

The Lord's Prayer: The Kingdom, the Power and the Glory

There are so many lessons to learn from the life of King David.

He especially understood worship.

His greatest failure was followed by an incident that is often overlooked.

You'll know the story: adultery, murder, and the prophet Nathan reveals his sin.

David repents, God forgives, but there is still judgment.

2 Samuel 12:14

However, because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also who is born to you shall surely die.

So God strikes the child and it becomes sick, and David goes into fasting - for an entire week.

With the hope that God will spare the child.

On the seventh day, the child died.

What was David's response?

He washed, anointed himself, changed his clothes, went into the house of God, and worshiped.

Worship is what the final part of the Lord's Prayer is about.

Matthew 6:9-13

In this manner, therefore, pray: 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 forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

This is the sixth message in this series on the Lord's Prayer, and it's entitled The Kingdom, the Power and the Glory.

What Is Worship?

A farmer had to go to the big city, and while he was there, he attended a large church.

When he got back, his wife asked him how church was.

He said, "It was really good, but they don't sing hymns. They sing worship choruses."

She said, "What's the difference?"

He said, "The best way for me to explain is like this: if I said to you, 'Mabel, the cows are in the corn,' that would be a hymn."

"But if I said to you, 'Mabel, Mabel, Mabel, O beautiful Mabel, sweet, sweet Mabel, the cows, the cows, the black cows, the brown cows, the black and white cows, the cows are in the corn. The cows, the cows, the cows are in the corn, in the corn, in the corn,' then that would be a worship chorus."

No doubt there are some weird and wonderful ideas on what worship is.

But one thing is for sure: we are designed to worship.

And if not God, it will be something else.

Money, sex, power, a celebrity, statues: you will worship something.

The Lord's Prayer begins and ends in worship.

In my view, this is the most deeply profound part of this prayer, because it is so powerfully anchored in the nature of God Himself.

So what is worship?

Eugene Peterson says it well: Worship is an act that develops feelings for God, not a feeling for God that is expressed in an act of worship.

That definition fits in perfectly with King David's act of worship.

No doubt he was filled with grief, disappointment, self-recriminations because of his child's death.

But he chose to worship.

Because worship is not based on our emotions, but the character of God.

So worship first, feelings will eventually follow.

So based on the final part of what Jesus taught in the Lord's Prayer – for Yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory – I want to give you four concepts that Jesus mentions in relation to the character of God.

1. The Kingdom

The kingdom belongs to God.

Yours is the kingdom.

This is all about rulership.

This is His world, His universe.

Psalm 24:1

The earth is the LORD'S, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein.

You don't own your house, you car, or even your clothes.

You don't even own your own body.

And because God is the ultimate ruler, that means that even though this world is in rebellion against His rulership, ultimately He will achieve His own purposes.

Romans 5:6

For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

"In due time" means at the right time.

In other words, there was a perfect time for Christ to come to this world.

God made sure that what needed to get done got done so that the gospel would have the best chance of reaching the most people.

Here's what got done in preparation for the gospel.

Over 300 years BC a man we know as Alexander the Great conquered the Mediterranean world.

He loved the Greek language and made sure that it was taught everywhere he conquered.

So by the time of Christ, virtually everyone spoke Greek; it was the common language of the Roman Empire.

Very helpful for the spread of the gospel.

From 27BC to 180AD, over 200 years of Pax Romana – the Roman Peace.

This was a time of relative peace and stability and the height of the Roman Empire - up to 70 million people.

This meant great conditions in which missionaries could travel.

By the time Jesus was born, there was the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament.

So Christ died at the right time.

Evil men ruled their kingdoms, but there was a common language, the Scriptures available in that common language, the largest extent of the Roman Empire, and relatively safe travel.

So whatever seems to be happening in your life right now, don't worry, God is still in charge.

And for that, we should worship Him.

2. The Power

Yours is the kingdom and the power.

God is all-powerful.

