (Mk. 10:15), delivered from churchianity to demonstrate the Kingdom and proclaim

²⁰ Sam McVay, Jr., and Spencer Stewart, *The Kingdom of God: The Reason Christ Created Man, Became Man, and Is Coming Again* (El Dorado, KS: Project one28, 2010) 2. See also *Light Shines in the Darkness*. Both booklets are free at ProjectOne28.com.

the Kingdom. May we have the forcefulness to grab ahold of Your Kingdom and keep up with its momentum (Mt. 11:12, Lk. 16:16). Make us a Kingdom and priests; manifest Your reign through us (Rev. 1:6, 5:10). May we live in the presence of the future, bringing the blessings of Your eternal Kingdom to this sinful and hurting world, preaching your Gospel, healing the sick, and loving the poor. May we hasten Your Day (2 Pet. 3:12).

Unfold Your revelation of end-times prophecies, so we can understand them clearly, according to Your promise (Jer. 23:20, Dan. 12:4, Eph. 4:13-14). Anoint us to teach many to understand and to take action (Dan. 11:31-35) in partnered agreement with Your plans, not offense (Ps. 149:6-9; Mt. 11:6, 13:21, 24:10).

Great God and Savior (Ti. 2:13), come reign! Spread Your Kingdom like yeast (Mt. 13:31-33). Grow Your Rock, Christ, into a mountain that crushes Your enemies and fills the whole earth (Dan. 2:34-35). King Jesus, come march on this planet and rid it of evil (Rev. 19, Isa. 63, Ps. 110). We long to see the unending increase of Your government and peace (Isa. 9:6-7). We long to reign with You on the earth (Rev. 2:26-27, 5:10, 20:4).

“Make haste, my Beloved” (S.S. 8:14).

YOUR WILL COME INTO BEING

The all-knowing, all-powerful, all-loving King of the ages has specific desires for Himself and for His creation. We rest in the reality that our Father is working all things according to His will (Eph. 1:11), yet we labor in prayer, grieving over and hating every specific thing that is against His will in this evil age (e.g., Rom. 12:9). Our prayers can literally change hearts and nations, moving angels and all of heaven for the sake of His will (e.g., Ex. 32:9-14, Am. 7:1-6, Dan. 10:12).

The perfect Son prayed, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will” (Mk. 14:36). What gives us the right to pray, “Our Father,” is our willingness to obey His will, for Jesus said, “For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother” (Mt. 12:50). Only those who do the will of the Father in heaven will be saved (Mt. 7:21, i.e., those who believe into Jesus, 1 Jn. 3:23, and bear the fruit of obedient faith, Rom. 1:5, 16:26). Faith without obedience ain’t real faith. So, we pray for the Church to be the answer to these connected petitions: “For God hallows his name by establishing his rule and reign in the realm of the world through obedience to his will.”²¹

Father, not what I will, but what You will. So often, I don't want Your will. Help me overcome my unbelief. Teach me to be Your Son whose food is doing Your will (Jn. 4:34). Give me and my family, Your Church, spiritual understanding of Your will, so that we may walk worthy of You, fully pleasing You, bearing fruit in every good work (Col. 1:9-10). Show us what it practically means to offer our bodies as living sacrifices, so we may renew our minds, test, and approve Your good, pleasing, and perfect will (Rom. 12:2).

THE READINESS OF THE CHURCH

The Church is to be the primary manifestation of the Lord’s glory on earth (Jn. 17:21-23, Eph. 3:10, Mt. 5:14-16, Phil. 2:15). Jesus’ letters to the seven churches in Revelation 2-3 show the condition of mixture and the need to overcome. The end goal is a Church who “has made herself ready” to marry Christ (Rev. 19:7-8; 21:2, 9-21; cf. 2 Cor. 11:2-3).

Let us pray for the global, regional, and local Church, including intercession for specific people and situations here (cf. Acts 1:8). “Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and

²¹ Scott J. Hafemann, “The Kingdom of God as the Mission of God” in *For the Fame of God’s Name: Essays in Honor of John Piper*, Eds. Sam Storms and Justin Taylor (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010) 251.

those who are mistreated, since you are also in the body” (Heb. 13:3, cf. 1 Cor. 12:26). Persecution.com and ChristianHeadlines.com post updates on persecuted believers.

