

The Lord's Prayer

*"For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever. Amen"*

Image by Greg Rakozy

Matthew 6:13

For Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory Forever.

Amen

This is the 4th message in our series on the Lord's Prayer. In the first message, we talked about "How Do we Pray" and we learned that our prayers are conversations that occur in private, behind closed doors, and that we can continue these conversations with God when we come together in worship. We also learned that prayers that are given up to please men, will not reach the ears of God.

In the second message we talked about "To Whom Do We Pray" where we learned about the nature of our Creator and how the term "Our" in "Our Father" relates to us as a body of believers and that "Father" is a role that relates to our God as our provider, protector and the head of spiritual family. We also learned about how the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ provides us with a path where we can stand on "Hallowed Ground" in the presence of God and Father. We learned, as well, about God's Kingdom and how we are chosen to help bring that Kingdom to the world around us.

In our third message, we discovered "For What Do We Pray" as we examined "Our Daily Bread" and how God not only forgives us our sins but that He expects us to forgive those who sin against us. We also learned about the nature of temptation and how God will allow us to be brought to the edge of temptation but will never lead us into that temptation. We learned temptation builds character

and strengthens us so that we can resist temptation in the future. It allows us to be an example of Christ in this world in the face of those temptations.

Today, we will discuss the Doxology of The Lord's Prayer.

I want you to repeat it with me:

For Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory Forever.

Amen

The term "scripture" simply means sacred writings. It can refer to the Bible, but it can also refer to what are considered holy writings in other religions. It is not a word singular to Christianity. However, when we, as Christians, refer to scripture, we are referring to the writings that we associate with the Holy Bible. When both theologians and historians are translating ancient writings, we often assume that they are using the same original manuscripts. After all, for most of us, what we are reading is not the original text, but a translations of that text. Because most of us are not Greek scholars, we trust those with that have those skills to get it right. We place a great deal of importance in their translations. And, in truth, most of these scholars confer and refer to each other as they translate. It is a way to keep them honest and accurate. Before scripture actually makes it to the Bible it has usually gone through many hands to ensure its accuracy.

It can become confusing, depending on the translation, when we find something that contradicts what we have always heard or that we have planted our flag on since childhood. In this particular case, what we refer to as the Doxology of The Lord's Prayer can be found in:

The King James Version

The New King James Version

And The New American Standard Bible

But it is not found in:

The English Standard Version

The Revised Standard Version

The New International Version

Or Today's New International Version

I usually use the New International Version when I am just reading the Bible, but I do look at multiple translations when I am preparing a sermon. Christians have been known to argue that Jesus never said these words that we find in Matthew 6:13 because they did not appear in the first Greek manuscripts that were used to translate the Bible. However, there were manuscripts found at a later date that

were from the same time period as the original texts that did include the doxology.

I'm going to go out on a limb here because I don't want to leave you hanging. I believe that Jesus did speak these words. And the reason that I believe that He did speak these words is for the same reason that others do not. Those who believe that He did not speak these words use the fact that the words are omitted in the originally translated manuscripts. They also believe that the words could have been added at a later date, well after the writing of the gospel. But, since there are other manuscripts from the same time period that have the doxology in them, I believe that Jesus did speak words these and that they were not spuriously added later.

As protestants, we use the doxology because we are influenced in great part by the King James Translation. It is what most of us grew up with. For the most part, the Catholic church has kept the recitation of the doxology out of their homilies and worship, but it seems to have crept into some of the more modern Catholic worship services.

We simply do not know everything Jesus said, only what was recorded. He most assuredly had many private conversations with His disciples, friends and family. Those who recorded the events surrounding His life and the words that He used

to teach us, were not with Him 24 hours a day, seven days a week. There is even the passage of scripture in Luke 10 where Jesus sends 72 of His disciples out into the world to tell the world about Jesus and to perform miracles in His name, but it does not tell us if the original 12 disciples were among those sent out or how long they were gone. We know that they went out and that they came back but not what happened with Jesus while they were away.

