

SERMON: MATTHEW 6:9-13 and LUKE 11:2-4**WITH CONFIDENCE AND PRAISE !**

*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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from evil. **For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.*** (COMMON WORDING OF THE LORD'S PRAYER.)

Which is more appealing to say? "Mom, I'm hungry. I need something to eat!" vs. "Mom, will you make me something to eat, please?" Or "Dad, I need \$20.00!" vs. "Dad, would you give me \$20.00, please?" If you say the first one is easiest to say, that's because the second one involves asking. It's hard to "ask," isn't it? It's an issue of "pride." Telling someone what you need and then seeing them do it makes a person feel a lot more important than having to ask. One time I was driving around Eisenach, Germany, trying to find a particular "Luther site" and not doing so well—but not quite at the point of "asking." A "Stadtpolizei" (city police) figured out what was going on, stopped in front of me, and asked me what I was trying to find. He was very kind and didn't make me feel helpless, though I was a little embarrassed anyway. "Asking" is a blow to the pride. OR sometimes a person doesn't want to ask, because of fear—fear of being told, No. Rather than hear your parents say "No" when you want to buy a cell phone, it's easier just to go buy one. Rather than having a certain girl say, No; it's easier for a boy not to ask her on a date.

In the Lord's Prayer we do not approach our Father with aloof pride or with fearful hesitancy—"I'm praying because I'm supposed to. I doubt that He'll answer." Quite opposite. We pray boldly and confidently as dear children to their dear Father. Today, as we look at the end of the prayer, we see it all the more clearly. The prayer doesn't end hesitantly with "I hope it's kind-of-sort-of OK, Father." OR "I think You maybe-probably-might answer my prayer, God." We close with a strong *For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen!* We end the prayer with great praise to God. We're not one bit concerned about our own greatness. Not one bit concerned about our prayer being denied. We close in certainty and confidence, Amen!

These words are not labeled The 8th "Petition." They are not a "Request." Sometimes these words are called The Conclusion of the Lord's Prayer. The word "conclusion" is easy to understand—the final part. Sometimes these closing words are called The Doxology. The word "doxology" is not familiar to our ears. A doxology is a sentence, a statement, of "PRAISE." "Doxos" in Greek means "praise." Hymn 644 is called The Common Doxology. "Praise God from Whom all blessings flow! Praise Him, all creatures here below! Praise Him above, ye heavenly host [the angel "host," the "multitudes" of angels]. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!" There are various verses of praise to God in the hymnal. This is the most common.

In the Doxology, as in the previous parts of the prayer, we do not look to ourselves—as if, "How worthy we are, how much we've done for God, how much we serve Him, how much we've got it right, how much we have things headed the right direction for Him." In the Doxology, we look to Him, not to ourselves. "Father, all these requests that we have brought to You are requests pertinent to Your Kingdom of forgiveness and eternal life in Jesus. We don't demand You to answer them on the basis that we in our little circles and our little kingdoms on earth are so right-on in Your eyes and so able to get ourselves to heaven. We are but grass—here one day, gone the next—one little blade missing or not, no big deal." *All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades because the spirit of the Lord blows upon it. Surely the people is [are] grass. The grass withers, the flower fades: but the word of our God shall stand for ever (Isaiah 40:6-8).* God's Kingdom in Jesus is what our lives are all about.

We can live in this world ever so carefree and ever so secure, yet ever so lost. Without Christ, after this life there's only damnation. Outer darkness and fires of hell await. Jesus says, *It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched—where 'Their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.'* (Mark 9:43-45). Imagine having a finger forcibly held over a flame that never goes out. Tremendous pain! However, eventually the finger will burn off and, theoretically, heal. But what if the finger never burned off and fire continued to scorch it forever? Now imagine the whole body! You don't want to go there. But in Jesus we have God's Kingdom of salvation, now by faith and after the Judgment

forever in heaven. Heaven -- *No tears, death, sorrow, crying, or pain* (Revelation 21:4)! Unworthy sinners that we are, here is comfort! In Jesus' death and resurrection you have forgiveness. God's Kingdom in Jesus is your great blessing. This is the great Kingdom about which we pray—to our benefit! "Father, it is Your Kingdom." We ask Him for everything. We demand nothing; we have no "standing"; without Jesus we are "gone-ers."

