

How to Pray: God's Kingdom, Power, and Glory

Hillsboro Presbyterian Church

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Matthew 6:9-13 (KJV) "After this manner therefore pray ye: 'Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on 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 the evil: FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, AND THE POWER, AND THE GLORY, FOR EVER. AMEN.'"

We conclude The Lord's Prayer declaring God's everlasting kingdom, power, and glory. It is a summary statement of all that Jesus has taught us to pray. However, Jesus may not have taught it directly. It is not in Luke's version and not in the earliest manuscripts we now have. For our Catholic friends, this causes no problem since they use the Lord's Prayer to begin their prayers. Most Protestants use it as a concluding affirmation. Both ways are correct. This affirmation goes back to the prayers of King David (1 Chronicles 29:11) and ahead to the praises in heaven (Revelations 4:11). They are echoed throughout Scripture, including when Jesus entered Jerusalem "**Hosanna to the Son of David!**" "**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!**" "**Hosanna in the highest!**" (Matthew 21:9) "Hosanna" means "save us"... it was shouted out to the conquering king, declaring his power and glory...seeking his mercy. Even if Jesus did not directly teach this closing, the Early Church practiced it as a triumphant conclusion to this prayer that Jesus taught.

Declaring God's kingdom, power and glory is essential for Christians. Everything that has happened in the past, everything that is going to happen in the future, the reason for the universe, the reason why we are alive are in these 3 words. We were made to live IN God's kingdom. We were made to live BY God's power. We were made to live FOR God's glory. And we will never find fulfillment in life...until we begin to live *in* God's kingdom, *by* God's power, *for* God's glory. How?

How to live IN GOD'S KINGDOM * Matthew 6:33 "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

To live in God's kingdom means you make God's agenda your agenda. God's will your will. That you care about what God cares about. Usually we care about everything else except what God cares about. Right after teaching The Lord's Prayer, Jesus taught about worry...going through all of the different things that we worry about. And Jesus ends with the statement above. "Keep God first and you will be provided for (my paraphrase). What does it mean to put God FIRST?

F – Finances. You need to put God first in your finances. If you want God to bless your finances then you need to give first to God.

I – Interests. Put God first in your interests. Your hobbies, your friendships, your career, your recreation. Give God first consideration in every decision. Think WWJD – What Would Jesus Do? **R** – Relationships. Put God first in your relationships...your family, your friends, your classmates and coworkers and neighbors. Pray for them and honor God in them - and God will bless them.

S – Schedule. Put God first in your schedule. First of the day, first of the week, first of the month, first of the year. Your time is your life and God will bless continually if you do.

T – Troubles. Turn to God first when you have a problem. Too often people go to God after they have tried everything else. Father God wants us to come to Him for help first.

How to live BY GOD'S POWER * Ephesians 3:20 "God is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us..."

This verse is the testimony of HPC. Out of the tragedy of a fire that destroyed our facility, God triumphed and raised up His church – a people who know Him and love Him and tell of Him. Do you know why God blessed us? Not because of who we are, but because of who He is. Not because of what we have done, but because of what He has already done. God uses us when we live according to faith. God is a gracious God. If we got what we deserved we wouldn't be here. God doesn't give us what we deserve. God gives us what we need...that is called love. God says I want to use you but you must live by my power. We get God's power in our life by:

By praying. Prayer is the connection to God's power. Much prayer, much power. Little prayer, little power. No prayer, no power. Because prayer and power go together.

By taking risks to obey God. We only grow when our faith is being stretched. If you're not taking any risks in your life then you don't need any faith...and if you don't have any faith you are being unfaithful. God releases his power the moment you step out in faith. Remember the lesson of the turtle: he only makes progress when he sticks his neck out. The power comes *during*.

By not giving up. We get God's power when we hold on. Life is a test. When you're going through difficulties, delays, dead ends, despair, and discouragement - God is saying, "I'm going to teach you how to trust me so I can pour my faith in you." If you hang on, God will bless you.

How to live FOR GOD'S GLORY * Romans 6:10-11 (NLT) "Jesus died to defeat sin and now he lives for the glory of God so you should consider yourselves dead to sin and able to live for the glory of God through Christ Jesus."

Whose glory are you living for? God didn't put you here on the earth to fulfill the desires of your parents or your spouse or anybody else. God wants us to live for His glory. Living for making money...for being popular...for pleasure...for food...for your job...even for yourself – leads us to miss the mark...to miss the best God has for us. How do I live for the glory of God?

1. Show love to everybody. God is love and it shows what God is like. Glory is revealing what God is really like. You are never going to be God, but God wants you to become godly. Like parent like child. Learn to love people like God loves people. Romans 15:7 "Accept each other just as Christ accepted you in order to bring glory to God." Just being nice to people brings glory to God.

2. Use your abilities to serve others. 1 Peter 4:10-11 "Each one should use whatever gift he has to serve others...so that in all things God may be glorified." God wired you to make a contribution in this world. Your God-given talents are for the benefit of other people. And God gave everybody some abilities. We glorify God when we develop them and use them.

3. Share the good news. 2 Corinthians 4:15 "As God's grace brings more and more people to Christ...God will receive more and more glory." This is not talking about bringing people to a religion...it is talking about bringing people to the person Jesus Christ. Every time you share your faith, you bring glory to God.

4. Join God's family. Ephesians 3:21 "To God be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus for all generations, for ever and ever. Amen." Listen up: the only things that are going to last for eternity are God's people and God's word. Nothing else is going to last.

IN God's kingdom...BY God's power...FOR God's glory. (Remember: "in by four".) We begin with our relationship with God...we close with our recognition that it is all God...forever. **Amen.**