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For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are Yours now and forever. Amen.

*What does this mean for us?*

This means that I should be certain that these petitions are pleasing to our Father in heaven, and are heard by Him; for He Himself has commanded us to pray in this way and has promised to hear us. Amen, amen means “yes, yes, it shall be so.”

Mark 11:9-10: Those who went ahead and those who followed Jesus were shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is our ancestor David’s kingdom that is coming! Hosanna in the highest!”

Philippians 2:5-9: Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted Him and gave Him the name that is above every name.

Mark 15:25-26: Now it was nine in the morning when they crucified Him. The inscription of the charge written against Him was: THE KING OF THE JEWS.

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Over the past few weeks we have had a sermon series on the Lord’s Prayer. Today we conclude with the doxology that closes this familiar prayer: “For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are Yours now and forever. Amen.”

Like a lot of people, you have heard people pray the Lord’s Prayer at occasions such as funerals and nursing home services. Because, although there may be people gathered from many different denominations, it’s wonderful that one thing we all have in common, and can say together the Lord’s Prayer.

The major variation between different denominations comes at the end. You may have noticed that while we say “forever and ever,” some Christians finish the Lord’s Prayer with a single “forever.” But, a bigger difference is that some Christians leave out the doxology altogether, and simply conclude with, “But deliver us from evil. Amen.”

Those differences go back to minor variations in the original manuscripts. Though it is so familiar to us, the doxology is actually not included in some of the oldest Greek manuscripts. However, that doesn’t necessarily mean the doxology wasn’t part of the original Lord’s Prayer. It IS included in some important Greek manuscripts, including an ancient order of Christian worship called the Didache, dating from 130 A.D.

When early church believers worshipped and prayed, surely they were reminded of David's doxology in his final prayer as King in 1 Chronicles 29. He prayed, "Yours, LORD, is the greatness and the power, and the glory and the majesty and the splendour, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, LORD, is the kingdom."

The doxology of King David surely is a great way to close the prayer of the King of Kings.

When believers worshipped and prayed, they were reminded of John's vision of the coming of the kingdom of heaven in Revelation 5, where he heard the angels singing in a mighty chorus: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honour, glory and blessing."

And when believers prayed the prayer and the songbook of the Old Testament, the Psalms, the book itself ended with a doxology, a psalm of praise, saying, "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord."

"Yours is the kingdom, the glory and the power. Amen" One writer has described it like this:

*Yours is the kingdom. All other kingdoms collapse. The mighty empires of old are piles of rubble underfoot.*

*Yours is the power. The military commanders, politicians and the lobbyists – theirs is not the power. The playground bullies and the office manipulators and the Islamic terrorists – theirs is not the power. The presidents and prime ministers and the global elite – theirs is not the power. Yes, their power is real, but God has set limits on the power of human rulers, as even Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 2:37) and Cyrus (Ezra 1:2) had to confess. Those with the most money, the best lawyers, the biggest mouths – theirs is not the power.*

*Yours is the glory. The entrepreneurs and innovators whose vision and forward thinking ends abruptly at the grave – theirs is not the glory. The Oscar winning actors, musicians, and Olympic athletes who work their whole lives to achieve 15 minutes of fame – theirs is not the glory. The self-righteous who imagine that God will be impressed with their tales of good works – theirs is not and will never be the glory. Nor can we boast of our faith or our good deeds, for even they are a gift of God. (Ephesians 2:8) Jesus has taught us that the only way to heaven is to despair of our own glory (which before God is really more like filthy rags) – and to confess with Paul: May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Galatians 6:14) "Yours, not mine, heavenly Father, is the glory."*

The doxology is a vital part of our discipleship and prayer because it focuses our prayerful attention where it belongs, on God. And Jesus, throughout the Gospels, is inviting us to pray with a much larger view about life and salvation. He wants us to see things the way He sees things, the way the Father sees things. The Lord's Prayer is ultimately about reorienting our life toward the things of God, the future as God sees it, the priorities that He has about things. And

there is no greater truth than the fact that the kingdom, the power, and the glory are God's forever, and so pray that His kingdom, power, and glory might indeed be ours as we strive to reflect Him in our days on this earth!

And that's the point; God's glory is not merely that His kingdom will finally be realised in all of its fullness. That's a given. The majesty is best seen not in God's raw power, but in His power to save; as people still come to know Jesus as their Lord and Saviour.