We bring this prayer for His Kingdom to our Father in all boldness. Jesus Himself taught us this prayer. These are His thoughts and words, not ours. We pray this prayer "in Jesus' name." But are those words "in Jesus' name" in the prayer? No. Yet that truth is certainly in the prayer. We address God as Father. Paul says, *You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus* (Galatians 3:26). We could not even call Him Father if we were not coming in Jesus' Name. In Jesus' name--it's like being pulled over by the sheriff for speeding, but then having a letter in your pocket from the Superintendent of the South Dakota Highway Patrol authorizing you to get to Pierre as soon as possible. In the name of the Superintendent, you are free to proceed. In the name of Jesus crucified and risen for you, you are the Father's dear child and a member of His Kingdom, your guilt washed away.

Not only is it His "Kingdom" for which, and about which, we pray, but we also pray recognizing humbly His "Power." His Power makes everything possible. He holds the power by which He made heaven and earth—out of nothing! He holds the power by which He created life--beyond our comprehension! He holds the power to set aside His unchanging, immutable justice and, for the sake of His Son's sacrifice of atonement, to pardon us from our trespasses! He holds the power to raise the dead from the grave—putting dust and ashes back together! He holds the power to demolish this world at the End! He holds the power to confine Satan and all rebels to the pangs of Hell! Thus, we close this prayer in all confidence, relying on His power. Our power can accomplish nothing.

His Kingdom and His Power are all to His Glory, not ours. *Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake* (Psalm 115:1). Do you remember the time Moses took God's glory for himself instead of giving it to the Lord? The Children of Israel were again without water in the wilderness journeying from Egypt to Canaan. In a similar situation earlier, the Lord had commanded Moses to strike a certain rock with his staff. He did, and water gushed out. This time God told Moses to speak to a certain rock, and water would rush out. Moses, however, impatient with the grumbling people, acted as if he were god. *And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock; and he said to them, "Hear now, you rebels! [addressing them harshly and without love]. Must we bring water for you out of this rock?"* [We??] *Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank. Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them" (Numbers 20:10-12).* Because Moses took the glory for himself, God was not pleased, and Moses could not enter the Promised Land of Canaan. Moses died on Mt. Nebo. At the close of the Lord's Prayer, we give the Glory to God! His greatness has done everything for us. All your life long, give the glory to Him! Forget about "We're Number One!" Who wants to be banished from the Promised Land of Heaven?

We are not embarrassed to bring these petitions to our Father, nor afraid to hear His answer. We need His help, forgiveness, and love at all times. Whatever the Father grants is always for the best—our best—for our forgiveness in Jesus and eternal life in heaven. He will never answer to your harm.

This powerful Doxology ends with a marvelous "shout" of confidence. "Amen! " The word "amen" comes from the Hebrew word "ah-mun." "Ah-mun" means "to support, or make firm." *Jeremiah 7:23, "Obey My voice, and do according to all that I command you; so shall you be My people, and I will be your God, that I may establish the oath which I have sworn to your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as it is this day."* --- *And [Jeremiah] answered and said, "Ah-mane! So be it, LORD"* Likewise in the Four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—Jesus regularly says (in the KJV translation), "Verily, verily, I say unto you." The newer English translates, "Truly, truly." The actual words of Jesus are "Amen, amen! I say to you." He says, "Listen closely. This is true!" Therefore, we end the Lord's Prayer with "Amen! So be it! The truth!" "Father, Your care for us is best!"

In the Small Catechism, Martin Luther explained it this way: "For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen. *What does this mean?* That I should be certain that these petitions are acceptable to our Father and are heard by Him. For He Himself has commanded us so to pray and promised that He will hear us. Amen! Amen! That is, yea, yea—yes, yes--so shall it be!"

So be it! Amen!

Pastor Kanzenbach---