

Week #6 ***Rejoice in God's Victory*** "For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power and the glory forever, Amen."

Introduction:

Many translators do not include these final words of what has been commonly recited as the Lord's Prayer. Nevertheless, the implied truth is clear - "it is all in Him". He began it all and He will finish it all. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. The Anglican prayer Book expresses the thought this way, "Glory to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. Amen". And so we shall conclude our prayer meditations by ascribing to God the power and authority to do what we have asked in His name.

The two overriding purposes of God are stated in the conclusion of this prayer: the glory of His name and the establishment of His Kingdom. His wise creation will echo this. ***"All Your works shall praise You, O Lord, And Your saints shall bless You. They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom, And talk of Your power, To make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, And the glorious majesty of His kingdom. Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And Your dominion endures throughout all generations."*** Psa. 145: 10-13

As the Creator and sustainer of all things, God directs the outcome, for He holds the keys. The closing thought, from this 'pattern for prayer', has present reality as well as a prophetic fulfillment. In the present, there is the manifest presence of His kingdom among us, where joy, peace and love are the currency of the kingdom. Here, the King's subjects experience the sanity of living by kingdom principles in the midst of a world that is drowning in the swirl of changing values. In the future, there is the certain hope that His kingdom will never end, so that what we have committed to Him will be kept by Him throughout the ages (2Timothy 1:12). No wonder we are instructed to complete our prayers with extravagant proclamations of His greatness, now active in our lives, and with the adoring recognition of His kingdom rule. ***"Amen"***.

Gail Whyte

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Day #1 Returning Praise - Lost in wonder, love and grace.

“Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honour and power and might, Be to our God forever and ever. Amen.” (Rev 7:12)

Questions

1. Can you picture this scene – a numberless multitude from all nations standing before the throne and the Lamb with white robes, holding palm branches and crying out their praises? What stands out to you in this picture?

2. Where are you in this crowd? What are you doing? What does the music sound like? Are you conscious of it? Are you observing or participating?

3. Are you worried about anything there? What effect does praise have on your problems?

Thought for the Day

The crescendo of affirmation and proclamation that concludes the Lord's Prayer, rises to flood our souls with hope that goes beyond the force of mere words. This doxology adds to the claim of kingdom authority, all power and splendour— eternally. The poet, Browning, relaxes this exalted expression without losing its impact when he writes, “God's in heaven – All's right with the world.” “Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven” (Psa. 119:89). Adoration takes us into that holy place where life's situations melt before His all consuming presence.

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Day #2 Returning Praise - A Matter of Wisdom

And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. (Luke 17:15,16)

Questions

1. Why was there only one foreigner who returned to give glory to God?

2. Is the proverb fulfilled here that “familiarity breeds contempt”?

3. What have you seen today, that causes you to run to Jesus, fall at His feet and give Him glory?

Thought for the Day

“Were there not ten cleansed?” is Jesus’ question to the foreigner who was healed. Of course, we would have been the one to return thanks for such a spectacular healing. Or would we credit the physician’s prescriptions and care for the disease in “remission”? Do we allow natural phenomena and man-made means to obscure the glory of our God?

Open our eyes to behold the wonders and miracles that surround us daily and may we be wise and grateful creatures who fall at Your feet in awe and amazement at Your wonderful works. Soften our hearts to sing Your praise.

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Day #3 Returning Praise – A Matter of the Heart

***I can of Myself do nothing (John 5:3) ...for without Me you can do nothing. (John 15:5b)
...feed me with the food allotted to me; Lest I be full and deny You, And say, "Who is the Lord?"(Proverbs 30:8b,9a)***

Questions

1. Count your blessings. At what things in your life have you been successful?

2. Have you praised God as much since the accomplishment of these things as you prayed for them to happen?

3. How would you assess your dependency on God in times of trouble and prosperity? Is there a difference? Why?

Thought for the Day

Success in life reveals the heart. The scripture tells us that a man is tested by the praise accorded to him. There is nothing like success to cause us to assume the glory for the fruit or output of our labour. The succulent fruit of success quenches our thirst for God and we turn away from our source, and take the credit for what He has given us the ability to do. We must guard our hearts against the pull of pride to take the glory for ourselves. It is He who gives the power to get wealth (Deut 8:18). Therefore, all our success or talent is from God who wants us to bear much fruit. He is glorified in this (John 15:8). Let us not be unwise but let us return and give thanks.