Please pray for the anointing and acceleration of the equipping ministry (Eph. 4:11-16, 2 Thess. 3:1, Col. 4:3-4) as it serves the Church. We labor for her to see her true identity and position in Christ (Col. 1:24-29, 1 Cor. 3:9-17), in order to move from a business to a Body, from an audience to an army. *May trust in the world’s methods and man-made organization become trust in the Spirit. We pray for maturing and activation of spiritual fathers and mothers (1 Cor. 4:15-17), so discipleship will become less information-based and more of a cross-bearing lifestyle. We long to see an undivided, aligned, and coordinated Church (1 Cor. 12, Eph. 4:16), exercising the keys of the Kingdom (Mt. 16:16-19, 18:18-19), operating all the gifts of grace (Rom. 12:3-8), loving the Lord and neighbors (Acts 2:42-47), and fulfilling the great commissions (Gen. 1:28, Mt. 28:18-20).*

Let us also pray God-breathed apostolic prayers:

Eph. 1:16-19

Eph. 3:14-21

Col. 1:9-12

Phil. 1:9-11

1 Thess. 3:12-13, 5:23

2 Thess. 1:11-12

Acts 4:29-31

Jesus commanded, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest” (Mt. 9:37-38, cf. 10:1-15, Isa. 6:8).

THE SALVATION OF THE NATIONS

Our prayers and missions for the lost are central to the advance of the Kingdom. We pray for God’s glory – every human being is created in the Image of God for His glory and rule, but all have fallen short of that glory (Gen. 1:26-28, Isa. 43:7, Rom. 3:23). We pray for God’s will – one of His specific desires is that all people repent, come to a knowledge of the Truth (Jesus), and be saved (2 Pet. 3:9, 1 Tim. 2:4, Jn. 14:6).

Satan has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so they cannot see the glory of God in Christ (2 Cor. 4:4-6). Satan has deceived the whole world and taken unbelievers captive to do *his will* (Rev. 12:9, 1 Jn. 5:19, Eph. 2:2, 2 Tim. 2:26, Mt. 13:38). Yet the Son of God came to seek and to save the lost (Lk. 19:10). He became Man and died for the forgiveness of all sins – even for those who deny Him, even for those who crucified Him (Jn. 1:14, 2 Cor. 5:14, Ti. 2:11, 1 Tim. 2:6, 1 Jn. 2:2, 2 Pet. 2:1, Lk. 23:34). Jesus is able to bind Satan and plunder his possessions (Mt. 12:28-29),

transferring believers from the authority of darkness to the Kingdom of the beloved Son (Col. 1:13-14, Acts 26:18). Salvation is a battle in Kingdom warfare.

The stakes are deadly serious. On the day of God's vengeance, all who refused to believe in Jesus will be slain by the sword of His word (Isa. 61:2; Rev. 19:21; 2 Thess. 2:10, 1:8-9). Upon judgment, they will be cast into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:15, Mt. 25:41). In righteous and just patience and love, God is delaying the end of this evil age until the Gospel of the Kingdom is proclaimed as a witness to all peoples (Mt. 24:14). To His glory, every tribe, tongue, and nation will be represented before the King's throne in worship (Rev. 5:9, 7:9-10). We need to pray for our eyes to be opened to that potential glory and judgment, which would drive us to pray and to act.

Father, change our hearts to truly care for the lost. We pray for the equippers to do the work of an evangelist (2 Tim. 4:5, Eph. 4:11), so the whole Church will learn to share the good news of Jesus Christ in purity, simplicity, and power (1 Cor. 1:17, 24; 2:1-5). May repentance and submission to the Lordship of Christ be restored to all evangelism (Lk. 24:47; Mt. 7:21; Acts 20:21, 26:20; Rom. 10:9). We pray for discernment and grace in our relationships with unbelievers (Col. 4:2-6, 1 Pet. 3:15-16). We pray for Spirit-empowered boldness and signs and wonders to confirm the message (Acts 1:8, 4:29-31; 1 Cor. 2:5, 4:20). We pray for the normalcy of daily multiplication of disciples (Acts 2:47, 5:13-14, 6:7, 11:21).