And if God wants to bring judgment, He will.

Absolutely nothing can stop him.

Think of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

God decided to judge them for their evil.

And nothing could stop Him from destroying the two cities.

You can't set up a missile program against God.

And if God wants to intervene in the affairs of this world, He will.

Think of King Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 20.

The people of Judah surrounded by a great multitude.

The Moabites, the Ammonites and the inhabitants of Mount Seir.

How did Jehoshaphat feel about that? Afraid.

So they fasted, sought God, sang to the Lord (probably the last thing they felt like doing) and worshipped.

And God, the all-powerful One, stepped in.

When the army went out, led by the choir, the enemy had pretty much destroyed each other.

God is a powerful God.

Sometimes God's power is expressed through His holy angels.

As in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

That took just two angels.

When they came to arrest Jesus, Jesus said that the He could pray and the Father would send over twelve legions of angels.

One Roman legion was 6,000, so that's over 72,000 angels.

If two angels could destroy two cities, what could over 72,000 angels do?

Listen to this.

Revelation 5:11

Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,

10,000 times 10,000 is 100 million.

That's a lot of angels, and a lot of power.

All proceeding from Almighty God.

That's the power at work in us.

Ephesians 3:20

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,

And for that great power we should worship Him.

3. The Glory

Revelation 5:11-14

Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honour and glory and blessing!" And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: "Blessing and honour and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!" Then the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.

Wow! What a scene!

All of heaven giving glory to Almighty God.

Here are some words associated with glory:

Praise, worship, honour, distinction, adoration, splendour, thanksgiving, admiration, greatness.

All of these belong to the Father. Why?

We go back to the beginning of the prayer.

Hallowed, or holy, is Your name.

Remember that God's holiness is all about His perfection.

Everything about God is perfect.

His love, His goodness, His faithfulness, His grace, His kindness, His justice, His mercy, His truth – everything.

That's why He deserves all glory.

Even for the things that we do.

Years ago I saw a movie, and a guy was an itinerant, wandering round from place to place.

He came to a farm where he offered to do work in return for food and shelter.

At the end of the first day, the three women who owned the farm were delighted, and started praising God.

The guy said, "Hey, God didn't do all this. I did."

I kind of understand where he's coming from.

But I've come to realise something: if I do something good, it's God that deserves the glory, not me.

Why?

Anything that I do that's good, I use the body He gave me to do it.

I use the talent, the intelligence and the energy He gave me.

I eat the food that He created, live on the land that He created, breathe the air that He made, and drink the water that He made.

The only thing that I bring to the table is a willingness to do what He wants – that's it!

For that, He deserves the glory, all of it.

4. Forever

When God created the world, He created a world that was inextricably bound up in time.

He created days, months, years, and seasons.

We talk about dates and lifespans - all related to time.

In this world, space and time are inseparable.

We measure speed in km/hr – space and time.

In school, I learned that $v^2 = u^2 + 2as$ – where “a” stands for the rate of acceleration, “s” is the distance travelled, “u” is the initial velocity and “v” is the final velocity.

How do they work these things out?

Because time and space are so closely related.

If I walk from one room to another room, it takes time to cover that space.

But time is a created entity.

2 Timothy 1:9

who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,

Because I am a creature bound by space and time, I can't get my head around the fact that there was time when time didn't exist.

Even saying that sounds weird.

But God created time, and when He finishes this universe, then comes forever, eternity, when time has no meaning.

2 Peter 3:12

looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?

That's a description of the whole universe going up in one massive nuclear explosion.

The old will disappear, and God will bring in the new heavens and the new earth.

For those who are followers of Christ, that means an eternity in the presence of God.

We will see His face.

We will live forever in perfect love - God's love.

No more sin, no more sickness, no more death, no more old age, no more wars, no more violence, no more hatred, no more suffering, no more sadness.

All that will be gone – forever.

And God will usher in a new age of perfect love, joy, peace, harmony, and goodness.

And for that, God deserves our worship.