



November 13, 2016  
Pastor Megan Hackman  
Chapel Hill Presbyterian Church

*Lord, Teach Us to Pray: For Thine is the Kingdom, the Power,  
and the Glory, Forever and ever, Amen*

Matthew 6:9; I Chronicles 29

It's been a bit of a weighty week, yes? Even my friends who posted pictures of their babies online this week offered them as a break from election coverage. And honestly, the media world has turned ugly. I'm uncomfortable with the tone of so many posts from both sides.

I know we're not sure how to navigate this as a community. We ourselves are divided with some of us content or even happy with Mr. Donald Trump as President-Elect, others of us are not just disappointed but even fearful with the result.

It has been such a gift to me this week that we have been in the Lord's Prayer. The day of the election, I struggled to find words to say out loud or to pray. Larry helped remind me that what I needed to pray was, "For thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever, amen." Isn't that amazing when something you're memorizing or something you're watching seems to be exactly what you need in a given moment? All this time spent in the Lord's Prayer meant that when I was speechless, a quick prompt from Larry was all I needed to sincerely and deeply pray the Lord's Prayer.

I hope you are finding that our study in the Lord's Prayer has shaped you that way. I hope you're finding the words of the Lord's Prayer come more quickly and satisfy your need for words to pray more often. (In the last few weeks, if you've slid away from prayer—let me invite you to come back to this daily practice. Get the prayer journal online, if you don't already have one, and join us in praying these last two weeks.)

If you're in your prayer journals, flip-flop the weeks and turn today to page 69 ("For thine is the kingdom...") We're switching these last two petitions because we needed to respond to the election, and this petition gives us the words to pray. It is timely for us as people of God and as a nation. I hope it will resonate with you as it did with me. So come back next week, and Pastor Mark will address "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Let's pray that the Lord will speak to us today.

Turn in your Bibles to Matthew 6:9. Let's read this altogether as a prayer:

Pray then like this:

"Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name.  
Your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our debts,  
as we also have forgiven our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.

Whoops! Our last line isn't there! Neither Matthew nor Luke record Jesus teaching us to pray with this last line. So where did it come from? The early church added this line. They would pray Matthew 6 here as a regular prayer in their personal devotions and services—just like we say the Apostle's Creed. Ending with "deliver us from evil" felt incomplete. So they incorporated one of their prayer traditions.

The earliest followers of Jesus were Jews. And Jews had a tradition when praying that you didn't close a prayer without blessing the name of God. It's a tradition we know was deeply a part of the Jewish faith by the time of King David. David was a musician and a poet from even his pre-king days, and he wrote most of the Psalms. Even David's darkest Psalms take a turn at the end and say things like, "Why are you cast down, O my soul... Hope in God for I shall again praise him" (Psalm 42). You could say it was unthinkable to end a prayer to God without blessing his name.

Most of our Bibles don't have this petition in Matthew 6 because most of our translations look to the earliest collection of manuscripts in the original Greek which don't have it there. But by the end of the second century, newer copies of the Gospels contain it because the church added the phrase in their daily repeating of Matthew 6. So it came from that tradition, and if you have a Bible like the King James translated from later manuscripts, you might have this petition in your Bible.

Let me just pause to say you can let the Bible undergo serious, scholarly scrutiny about its translation and texts, and the Bible's authenticity will stand up to it. So don't be afraid to ask about how the Bible came to be in your hands.

So what does this petition mean? Let's look at it one word at a time. We pray "For thine is the kingdom"—materially the whole world belongs to God who is the sovereign ruler over all; "thine is the power"—God sees all, knows all can do all; and "thine is the glory"—all the admiration, beauty, reputation belongs to God; "forever and ever"—before time began, in our history, and into our future; "amen"—it is and let it be so, I agree. This prayer means we recognize that God is over all, that he always has been and always will be.

It's a prayer King David introduced. Turn with me to 1 Chronicles 29. It's been a while since we've been in the Old Testament together, so let me remind us where we are here. Chronicles records the history of the Israelite people when they lived

in Jerusalem and had kings. Saul was the first king, then David. Here, in 1 Chronicles 29, David is turning over his throne to his son, Solomon. This is a time of prosperity for Israel. They have a really strong relationship with God who as a whole people they are totally devoted to. They've won just about every battle they've gone into. They're incredibly rich as a nation. Everything King David has wanted, he's gotten... except one thing.

David had a lifelong dream to build a temple for God. It's not something God asked for. God asked the people back in Exodus to build him a tent where his presence could dwell. This tent was portable because the people were traveling through the desert, and God was going with them. Now they've settled in the city of Jerusalem, and David wants God to settle into a house there in the city. But God won't let David fulfill this dream of his. He says his son Solomon can. So right here in 1 Chronicles 29, we see David throwing a lot of the country's resources and all his personal wealth at the future dream of seeing this temple built—a legacy he knows he won't live to see.

This prayer is prayed when David is an old man and handing over his legacy to the next generation. They're standing looking at the pile of their wealth handed over to God and they say: "Then the people rejoiced because they had given willingly, for with a whole heart they had offered freely to the Lord. David the king also rejoiced greatly." They were giddy over giving so much of their wealth to build a house for God!

Then David prays this blessing to God, beginning in verse 10:

*"Therefore David blessed the Lord in the presence of all the assembly. And David said: "Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of Israel our father, forever and ever. Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name."*

David's blessing is about what is God's. Look at what David says belongs to God:

- Greatness
- Power
- Glory
- Victory
- Majesty
- Everything in heaven and earth
- The Kingdom

Do you know that these words could easily describe King David's legacy? Greatness, power, glory, victory. Remember the song people sang when David was younger? Saul had slain his thousands but David his tens of thousands? Majesty—his wealth

and his palace were incredible. Do you remember from last week how much a talent was? (20 years' wages). David had 3,000 talents of gold in his personal treasury—60,000 years' worth of wages just in gold. His is certainly this kingdom. He had a lot to boast about... a lot he could have called his own. He had a lot to pass down to future generations. He had accomplished much. He had fought and won many wars. He had reason for personal pride and personal security.