Father, You have made the nations Jesus' inheritance (Ps. 2:8), and He has promised to share this inheritance and rule with overcoming believers (Rev. 2:26-27). Amen, give the nations to Jesus! May the blessing of Christ come to all nations through the Holy Spirit by faith, as You promised our father Abraham (Gal. 3:8, 14, 16; Gen. 12:3, 22:18).

May Israel repent and believe in the King she crucified. Anoint those who evangelize among Jews to save them before the coming Tribulation. Magnify ministries to the Gentiles to provoke Israel to jealousy (Rom. 11:11-14). We long for the day that You pour upon Israel "a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy" (Zech. 12:10, 13:1), that all Israel would be saved (Rom. 11:25-26) and the world blessed with "life from the dead" (11:12, 15). Empower our witness to the kings of the earth to be warned (Ps. 2:10-12) that King Jesus is coming on the clouds to reign over all the earth, and He will again choose Jerusalem (Zech. 1:14-17, 2:8-13; Rev. 14:1, 20:9, 21:2).

We cry, as the two young Moravians selling themselves into slavery to witness to slaves, "May the Lamb who was slain receive the rewards of His suffering!" Seek and save! Come inherit the nations!

GIVE US TODAY OUR BREAD FOR TOMORROW

After the first three petitions prioritize God's glory (cf. Mt. 6:33), the remaining petitions address our human needs. Some actually think they should not bother God with their personal needs. Yet God cannot be too busy, and the Son of God has commanded us to be praying in this manner. In fact, Jesus followed this model prayer with teaching not to be anxious about life because our Father cares about us, knows our needs, and will give good things to those who ask Him much more eagerly than earthly fathers (Mt. 6:25-34, 7:7-11).

The Greek is literally, "Give us today our *next-day* bread" (Mt. 6:11).²² "In terms of the Jewish prayers, the morning prayer is for today's bread, and the evening prayer for tomorrow's bread."²³ Jesus commanded us not to worry about tomorrow, but to pray for it (6:25-34). This reflects "the precarious lifestyle of many first-century workers who were paid one day at a time and for whom a few days' illness could spell tragedy."²⁴ Most Americans may be removed from this context, but we need to pay attention to the Lord's warning in Deuteronomy 8:11-18 that when we have eaten our fill and lived in good houses, we do not forget it is God who gives wealth. We should guard our hearts, so that we do not think our employers or our own skills provide our wealth. God is our provider, and we humbly implore Him, with thanksgiving, for our provision. Bread represents all food, and even more generally, all needs. Therefore, we broaden our mindset to consider finances as a whole.

MONEY, POSSESSIONS, HEARTS, AND GIVING

Jesus preached repeatedly about money because of its practical connection to our selfishness and independence. In our cashless, credit-card culture with abundance of "stuff," we do well to note that Jesus used a Semitic word (*mammon*) that defined both money and possessions. They compete against our affection and service for God (Mt. 6:24). In these last days, many are lovers of money, pleasure, and Self, rather than lovers of God (2 Tim. 3:1-5). "The love of money is a root of all kinds of evils..." (1 Tim. 6:10). Greed, or covetousness, is idolatry (Col. 3:5). The deceitfulness of riches and desires for other things are thorns, choking out the life of the word in many believers and stunting fruitfulness (Mk. 4:19).

²² Cf. Carson, 171, "bread for the coming day;" Osborne, 229. The strictly literal translation above maintains the function of *epiousios* as an adjective modifying *artos*, "next-day bread."

²³ Osborne, 229.

²⁴ Carson, 171.

Garden our hearts, Father; uproot these thorns. May Your Church be free of debt (Rom. 13:8), free of the love of money and possessions, and free from the fear of lack. May we seek first Your Kingdom and Your righteousness (Mt. 6:33) and trust You to supply our every need (Phil. 4:11-13). May we have "godliness with contentment" (1 Tim. 6:6). Lead us not into temptation by this culture's marketing that we deserve everything it offers (Mt. 6:11, 13).

