

“THE POWER AND GLORY FOREVER, AMEN!”

Pastor Mike Corwin

LORD’S PRAYER PART 8

TEXT: EPHESIANS 3:14-21 (THE MESSAGE) **SCRIPTURE:** MATTHEW 17:14-21 (THE MESSAGE)

I – CHANGED PRAYER:

There is a story of a religion student at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee who was going through a rough time and had lost his faith in God because of his daughter. She was very young and had been stricken by a debilitating joint problem, which kept her from moving her limbs. She was facing an upcoming surgery when the young depressed father received the assignment from his professor to write the Lord’s Prayer in his own words. He started his version like this:

Our Father, who art in heaven, why aren’t you down here on earth, doing something about my present difficulty? Who cares if your name is hallowed, or whether or not your kingdom comes, when what concerns us most is what life is really made of – our big and little hurts?

It’s at that moment that he stopped and thought about his little daughter. He thought of the simple, pure faith she had in God. He imagined her talking to him about Jesus and his love. Crying into his typewriter keys he started the assignment over and wrote a new version:

Our Father, in spite of the present difficulty, you are still in heaven and the world is still ordered. May my response hallow your name. The coming of your kingdom is more important than my own difficulty so may I not hinder it’s coming by my worry. Cause this event to be an opening up to your will, which I can see as clearly as if I were in heaven. I must recognize that you still provide the necessities of life, I have bread enough. May this event help me to realize how important it is to secure your forgiveness and may this not be an occasion for temptation to lose faith or respond as a pagan. Deliver me from any evil response or action in this difficulty. The overriding and all-important fact of life is that to you belongs the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.

A few days after finishing this prayer the man’s daughter was admitted to the hospital and his professor called the hospital to check on them with the intentions of sitting with them during the surgery. He couldn’t locate them at the hospital and instead ran into him a few days after that. The man explained that just before the surgery they had taken more x-rays and found out her joint had started to grow and heal. They didn’t operate, the doctors said it was a miracle and she

was going to be all right.

II – CHANGE OF FAITH:

So what happened here? Why the sudden healing of his daughter? I'm sure if he was a religion student he had been praying about his daughter before, why now are his prayers answered and his daughter healed? The answer is simple...a change of faith. He changed from a man who went to prayer simply because he thought it was the thing to do, to a man who prayed knowing God was in charge and would hear and answer his prayers. His new prayer shows a confidence in God he didn't have before. His new prayer said "OK God, it's your Kingdom and your power so I trust it all to you."

In the scripture you heard read this morning from Matthew you heard Jesus addressing this issue with his disciples. A man had brought his son to the disciples to be healed, to have a demon cast out of him and they had tried and failed so the man brought his son to Jesus who healed him. The disciples later asked Jesus why they had failed in their try to cast the demon out and Jesus said, "Because you're not taking God seriously." He's saying you have no confidence; you have not yet come to the understanding that God is everything and everywhere. There is nothing we can ask that he can't do. In other words you're not recognizing its God's Kingdom and he has the power to do anything you ask of him so his glory can shine out.

Praying this last line of the Lord's Prayer, "For thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever" is recognizing there is only one place to put our confidence and faith, only one God who cares for us, hears us, and answers us. The God of the universe and Savior of the world. Our God!

III – TEXT:

This morning's Scripture lesson is all about this Kingdom and power of God. It points out that when disciples of Jesus Christ say, "Lord, teach us to pray" they are also saying, "Lord, teach us to live it. This Scripture tells us where to put our faith and who has the power to answer prayers.

In the verses right before these Paul tells us that God had a plan. He had a plan to restore us, to take care of us, to save us. He wants to be our Father now and forever. To put this plan in action he sent his one and only Son, Jesus who brought us all together by the blood he shed on the cross. As we read this passage we find out that it was all out of love...

Ephesians 3:14 - 21 (TMNT)

¹⁴My response is to get down on my knees before the Father, ¹⁵this magnificent Father who parcels out all heaven and earth. ¹⁶I ask him to strengthen you by his Spirit—not a brute strength but a glorious inner strength— ¹⁷that Christ will live in you as you open the door and invite him in. And I ask him that with both feet planted firmly on love, ¹⁸you'll be able to take in with all Christians the extravagant dimensions of Christ's love. Reach out and experience the breadth!