So, I truly do not have a problem believing that Jesus did say the words in the Doxology. These words are important, and they were a definite statement to resolve certain questions of the day. One of those questions was based on statements that the Kingdom of God actually belonged to man, that somehow, we were inheritors of that Kingdom rather than potential residents of it. So, the statement "For Thine is the Kingdom" is a direct rebuttal of this idea. God's Kingdom belongs to God. It is the Kingdom of God and belongs solely to Him. Man is not and never will be God and heaven is not a piece of real estate that we can purchase.

When we recognize the fact that God is God, not some manmade abstract or idol, then we begin to fully understand the gulf that God had to cross to bridge into our lives with the life, death and resurrection of His Son. If we truly grasp that God is King, that God is Creator, that God is the Author - then it is only natural for us to

understand that the Power and the Glory are His as well. And since His Kingdom is eternal, the use of the word “forever” is inevitable.

I had a good friend who sat next to me in choir several years ago. When he recited the doxology portion of “The Lord’s Prayer” in worship, his volume increased with each phrase so that “and the glory” was almost a shout. I sadly admit that at first this annoyed me. I found it almost embarrassing. After all, I had been reciting The Lord’s Prayer all my life and had never heard anyone do this. But slowly I began to realize that he had found a way to make “The Lord’s Prayer” fresh and alive every time he recited it. It wasn’t long before I began to envy his abandon, like David dancing before the Lord. I then understood that I, too, could make “The Lord’s Prayer” fresh and alive every time I recited it. After all, who is to say that it is not worshipful to shout, “and the glory.” That is so much more appropriate than a humble mumble.

The Doxology to “The Lord’s Prayer” is a proclamation that our God is an awesome God, indeed. Let there be no confusion as to our worship of our creator. Let us shout with abandon “for Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the glory forever! Amen”

And what about that “Amen?” What does it actually mean and why do we find it at the end of the prayer? What are we saying when we shout it out?

Amen is used in both the Old Testament and the New testament and it is used in a variety of ways, but its meaning is translated as “surely, indeed, truly,” as in – “This is the truth.”

During ancient and medieval times, when an important document was sent by courier, it was sealed with a wax seal and often the current monarch would put their mark in the wax with a signet ring or stamp. If the wax was broken or it did not have the proper signet on it, it was considered invalid because it may have been tampered with. Even today, many trailers and secure lockers use a lead seal tied to the lock to ensure that the contents have not been disturbed. These lead seals have signet markings on them and if they aren’t correct, the question is raised about the validity of the contents.

“Amen” is like that. It is spoken or written to validate the contents of the message. It can be used as an affirmation such as when all the people say “Amen.” In other words, we believe this message to be true. It can also be used to endorse the messenger as well. It can be used by either the writer or the recipient of the message. It is like stating “I believe in the truth of this message and the person that sent it.”

In a slightly different context, we read in the New English Bible translation of Isaiah 65:16, “He who invokes a blessing on himself in the land shall do so by the God

whose name is Amen.” This is being spoken this way because the name of God is “Truth” when used in this context. If we look at II Corinthians 1:20 in the King James version, Paul tells us, **“For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us,”** which we can interpret as “and in him Truth.”

So, when we use “Amen” we are telling the world that we truly believe this to be the truth, truth because the message is of God. That God is speaking truth into our lives and that truth is definitive. It is not a partial truth or a transitional truth. It is truth because God speaks into it and receives it that way as well. When we end our prayers with Amen we are telling God that we believe that what we have spoken to Him is true and affirming.

Because of this, I believe that “Amen” is a necessary part of our conversation with God. Standing in the presence of the Creator of the Universe with half-truths on our lips is reviling to God. God is only interested in the truth. Even man acknowledges this in our courts when we give sworn testimony affirming that we will speak “The truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help us God.”

I hope that you have gained some insight into the words of our Lord Jesus with regards to how we should pray, to whom we should pray, for what we should pray

and the nature of the doxology of the Lord's Prayer. Let me know if you found value in the little red books for recording your notes and thoughts on this series.

Next Sunday is the first Sunday in Advent and we will begin our series on "The Angels of Christmas" starting with "The Angel of Herald." I am so thrilled to be spending this Christmas time with you as we gather to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior.

I can't think of any better way to wrap up this series on the Lord's prayer than by praying it once again, as a congregation, in unity, and hopefully with greater understanding.

'Our Father which art in heaven,

Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.

Amen.