Keeping in mind the collective voice of the prayer ("Give us... our..."), we should pray for provision for our brothers and sisters. *Father, give them bread for tomorrow. Lead me, if You want to provide for them through me. "But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?" (1 Jn. 3:17). The Father's love in us will contribute to the needs of everyone, especially to those of the household of faith (Gal. 6:10, Rom. 12:13).*

We also pray for the poor in the nations. The thief (Jn. 10:10, 8:44) is killing millions of men, women, and children every year through injustices connected to poverty, such as abortion, gendercide, dirty water, starvation, slavery, and human trafficking.²⁵

May we excel in the grace of giving (2 Cor. 8:7), even in our poverty (Lk. 21:1-4, 2 Cor. 8:1-3). Press down and spill over reward (Lk. 6:38, 2 Cor. 9:6); open the floodgates of heaven (Mal. 3:10), so that we can give even more (2 Cor. 8:14-15). Raise up a testimony through a Church who does not have to raise her standard of living, but raises her joy in giving (cf. Acts 20:35). Multiply our seed for sowing and our submission in generosity for Your glory, as it overflows in many thanksgivings (2 Cor. 9:10-13).

The enemy has enticed such hoarding of wealth, such waste, such unjust disparity. Bind up idolatrous greed, and let loose Your cattle on a thousand hills (Ps. 50:10). Release the wealth of the Gentiles (Prov. 13:22) and the treasures of darkness hoarded in secret places (Isa. 45:3), for You are worthy of all wealth (Rev. 5:12). May our ministries have enough to accomplish Your commissions – and more – so we can give to those in need and to other ministries. We ask for millions of dollars to feed the starving, to quench the thirst of the poor, and to rescue orphans and slaves.

May the poor in body and the poor in spirit be filled with the blessing of the Kingdom of Christ (Mt. 5:3, Lk. 6:20), who though He was rich, became poor that we may share in His riches of glory (2 Cor. 8:9).

²⁵ See DiscipleNations.net/justice.

FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS

Even more than bread, we need forgiveness. “Debts” here is used metaphorically of sins.²⁶ In the instance recorded in Luke, Jesus said “sins,” but He also maintained the metaphor in the following phrase: “for we ourselves are forgiving everyone *indebted* to us” (Lk. 11:4, lit.). Reverence, honor, obedience, and glory are due to God, and our sins deny Him. Therefore, we need “forgiveness,” a word also used in Greek for canceling or remitting a debt.²⁷ Jesus later told a parable (more below) about a king, out of compassion, forgiving the unpayable debt that the servant owed (Mt. 18:27).

We must keep in mind the place of Jesus’ teaching in history: He had not yet died for the forgiveness of sins by His blood. But now He has! Now God “has forgiven us all our trespasses, by *canceling* the record of *debt* that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross” (Col. 2:14). As Jesus died, He cried, “*Tetelestai*” (“It has been finished,” Jn. 19:30), which was used also as a Greek accounting term for, “The debt is paid in full.”²⁸ When we confess our sinfulness to God, repent, and believe into the Lord who died and was raised again, then His blood cleanses us from all of our sins.²⁹ Thanks be to God!

Therefore, we should not pray, “Forgive us,” as if the Father has not already forgiven us. We should pray with thanksgiving that God has forgiven us in Christ. What about when we sin again in the future? Christ’s death was once for all;³⁰ He has already forgiven even what we have not yet done. Of course, we should confess (be honest before God about) each future sin, so that our repentance can be genuine and our relationship with Him unhindered from our perspective. But we should do so with confidence in what His blood has already accomplished, so that our hearts may be “sprinkled clean from an evil conscience” (Heb. 10:22). The adversary will accuse us, but we overcome by the blood of the Lamb (Rev. 12:11).

AS WE ALSO FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS

This line is weighty. Of all things to follow this model prayer, Jesus

²⁶ In Jesus’ commentary immediately following the model prayer, He spoke of the Father forgiving our “trespasses” (Mt. 6:14-15).

²⁷ BDAG, 3rd Ed., 156.

²⁸ Dr. Joe White, *Tetelestai: Drawing Near To the Man and His Cross* (Branson, MO: ADPress, 2000) 13.

²⁹ 1 Jn. 1:7-9; Acts 2:38, 10:43; Mt. 26:28, Eph. 1:7, Rev. 1:5

immediately commented on this crucial aspect: “For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses” (Mt. 6:14-15). We are saved by grace through faith (Eph. 2:9-10), and forgiving others is a necessary fruit of real faith. There is no need to soften Jesus’ words. He strengthened them in a parable of a king who forgave a servant “who owed him ten thousand talents” (Mt. 18:24-27), which equated to 200,000 years of wages!³¹ However, the forgiven servant then threw into prison someone who could not pay him only 100 days’ wages that were owed (18:28-30). The parable concluded:

Then his master summoned him and said to him, “You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?” And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart (18:32-35).