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Day #4 Returning Praise – A Matter of Relationship

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. (Romans 12:14,15,18)

Questions

1. Can you think of someone who persecutes you or who has done so in the past? Why not bless this one now?

2. What will you do if God answers your prayer and pours out His blessing on them?

3. Do you want a relationship with this person? Do you desire reconciliation?

Thought for the Day

It is often easier to weep with those who weep than it is to rejoice with those who rejoice – especially if you were the one who was overlooked in their success. Not only does our success test our hearts to see if we will return thanks to God (Day #3), but the success of other people tests it too, especially if we think they are undeserving of honour. Returning praise to God for the success of others is the acid test of our trust in God. God is in control. His is the kingdom and He can rule it as He wills. All his judgements are righteous and just. Can we acknowledge His authority and power, and then give Him glory in the light of others' success, even at our expense?

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Day # 5 Returning Praise – A Matter of Perspective

Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen. (Eph 3: 20,21).

All Your works shall praise You, O Lord, And Your saints shall bless You. They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom, And talk of Your power, To make known to the sons of men Your mighty acts, And the glorious majesty of Your kingdom. Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Your dominion endures throughout all generations. (Psalm 145:10-13)

Questions

1. For your problems and concerns, what would the “immeasurably more” than all you could ask or imagine look like? Could you begin to believe for this to take place in one area of your life?
2. Is your conversation salted with praise, blessing, speaking of His glory, majesty, might and enduring dominion? Could you intentionally insert these into your conversation today?
3. Does it make a difference to see your concerns from the perspective of His overwhelming ability as expressed in the scriptures above?

Thought for the Day

In Mary Poppins, Burt, the chimney sweep, kindly counters Michael's gloomy view of the sooty chimney, with “There now, you see how wrong you can be? That's what I call a gateway to enchantment.” It's a matter of perspective. If we were to end our daily prayers by declaring the omnipotence of the sovereign God as expressed in the final words of the Lord's Prayer, our troubled lives and the turbulent current of world be altered. Would this expression of faith in the Faithful One release the hoped-for request? A.B. Simpson said of God: “He stands between us and all the mighty barred doors of material force, natural law, human purpose and even divine judgement! With His hands of love He turns aside every bolt and bar that stands between us and the fullest blessing He can give our trusting and obedient hearts.” What a perspective from which to begin and end our prayers!

Prayer Requests

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Day #6 Returning Praise – A Matter of Grace

And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as one dead. (Rev. 1:17)

Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. "The Lord is my portion", says my soul, "Therefore, I hope in Him!" (Lamentations 3:22-24)

And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as one dead. (Rev. 1:17)

Questions

1. Can you recount your initial revelation of the Father? What effect did this have on you? How was it similar to or different from John's encounter?
2. What are the outstanding sins that you feel God is judging the world for at this present time? How are you guilty for these?
3. How can you mediate on behalf of mankind for the desperate state of the world?

Thought for the Day

I once did an exercise where I was asked to list the sins I hated most. This was followed by a list of my sins. When asked if they were the same, I hung my head to realize that I did not hate my sin but the sin of others. Over the years I have come to weep for the sins of the world for I realize that their sins are mine too. Salvation can either make us smug or we can identify with the sins of others and say, "There, but for the grace of God, go I." Jack Hayford has put it this way, "Those who understand His grace, even a little, praise Him a lot."

My sin, O the bliss of this glorious thought; My sin, not in part but the whole, is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more. Praise the Lord, Praise the Lord, O my soul.

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Day #7 Returning Praise - Amen

For all the promises of God in Him are yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us. (1Cor. 1:20)

He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus! (Rev 22:20)

Questions

1. What hinders the answers to our prayers?

2. Can you recognize any of these working in your situation?

3. Is the word "Amen" an after-thought, or does it have significance for you when you pray?

Thought for the Day

When God says it, it is done. The matter is finished. His promises met by His conditions guarantee the requested answer. The "Amen" at the end of a prayer does not mean it is time for someone else to start to pray. It is the seal of faith on all that has been hoped for. It is the agreement that the spoken words will come to pass. It is the confident resignation to His will as we believe we have prayed in accordance with it. The hymn writer captured this understanding when he encouraged us to, "Let the Amen, sound from His people again...". A.B. Simpson has described the impact of this little word, "Amen" as "faith ascending to the throne, humbly claiming and commanding in the name of Jesus that for which humility has petitioned." And to this we add our "Amen".