

**149 Years Praying the Lord's Prayer Together: *Thy Kingdom Come!***  
Rev. Scott McGinnis - First Presbyterian Church of Newton, KS - July 18, 2021  
(Drawing from *Fifty Seven Words that Change the World*)

As we celebrate 149 years of being Jesus' church here in Newton, KS, I'd like to see if anyone here was at that first Sunday 149 years ago? Jesus is absolutely brilliant. He is here now and He was here then. The answer is Jesus. You should have known there was a "Sunday School" answer for my question.

From the first days gathering those interested in forming a church and today in our ministry, Jesus has been here ministering to us. Consider how many worship songs have been sung, how many baptisms and Lord's Suppers have been celebrated? How many potlucks and luncheons? Consider how many donuts have been shared in fellowship? Jesus is absolutely brilliant. He knew what He was doing bringing us together. I'm thankful He has.

And Jesus is brilliant, because He taught us how to connect with His Father. Jesus' most important teaching may be when He taught His disciples how to pray, because He began with "**Our Father...**"

In this teaching, Jesus gives us the gift of a new identity. When we pray "**Our Father**" we learn that we are children. We are daughters and sons of our heavenly Father. By this, we are not just creatures of the Creator. We are not merely accidents of the cosmos. We are the children God

loves. We are loved by our true Father. The first word of the prayer in Greek is "*Pater*". It would be *Abba* in Aramaic and "Dad" or "Papa" in English today.

Jesus teaches us to address the Holy, Sovereign God of the Universe as "Abba," "Dad". Note that Jesus teaches us to address the Holy sovereign God of the universe in the same way He does. This is a gift. A gift 149 years ago and a gift today. Jesus says, "***Come, follow me into the same relationship I have with the Father.***"

"Our Father in heaven" was Jesus' way of saying "***Our Father on the throne***" (see Matthew 5:34). So we're not just children off at boarding school; we are children who have been given access to our Father on the throne in heaven. We have the same access Jesus has! Just say, "*Jesus sent me*" and you're in like Flynn. Just say, "*Jesus sent me*". "*Jesus sent me and said I can address you as 'Father'.*" *Amazing!* This is what we need to know.

Imagine: we can walk into the headquarters of the universe and say to the One who sits on the throne, "*Father,*" and He receives us and hears us. "**Through [Jesus],**" says the apostle Paul, "**we have access to the Father**" (Ephesians 2:18). No paperwork. No background security checks. No admission fees. No waiting in line. Just walk into the throne room and say, "*Father, I am here because of Jesus*" and He always welcomes us with open arms.

Now let's briefly walk through the rest of the prayer. Jesus say, "*Jesus sent me,*" and He begins to fill us with the knowledge of His closeness, goodness, and love. When we pray "**Your name be hallowed,**" it begins to happen in our hearts and minds.

Jesus say, "*Jesus sent me,*" and He begins to bring in a whole new order into our lives. When we pray "**Your kingdom come,**" He will rule without rival. "*Father, rule without rival in every corner of this globe!*"

Jesus say, "*Jesus sent me,*" and He will help us live as His image bearers. When we pray "**Your will be done,**" He will fulfill all His good pleasures, the good reasons He created us.

Jesus say, "*Jesus sent me,*" and He will give wisdom and strength for the day. When we pray "**Give us this day our daily bread,**" He will provide everything we need to be all He calls us to be.

Jesus say, "*Jesus sent me,*" and He will forgive. When we pray "**Cancel our debts as we cancel the debts of others,**" the whole list of all our debts are canceled. Gone.

Just say, "**Jesus sent me,**" and He will give you faith. When we pray "**...rescue us from the evil one,**" He will keep your faith alive under the pressures we face in a broken world. We ask for *faith!* We can ask for our faith to be made strong. And He does. He will rescue us from the lies of

the evil-one who wants us to think that our Father in heaven is not as good as Jesus says He is.

Do you see then that in his Prayer Jesus is giving us his vision of the Christian life? Through this prayer, we come to know the character of God. We come to know God's reign. We come to know God's good will for us. We come to trust God daily. We learn to live in reconciliation with God and brothers and sisters. We come to learn how to stand in Jesus' victory over evil.