The unforgiving will become, by that fact, the unforgiven.³² John Stott wrote well: “Once our eyes have been opened to see the enormity of our offense against God, the injuries which others have done to us appear by comparison extremely trifling. If, on the other hand, we have an exaggerated view of the offenses of others, it proves that we have minimized our own.”³³ The unforgiving are ignorant of Satan’s schemes and outwitted by him, sowing and reaping bitterness and division in the Body of Christ (cf. 2 Cor. 2:10-11). Truly, being forgiven by God is the basis of our motivation and our ability to extend forgiveness and even love to those who curse us, strike us, abuse us, and even stone or crucify us to death (Lk. 6:27-36, 23:34; Acts 7:60).

Father, I praise You that You have forgiven me by the precious blood of your Son for the sake of Your holy Name (Isa. 43:25). Thank you! Overcome my guilt through trust in His blood. The arrows of some people’s words have gone into my heart; please give me grace to forgive. Love keeps no record of wrongs (1 Cor. 13:5), so bear the fruit of that forgiving love by Your Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23) for the sake of Your Church and the witness of our unity (Jn. 17:20-23).

³⁰ Heb. 9:25-26, 10:10-14, 17-18

³¹ *ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008) 1,859.

³² Paraphrasing (by removing the oxymoron, “unforgiven Christian”) F. Dale Bruner, *Matthew: The Christbook*, 2 vols. (Dallas: Word, 1987, 1990) 257. Qtd. in Osborne, *op. cit.*, 234.

³³ John R. W. Stott, *Christian Counter-culture* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1978) 149-150. Qtd. in Carson, *op. cit.*, 172-173.

DO NOT LEAD US INTO TEMPTATION

The same Greek word (*peirasmos*) can mean “temptation” or “testing.” God never tempts (Jas. 1:13-14), but God does test (e.g. Ex. 20:20; Deut. 8:16; 1 Pet. 1:6, 4:12). God does not lead into *peirasmos*, and He does lead into *peirasmos*! The difference is God’s *testing* reveals our hearts, refines faith, and produces character (Jas. 1:2-4, Rom. 5:3-5), but Satan’s *tempting* aims for sin and death. It is actually possible that God would lead us into a circumstance in which the enemy would tempt, but God would test. In fact, earlier in this Gospel, Matthew wrote, “Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil” (4:1).

God truly did place a hedge around Job, and when He removed it, the enemy tempted, God tested, and Job’s faith was refined unto God’s glory (Job 1:10, 21; 2:3; 42:1-6; cf. 1 Pet. 1:6-7). When we pray, “Do not lead us into temptation,” we are asking God to keep a hedge around us.³⁴ But we know from Job and from Jesus that God may allow us to be tempted, and yet “God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it” (1 Cor. 10:13).

Therefore, there may be a more specific sense in which we are praying, “Do not let us fall into sin because of temptation,” which seems to be the use of the word in Galatians 6:1.³⁵ Because of upcoming trial in which the disciples would stumble (Mt. 26:31-33 YLT), Jesus told His disciples, “Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak” (26:41). Even though stumbling blocks will come (Mt. 18:7 NASB), God is able to keep us from stumbling (Jude 1:24).

A disciple who genuinely prays, “Hallowed be Your Name,” will desire for God to show Himself holy through his life (Ezek. 36:23, 1 Pet. 1:15-16). Therefore, we must be sober about living in the midst of such a sensual, greedy, tempting society (1 Pet. 4:1-7).

Father, I don’t want to be tempted because I don’t want to sin against You! Guard my heart and my mind in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:6, Prov. 4:23). You know my weaknesses, and where I need help. Give me wisdom to “gouge out” my eye or “cut off” my hand – to remove sources of temptation (Mt. 18:7-9). Weed out thorns choking fruitfulness (Mk. 4:19). I thank You for Your faithfulness to never let me be tempted beyond what I can bear, and You always provide a way

³⁴ R. C. Sproul, “Angel of ‘Light’” (ligonier.org).