Test its length! Plumb the depths! Rise to the heights! ¹⁹Live full lives, full in the fullness of God. ²⁰God can do anything, you know—far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in your wildest dreams! He does it not by pushing us around but by working within us, his Spirit deeply and gently within us.

²¹Glory to God in the church!
Glory to God in the Messiah, in Jesus!
Glory down all the generations!
Glory through all millennia! Oh, yes!

Paul says when he considers all that God has done for us he falls to his knees before God, what else can he do? Its God's Kingdom isn't it? Paul says he made it all, the heavens and the earth. He goes on to say that we can be a part of this Kingdom of love very simply by opening our hearts to Jesus. Remember what Jesus said when he was here; the way to the Father is through the Son. I find God when I open the door of my heart to Jesus.

It's when I discover this Faith in Jesus and plant the roots of my life firmly in this faith that I discover the Kingdom, the power, and the glory of God.

I discover that this Kingdom is larger than we can ever imagine. It cannot be contained in our human terms or mind. It's so long it stretches from eternity to eternity. It's so wide it takes in the whole universe. It's so deep it reaches down to the lowest depths of evil and sin to rescue us, and it's so high it carries us to the very throne of God! Paul then tells us that we should live as mature Christians who explore all these dimensions of God's love.

Paul tells us about the power of God. He says God can do anything! He can do more than we could ever think or dream of in our wildest imaginations of dreams. There is nothing we can ask him in prayer that he's not capable of pulling off if it's in his will to do so.

He finishes by telling us that because of all this God deserves all the glory we can give him in our church, in our worship and faith in Jesus, in the lives of our children and grandchildren, and to the end of times, for all eternity. Everything we do should glorify our God! We give God this glory when we recognize it's his Kingdom, when we have faith in his power, and live our lives and say our prayers accordingly.

IV – WHERE'S YOUR FAITH?:

As we look at the Lord's Prayer we find that we close it the same way that we opened it – centered on God. We open with a plea to “our Father” and we close with a doxology which proclaims that he has the power to do anything in his Kingdom and it all brings him glory. To pray that God is the Kingdom, the Power, and the glory puts an exclamation point on this prayer that God's Son taught us to pray.

It proclaims that we know whom to pray to and where to put our trust. In God and nowhere else.

The Roman Empire thought it was so grand and powerful that it would last forever...it thought wrong. Alexander the great thought he was building a Kingdom to surpass all kingdoms...he thought wrong. Napoleon thought he would have the kingdom to rule the world...he thought wrong. Hitler believed the kingdom he was fighting for would rule for a thousand years...he thought wrong. The Shah of Iran proclaimed himself king of kings and a year later was out of a job. There is only one Kingdom that will never fade or crumble as all those made by men eventually do...the Kingdom of God, the Almighty God who has the power to do anything.

When we center our prayers on God then we quit just saying the Lord's Prayer like some kind of formula we just recite, and we start praying it as a prayer to our heavenly Father, confident in the belief that he does hear us and have the power to change our lives and the lives of others. It's to admit we don't have the power or the answers to get us not only through this life, but into the next. Today's question is this: DO YOU PRAY WITH CONFIDENCE? Do you have the faith to place your hopes and dreams, your cares and concerns, your pain and your sorrow into God's hands and trust that he'll handle it? If not then isn't it time you change your view of this and all prayers just like the religious student we started this sermon with? When you enter the Kingdom through faith and believe in the power of the King, then you'll see the glory.

V – AMEN!:

We close this series on the Lord's Prayer, the way all our prayers should be closed, with the word "AMEN." Amen is the word which is used every place on earth and yet never translated. It means the same thing everywhere. It's an ancient Hebrew word, which means, "so be it" or "let it be so." If you look you'll find that it's the very last word of the Bible in Revelation 22:21.

To proclaim AMEN at the end of this prayer is to open our hearts and our lives to the Kingdom, the power, and the glory of God. It means that we pray the prayer with meaning and with confidence. It means:

- We want God's name to be holy & all God's children said- AMEN
- We want God's will to be done &AMEN
- We believe God will give us not only this day, but the food we need to live it &.....AMEN
- We believe that God will forgive us &AMEN
- We believe that God will keep us out of trouble and away from evil &AMEN
- We believe that God is God forever &AMEN

From this point on when you pray this or any other prayer I want you to do it with confidence in the power and the love of God, knowing it couldn't be in any hands better than his. Then I want you to have the faith to say..... AMEN