It is fitting that our sermon series concludes with The Lord's Prayer doxology on Palm Sunday, the day we remember Jesus entering Jerusalem on a donkey surrounded by cheering crowds. In those days, an important personage would enter a city on horseback as a sign of power and strength. Jesus entered on a donkey as a sign of humility and peace. The crowds shouted, "Hosanna," "Praise God," "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!" And Jesus, in an act of performance art, demonstrates that kingdom with humility and peace.

Yet, God as Jesus is not finished; the throne He rides toward is a cross. He brings the "kingdom and the power and glory forever" through sacrifice and service and love.

King David once prayed, "Open my lips and my mouth will declare your praise" (Psalm 51:15). With the petitions of the Lord's Prayer, Jesus puts everything in perspective. He teaches us to open our mouths wide to pray for heavenly, spiritual, divine things. Then our prayers become big and bold, with a wide perspective and filled with faith.

When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray, he did not hand them a little prayer book. He gave them one specific prayer – the Lord's Prayer.

Prayer prayed in such faith, focused on the God of the Bible who has made and kept all of His promises, such prayer changes people because God is the One who saves, who redeems, and gives you and me life. Connected to Christ, His work, His promises; prayer in such faith makes a difference in our lives all year round!

It was Easter morning, 1799, the people of Feldkirch, Austria, were terrified. Indeed, they believed that this Easter would probably be the worst day of their lives. Outside the gates stood the army of Napoleon and he wanted in. The citizens were ready to raise the white flag of surrender. But the bishop of the church had another agenda. In a voice trembling with emotion, he said to the townspeople, "This is Easter Day. This is the day of our King's resurrection. We must have one moment of triumph. Let us even now prayerfully ring all the bells of Easter." The people agreed. Soon the sound of church bells ringing filled the air with sounds of victory. Napoleon's army was astounded. What could it mean? It didn't take long for the generals to conclude that only one possible explanation could account for such celebration: the Austrian army had arrived

during the night to help defend the town. The bells had not yet stopped ringing when the French army broke ranks and fled.

Prayer prayed in the confidence of the resurrected Lord can truly change things, can't it? But, praying the Lord's Prayer in faith, in confidence, and trust; now that truly is ringing resurrection bells of hope, bells of eternal victory in the struggles and challenges of our lives now even more. And so we pray "Amen."

Do we ever use the word Amen casually in our prayers? Probably. Especially if we consider Amen as simply signalling the end of prayer. Then we can move onto something else – like eating our meal, sitting down after a long pastor's prayer, the meeting is finally adjourned or we can fall asleep because we're done praying. But the Amen means so much more!

"Amen" is a Hebrew word that means, "it is certain, solid, sure. Yes, yes, it shall be so." We can be certain that our Father has heard our prayer and will act on it in our best interests. Learning to pray means learning to say "amen." "Amen" is faith talk. It is the confidence that God is faithful and true to His Word, and that He will hear this prayer not because of our own holiness or on account of the strength of our words, but because of His promise to hear through His Son Jesus. "For all the promises of God find their Yes in Him. That is why we utter the Amen through Him, to the glory of God" (2 Cor. 1:20).

"You must always make the Amen strong," Luther told Peter, his barber, "never doubting that God is surely listening to you with all grace and saying Yes to your prayer. Remember that you are not kneeling or standing there alone, but that all Christendom, all devout Christians are standing there with you and you with them in one unanimous, united prayer which God cannot ignore. And never leave off praying without having said or thought: There now, this prayer has been heard by God; this I know of a certainty. That is what 'amen' means."

And so the prayer that Jesus teaches His disciples ends as boldly as it begins. It begins by addressing God as "our Father." And it ends with a confident, "Amen. Yes. It shall be so." How dare you be so bold as to say Amen? Jesus said so. And He died and rose for you so that you could say, "Amen."

What a way to end the prayer that Jesus has taught us, right? He has taught us to pray to God as our Father and not just a majestic force in the universe; He has taught us to use His Name as our source for life and salvation; He has taught us to put the power of His forgiveness and Spiritual protection to work in our lives. And He has even taught us to ask for our daily needs in a way that unleashes the power of thanksgiving in our prayerful petitions.

*Lord Jesus, You have indeed taught us how to pray! Give us the power to release our hold on the things of this world. From our closed fists may we open our hands and receive the gifts that You have for us. Show me Your ways, Lord, teach me Your paths. Guide me in Your truth and teach me, for You are God my Saviour, and my hope is in You all day long. Amen.*