³⁵ Carson, 173.

out (1 Cor. 10:13). Teach me to put my flesh to death by the Spirit and clothe myself with Christ (Rom. 8:13, 13:14). Teach me to walk by the Spirit, so I will not gratify the desires of the flesh (Gal. 5:16). I thank You that by one sacrifice, Your Son, You have perfected those who are being made holy (Heb. 10:14). Make me holy. Lead me not into temptation, but into paths of righteousness for Your Name's sake (Ps. 23:3, 31:3).

BUT DELIVER US FROM THE EVIL ONE

Many translations render “deliver us from evil,” but the Greek is more literally “the evil one.”³⁶ Jesus defined “the evil one” as the devil, Satan.³⁷ According to Daniel Wallace, “...there is no little theological difference between the two. The Father does not always keep his children out of danger, disasters, or the ugliness of the world. In short, he does not always deliver us from evil. But he does deliver us from the evil one.”³⁸ Jesus later prayed for His disciples: “I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one” (Jn. 17:15). As was the case with the chronology of forgiveness, now also Christ *already has delivered* us from the evil one – from the authority of darkness and the power of death in which he held us captive (Col. 1:13, Heb. 2:14-15). The apostle John wrote that we have overcome the evil one (1 Jn. 2:13-14) and that Jesus protects the one born of God, “and the evil one does not touch him” (5:18). Paul encouraged, “The Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one” (2 Thess. 3:3).

For our part, we must “in all circumstances, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one” (Eph. 6:16). We cannot pretend we sit in a bubble, unaffected by the spiritual war raging around us. Satan hates us because we are in the Image of God. Satan hates us even more since we have been stolen from him and transferred into the Kingdom of Christ, being loved by God and transformed into the glory of Christ in order to conquer him (2 Cor. 3:18, Rev. 12:11). Therefore, Satan is prowling around like a roaring lion to devour us – to steal, kill, and destroy us (1 Pet. 5:8, Jn. 10:10). We do not need to fear because greater is the Lion of Judah in us (1 Jn. 4:4, Rev. 5:5). But we do need to be sober-minded and watchful (1 Pet. 5:8).

Father, protect our lives from the enemy who wants to kill us. Hedge

³⁶ *Tou ponērou* is not indefinite neuter (“evil”). It contains the definite article (“the”) and a masculine singular adjective (“evil”) used substantively (as a noun): “the evil one.”

³⁷ Cf. Mt. 13:19, Mk. 4:15, Lk. 8:12. Also, in Mt. 5:37, “the evil one” is the devil who fathers lies (cf. Jn. 8:44).

³⁸ Daniel B. Wallace, “Exegetical Insight,” in William D. Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek Grammar, Second Edition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003) 63.

around us; encamp around us (Ps. 34:7). Help me and help Your Church to hate darkness and to discern when the enemy is masquerading as an angel of light (Rom. 12:9, 2 Cor. 11:14). Break the spell that has bewitched many believers to living by law instead of the Spirit (Gal. 3:1-3). Demolish strongholds in minds that keep us from intimately knowing our God (2 Cor. 10:4-5). May Your Spirit teach us to put on the armor of God by faith to stand against the schemes of the devil (Eph. 6:10-20). Perfect our faith in all circumstances to manifest Your manifold wisdom and silence the enemy who slanders Your worth (Eph. 3:10, Ps. 8:2, Job 1:9-11).

JUSTICE AGAINST THE ADVERSARY

The Lord Jesus told His disciples the parable of the persistent widow because “it is necessary for them to be praying always and to not become discouraged” (Lk. 18:1, lit.). The content of the crying out day and night is, “Give me justice against my adversary!” (18:3, 7-8).

Father, we praise You that the reason You sent Your Son was to undo the works of the devil (1 Jn. 3:8). We praise Jesus, who disarmed the enemy and triumphed over them through the Cross (Col. 2:15). But, Father, the enemy is raping, pillaging, enslaving, and killing Your Image-bearers! Grant justice to those oppressed by the Adversary! Give wisdom and power to the authorities You have placed on earth (Rom. 13:1-7) to hunt down the wicked and bring them to justice. Command Your angels to stop the hand that is about to abuse a wife or a child (Ps. 91:11). Break the arm of the wicked (Ps. 10:15, cf. 104:35).

