

# The School of Prayer - Part 4

by Walter Beuttler

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*Walter Beuttler emphasizes the importance of understanding God's presence and the principles of effective prayer in the context of the Disciples' Prayer.*

**Scripture:** Isaiah 55:2, Matthew 6:9, Matthew 6:33, Philippians 4:6, Colossians 3:13

**Topics:** "Effective Prayer", "Reverent Worship"

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## Description

Walter Beuttler emphasizes the importance of reverent worship and acknowledging God's sovereignty in prayer, starting with recognizing the oneness of God's family and approaching Him with reverence. He delves into the significance of seeking God's kingdom and will in our lives daily, making restitution and forgiving others as part of effective prayer. Beuttler highlights the need for worship to precede petition in prayer, illustrating how worship opens the heart of God and enhances the effectiveness of our prayers.

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## Transcript

Now I want to see what I can do with you this morning. I'll have to give you some fragments that I pick up and try to do it in a reasonable order to try to be helpful. You will recall we were last on Matthew 6:6, "And thy Father which is in secret."

Some years ago the Lord made tremendously real to me the passage in Jeremiah 23:24, "Do not I fill heaven and earth." You have no idea what that has meant to me. The Lord gave it to me specifically for travel, but it applies of course, in any situation. I have no problem whatever to recognize the Presence of God irrespective of whether I feel it or not. I know He is there. So when you go to the closet, to the secret place to pray, you don't have to worry about not feeling His Presence. What you do is, "Father, I thank You for Your Presence." Feeling has nothing to do with it. It says that He is in secret, He sees in secret, so acknowledge what the scripture says. Then proceed on that basis irrespective of how you feel.

"Which seeth in secret." That is the Father's observation. Sometime if you're in distress, you can go to Exodus 3 where God says, "I have seen their affliction. I heard their cries. I know their sorrows," a marvelous picture of the awareness which God has of our needs. So when you go alone, don't wait for the feeling. Acknowledge what is written, that's the fact, and then build your prayers upon that.

"Shall reward thee openly." Now that is the Father's disposition. The Father, as a Father, has a Father's heart and He's kindly disposed to respond to our request. But do remember, "but seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness" that I gave you yesterday? There are firsts here. As we comply with the

laws of His kingdom, and respect His sovereignty over our lives, then we can come in confidence, because under those circumstances the Father is kindly disposed to respond to our needs.

Said the sparrow to the robin, I would really like to know

Why those anxious human beings rush about and worry so.

Said the robin to the sparrow, friend, I think that it must be

That they have no heavenly Father such as cares for you and me.

Jesus referring to the sparrow said, "Are ye not much better than they?" So bring yourself into alignment with the laws that govern His kingdom, subject yourself in obedience to do His will because He's sovereign, and all these things shall be added unto you.

Now I would like to touch a bit on what we call, I think mistakenly, "The Lord's Prayer." I think it is unfortunate that this prayer, which the Lord gave, has ever become known as The Lord's Prayer for the simple reason that it's not the Lord's Prayer at all. It's the prayer, which Jesus gave to His disciples, to the sons of God, as a medium of expression what they should feel. This is really not the Lord's Prayer. It is the "Disciples' Prayer."

You have the prayer of the hypocrite. You have the prayer of the heathen. In between you have the disciples' prayer, "After this manner pray ye" and "But when ye pray." This is the prayer of the sons of God. It's not the Lord's Prayer. Now I'm not going to change it because that's unchangeable, but it isn't really strictly correct.

The fact is, the Lord couldn't pray this prayer. He could not pray and forgive us our trespasses. He had none to forgive. It's the Lord's Prayer only in the sense that He gave it to us. In reality, it's the disciples' prayer, or better still, the son's prayer, the prayer of the sons of God.

You recognize that the Lord was a man of prayer. We read, for instance, that Jesus rose early a great while before day and went out into a desert place apart to pray. I may differ here somewhat with the psychologist, but I can't help that. I believe, and I think I see it in scripture, that there is something to the morning hour in approaching God that is different and likely to be better than any other time.

God sent His prophets early. You read the biographies or even autobiographies of men and women in the history of the church who have left a mark, whose ministry and fruitfulness continues after their departure, they were invariably men and women who met their God early in the morning. While the psychology says that some people are made up differently, they do better at midnight than they do at 6:00, (and I don't question that, not at all), but still I think there is something to the morning hours the other hours do not have.

Be that as it may, I used to be the kind of a fellow, late to bed and late to rise. I could be up until 12:00, 1:00, 2:00 o'clock, but don't you bother me in the morning. I wanted to sleep until the sun was up in the sky. Do you know the Lord dealt with me about that? The Lord dealt with me about getting up early to meet Him before the cares of the day press upon the mind or fill the mind, before the body and mind and the spirit is weary from the day, while our faculties normally are at their best. They are the freshest. I think we'd all agree with that.

The Lord wanted me to be an early getter-upper and I struggled so hard to get up early and couldn't do it. At night you couldn't get me to bed. In the morning you couldn't get me up. So the Lord dealt with me on this.

I had been seeking the Lord every Wednesday night. I was going to work as a draftsman in New York City. I made patent drawings for the US Government. Every Wednesday night I had set aside for the Lord arbitrarily. We had Tuesday night Bible study in Brother Swift's church. We had Thursday night prayer meeting. There were the Sunday services and Saturday night street meeting. Wednesday night was free and Wednesday night I set aside for the Lord in fasting and prayer and nobody could move me.