But what does he do in his prayer? He attributes all his legacy to God. By praying this prayer in front of all the people, he says that he's not really the one in charge. God is. God was over everything before David was king, and He will be after. David doesn't have the power. He isn't rich. This isn't his kingdom—it's all God's! And everything he could be proud of he says came from God! "Both riches and honor come from you! You rule over all! In your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all!" This is a prayer of humility, a prayer of perspective... the prayer of a man devoted to God. And a prayer that teaches his son, Solomon—who could look at these piles of gold, at his inheritance, and think, I've just inherited a lot of power and quite the reputation—instead to say, "This wealth isn't mine. I am not in charge."

Let's keep reading, verse 14: *"But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you. For we are strangers before you and sojourners, as all our fathers were. Our days on the earth are like a shadow and there is no abiding."*

I've noticed that age can lead to this kind of perspective. My grandma is still going strong; thanks be to God. She is a first generation American from Czech immigrants, but she never visited the family homestead. She lived all her life in Baltimore until my grandfather died. When my mom took her back this summer, she only had two loved ones left to visit. She lives in Memphis near my parents where she is befuddled by southern women. When I went to visit her last, she was eager for me to have jewelry. Granted, she's not a woman of much sentimentality. In the last decade she's lived giving everything away—acting as if there's nothing to cling to here. She's become acquaintances with a neighbor where she is living that they call "the Colonel." (Some veterans, as I'm sure you can personally attest to, are still "The Colonel" no matter how long they have been retired.) It's an endearing nickname that speaks both respect and a bit of humor of the ingrained personality that often comes with the military. He spends a lot of time telling stories—heroic stories—of the past. His legacy is grounded in those years, and the stories come with an air of wistfulness.

When we pray "For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever, Amen" we take the posture of the elderly—the one with perspective and humility, the one who's in touch with the fact that none of their stuff is going with them. We pray like the immigrant who recognizes that this place is not their home; we pray like the elderly Colonel who recognizes that the authority to make decisions is no

longer his. Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever. God's over all, and though our days are like shadows, God is forever.

When we pray this as a community, we assume the posture of a heavenly reality. It's as if we take stock of all that we have—David prayed this looking at all his gold. Just picture with me if we piled all that we have as a community here on the church property—all our homes, all our cars, all our diplomas, all our bank accounts, everything we can give to the next generation to inherit—imagine we pile it all up. Then picture giving all of that to the next generation along with all your hopes and dreams. David gave the dream of the house for God and a peaceful kingdom. Many of us have the dream of a thriving nation, a good economy, a beautiful Pacific Northwest. Can you see it? Then we pray, "Blessed are you, our Father. All integrity, honesty, beauty, and wealth are yours. Everything in the Puget Sound and everything in heaven is yours! You've raised yourself high over all. All our homes and careers and bank accounts come from you. Your rule is higher and with greater authority than our government. You hold influence and power in your hand. And here we are, O God, our God, giving thanks to you, praising your splendid name." If we pray this like David's community did, it isn't with grief... it isn't begrudgingly. How are they described? As rejoicing!

Why should we pray this? Can you hear it? This prayer ushers our heart into heaven's perspective. It surrenders our grasp on what we have and what we want. It transforms our heart. The Lord's Prayer reminds us, calls us, to surrender every concern we have about the future—the future of our country, the future of our kids, the future of our businesses and our influence.

The ESV Study Bible notes says this of David's prayer, "They depend entirely on God for their security and well-being, and even in the Promised Land they are strangers and aliens before God (verse 15.)" When we pray this prayer, we declare boldly that we depend entirely on God for our security and well-being, and even in the good, free land of America we are strangers and aliens before God. We declare publicly that ours is a higher citizenship—a citizenship in heaven, a citizenship we share with everyone who calls upon the name of Jesus.

Wherever you land with this election, don't be afraid and don't be proud! God could not be contained in a temple in Jerusalem, and he cannot be isolated to leading in our capitol building. Our Father is not merely the God of the United States of America. He rules over all. He has not abandoned his throne, and he has not abandoned his promise to dwell with us: "surely I am with you always to the very end of the age."

Whose man/woman are you? Who do you represent on social media? This week I see, with our collective American response to the election, that we need this last line of the Lord's Prayer more than ever. We are acting and speaking as if President Trump is the new king on the throne. And how we are acting and speaking is determined by whether or not we voted to give (or not give) the "kingdom" to

President-Elect Trump. We react differently depending on whether we trust Mr. Trump to hold in his hands our riches and our honor... but whose riches are they really? God's. And in whose hands is the power over everything we mentally piled up here—your 401k, your house, your career, your healthcare? God's. Who wields the power over our nation? God. Who holds your vision for the future? God. And not just God—an out-there, don't know what he's doing God—it's our Father. Our Father, who art in heaven. Our Father, the Bread of Life. Our Father, who loves you.

So are you willing to pray this prayer? Will you pray it like a dying man, giving all his treasure away—not attached to his home or country, willing to “wink” at his former titles and prayerfully, trepidaciously—handing over his legacy not to the next generation but to God himself? Whether you are 32 or 93, this is the prayer of the believer in the Lord, the King Jesus: For **thine** is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever, Amen!

Are you willing to surrender to a God who calls you son and who reminds you that all that you have is from him and belongs to him? Will you follow this God? If you will, join me in the Lord's Prayer:

*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 evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever, Amen.*