Wake up Your slumbering Church and send her to redeem and rescue! Anoint us to proclaim liberty to the captives (Isa. 61:1, Lk. 4:16-21). Teach us our authority (Mt. 16:18-19; Lk. 9:1, 10:19) that 1 John 3:8 may continue manifesting through us. We want to be able to discern spirits, cast out demons, and heal the oppressed in a Scriptural manner that exalts Christ alone. Your Son said, “But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you” (Mt. 12:28 NIV). Bring that Kingdom through us!

We pray for the persecuted Church. Protect them. Uncover plots, if it is Your will for them to flee (Acts 9:23-24). Send angels to open prison doors, so they can freely proclaim the Gospel (Acts 5:19-21). Help them to know that even though they may be martyred, not one hair of their heads will perish in You (Lk. 21:16-19). May Your Church be overcomers who conquer the enemy by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony, not loving their lives even unto death (Rev. 12:11, 15:2). For You are worthy! Stop those who bear Your Name from retaliating (Rom. 12:19); give them hope in the resurrection (1 Thess. 4:13-18) and faith that You will come soon to avenge the blood of Your martyrs and to destroy the destroyers of the earth (Rev. 6:9-11, 11:15-18). Give us strength to endure to the end (Mt. 24:13, Lk. 21:19). Come, Lord Jesus!

YOURS IS THE KINGDOM, THE POWER, AND THE GLORY

We traditionally finish “the Lord’s prayer” with the doxology: “For Yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory, forever and ever! Amen!” But then if we look at most modern English Bibles, the words are either bracketed or placed in a footnote. This is because the earliest Greek manuscripts do not contain this phrase. It began to appear in later manuscripts *in various forms*, evidence which causes most scholars and translation committees to believe it was not in the original teaching of Jesus penned by Matthew.³⁹

But of course, the content is gloriously true! In fact, it comes from 1 Chronicles 29:10-13, a prayer of David:

“Blessed are you, O LORD, the God of Israel our father, forever and ever. Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name.”

May the beginning, middle, and end of our prayers be filled with praise. Yahweh is exalted as head over all, and He has exalted Yahweh in flesh, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as head over the Church (Acts 2:33, Eph. 1:20-23). His plan for the fullness of time is to sum up all things in the heavens and in the earth under one head, even Christ (Eph. 1:9-10).⁴⁰ He has already begun this new creation in us (2 Cor. 5:17), saving us and adopting us as sons and daughters. So we say, “Amen! May it be so! Finish Your plan! It all belongs to You, Father! We give You the glory due Your Name!”

³⁹ Carson, 174. Osborne, 231. *ESV Study Bible*, 1,832.

⁴⁰ A combination of NIV (1984) and NASB may best translate the tricky Greek verb. *Anakephalaionmai* can mean to sum up (Rom. 13:9) and to bring together, and it is built upon the word *kephalē*, head.

CONCLUDING EXHORTATIONS

Some may question using this model to pray everyday. Will it be vain repetition like Jesus warned against?⁴¹ It does not have to be. In Gethsemane, Jesus Himself “prayed for the third time, saying the same words again” (Mt. 26:44). Consider also the angels around the throne, who never stop repeating, “Holy, holy, holy!” and, “Worthy are You!” (Rev. 4:8-11). Each time we pray this model prayer, we can be believing afresh the revelation given and expressing our hearts through whatever words overflow “in this manner.”

We can guarantee there will be times you do not feel like praying. Do not pray merely based upon emotions. Pray by faith. Your spirit wants to pray whether or not your soul or body feels like it (Mt. 26:41). Love for Jesus will motivate us to endure in prayer until He returns (1 Cor. 13:7). Therefore, let us watch our hearts to guard against law-based performance and remind ourselves of our first love (Rev. 2:4). Let us know we are sowing in the Spirit seeds we may not see sprout for some time, “...and let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up” (Gal. 6:8-9).

God in flesh said, “Be praying in this manner.” Let us respond. It is not about time or exact words, but spirit and truth, the intent of the heart. Slow down. Be still. Wait. Meditate on each aspect of this prayer. The Holy Spirit will take this kindling wood and put fire on it – for the glory of God’s Name on earth!

⁴¹ Mt. 6:7

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