In praying, therefore, we are participating in God fulfilling His good purposes in the world. It turns out that the movers and shakers of our world are those who pray the Lord's Prayer. Note that in His Prayer Jesus gives us the gift of *boldness*. He has given us boldness in our access to the headquarters of the universe.

The verbs in all six petitions are in the imperative mood: they are commands! Jesus is teaching us the amazing truth that we, as His adopted brothers and sisters, can walk into the headquarters of the universe (through prayer) and entreat the Sovereign God boldly with these commands! And this pleases God. Pray the Lord's Prayer and it pleases God.

*"Only you can do it, Father." "You hallow your name, because only you can. You bring your kingdom, because only you can. You provide us all we need this day, because only you can." And He will.*

That is the point of the conclusion to the prayer that was added after Matthew published his Gospel: **“For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.”** The church rightly did not want to end with, **“But deliver us from the evil-one.”** It was inconceivable to the church that, “within the Jewish prayer styles of his day,” Jesus would not end without a final statement of why the prayer can be answered. King David ended his prayer at the coronation of King Solomon (1 Chronicles 29:11) with these words:

**Yours, LORD, is the greatness and power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, LORD, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all.**

So the early church believed that David’s greater Son, King Jesus, ended His prayer, **“For yours is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, forever.”** With the “For,” meaning, “all we have asked you to do you can do.”

*“For the kingdom is yours: you are sovereign over all, always have been, always will be. You can do whatever you choose to do. You can do it for the power is yours: all power, power to do whatever you choose to do. You made the world out of nothing; you raised Jesus from the dead. You have the power to fulfill your will, to provide us all we need, and overcome the evil-one. And you can do it for yours is the glory. Glory stands for all that makes you be you, all that makes you the Sovereign, powerful God you are. Infinite resources are yours. You can do all and more than we can ever dare to imagine! Only you, Father can do all this. And you have what it takes to do what only you can do.”*

Is this not why we worship God? He is our firm foundation in an otherwise chaotic world. We pray the Lord's Prayer weekly, because we've been given hearts for His Kingdom. It is in us as His children to want to pray this, because we know the good we hope for in ***His Kingdom come***.

I like how John Eldredge writes of this desire in his book *All Things New*.

*The thing you are made for is the renewal of all things. God has given you a heart for his kingdom—not the wispy vagaries of a cloudy heaven, but the sharp reality of the world made new. This is one of the most important things you can know about yourself. Did you know this about yourself? When was the last time you told yourself, as you looked in the mirror in the morning, “Good morning; you have a heart for the kingdom.” This explains so much; it will be such an enormous help to you. It explains your anger and all of your addictions. It explains your cry for justice, and it also explains the growing hopelessness, resignation, cynicism, and defeat.*

*If we will listen with kindness and compassion to our own souls, we will hear the echoes of a hope so precious we can barely put words to it, a wild hope we can hardly bear to embrace. God put it there. He also breathed the corresponding promise into the earth; it is the whisper that keeps coming to us in moments of golden goodness. But of course. “God has made everything beautiful for its own time. He has planted eternity in the human heart” (Ecclesiastes 3:11*

*NLT). The secret to your unhappiness and the answer to the agony of the earth are one and the same—we are longing for the kingdom of God. We are aching for the restoration of all things.*

*That is the only hope strong enough, brilliant enough, glorious enough to overcome the heartache of this world.*

*One morning you will wake, and sunlight will be coming in through the curtains. You will hear the sound of birds singing in the garden; delicious scents of summer will waft in on the breeze. As you open your eyes you realize your body feels young and whole. No tormenting thoughts will rush in to assault you; you realize that your soul feels young and whole too. As you sit up to look around the bedroom filled with light, you hear the sounds of laughter and running water outside and you will know—it is going to be a wonderful day. Only this hope can serve as the anchor for our souls:*

***We who have run for our very lives to God have every reason to grab the promised hope with both hands and never let go. It's an unbreakable spiritual lifeline. (Hebrews 6:19 The Message)***

*So let us chase it now with all of our being.*

Let us pray for it to come, come now, come soon. Our hope on this 149th anniversary of our church is in Jesus' Kingdom, it always has been the world's hope, and so we continue to pray, **"Thy Kingdom Come!"** I invite you to sing some these truths in our next hymn, *How Firm a Foundation*.