That was my night with the Lord. That was the Lord's evening and I held to that.

During that time the Lord dealt with me about getting up. Well, I needed help. I tried the alarm clock and it would go off, and you know, I'd turn over, shut it off and go back to sleep, and that was it.

So I said to the Lord, "Lord, the alarm clock doesn't work, so I'm going to ask You to wake me up tomorrow morning at 6:00 o'clock." Now to me, 6:00 o'clock was early. Today, it's late when I'm at home especially. When I'm in meetings, I don't do it as much because I don't go to sleep after a meeting. Last night it was 1:00 o'clock and I still was wide awake. But at home, especially in school, when you have a routine and you live by the clock, it's much easier. At school my day usually starts about 4:30-5:00 o'clock. I'm up and about my knitting and so forth.

So I said, "Lord, tomorrow morning please wake me at 6:00 o'clock." That was early! Well, I was awakened by a blue jay. Now a blue jay doesn't sing. What does it do? He makes a racket. Can those fellows make a noise! A blue jay was screaming or racketing away on a tree outside my window, and the scamp woke me up. I went around my room looking for something to throw at the beast. I had a piece of soap in my hand, but it was too new to be throwing away. I was going to throw it to try to stop that aak, aak, aak. In the process I looked at my clock. It was 6:00 o'clock. The Lord sent a blue jay to wake me up. You can think of that what you like. I'm just telling you what happened. Well, I couldn't get at him, but I went back to bed and had another snooze. Oh yea!

That night I apologized to the Lord. I said, "Lord, I'm so sorry. Please forgive me. Tomorrow morning awaken me at 6:00 o'clock." Now I lived in a rooming house with a very old couple, the quietest people you'd ever want to live with. You never heard them. And yet those people woke me up arguing. They woke me up with a red-hot argument right outside my door, and did they give it to each other. They woke me up and I got my Dutchman up and said, I'm going to quit here. This is no way to treat a roomer. Here they are waking me up and I've paid my good money for their rent, and they don't give me a chance to sleep, those inconsiderate so and so." I looked at my clock-6:00 o'clock. The Lord used their argument outside my door to answer my prayer. Now don't start an argument and say, "It must be the Lord." (Laughter) I do not mean it that way at all. Well, I went back to sleep. O yea!

That night I apologized to the Lord, "Forgive me, Lord. Please wake me up at 6:00 o'clock." Now you can believe this or not. I say many things that are hard to believe, but they are true. Not everybody believed the Lord either, did they? I was awakened by an automobile crash-a big bang. I jumped out of the bed to look. Now I couldn't see the cars, but I heard the crash just around the corner, and in front of the house there were the wooden spokes from the wheels. This was in 1926. They still had wooden spokes. The wooden spokes of the wheels were lying in the street in front of the house. I heard the smash over there though. I didn't see it, but heard it. I looked at my clock, 6:00 o'clock. Oh brother, it's too early. I went back

to bed and went to sleep. (Laughter)

That night I said, "Lord, I am ashamed. I'm not going to ask You to wake me up. It hasn't worked." He worked, but I didn't cooperate. I said, "Lord, I'm asking You to make me get up at 6:00 o'clock. Make me get up." That was a challenge. I woke up at 6 o'clock with such a terrific stomachache that I made a beeline for the bathroom. By the time I came back, I was awake, (Laughter) and stayed awake. The spell was broken. Since then I have been an early riser, but I get to bed on time. I have to.

I'm very, very careful not to linger at night. I go out and hold meetings and come back from church around 10:00 o'clock, "Now Brother Beuttler, would you like some apple pie and..."

"No thank you. I'm going to go right upstairs," I answer.

"Oh come on. Let's have a little fellowship." Well, I can't afford it. I can't afford it. This is a very, very disciplined life, believe you me, folkses. Walking with the Lord in this area demands tremendous self-discipline. I almost live by a schedule. I have to watch certain things. People do not always understand. That is the price you have to pay.

Now then, before I use more time, I would like to give you a few principles from The Lord's Prayer. Now this Lord's Prayer, as we call it is a most remarkable bit of literature.

First of all, let's notice something. Have you noticed that in the Lord's Prayer, the personal pronoun is always in the plural, never in the singular: "Give us our daily bread," "Deliver us from evil." Us this and us that. How come? There's a principle there. In true prayer there is no room for selfishness. You see this prayer is chuck full of principles. Those of you that have my notes on The Lord's Prayer can see it for yourself. I'm using them here, but I'm only calling out some things. There are principles here.

To me, The Lord's Prayer has a two-fold purpose. It is given to us as a medium of expressing what we ought to feel. I pray The Lord's Prayer many times, not in an ecclesiastical way. (In a singsong voice he prays) "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name...Amen." Sometimes I pray only fragments because of their tremendous implication.

More than that, we have here the embodiment of principles of prayer, principles that govern all kinds of prayer by all kinds of people for whatever need. So you have here the plural personal pronoun indicating that there is no room for selfishness in true prayer. It's not a case of, "Oh Lord, bless me, Huntz, Fritz, Rosemary, us four, no more. In Jesus Name, Amen. Bye, bye." No, this prayer includes others.

Also, there is a place for forgiveness, "And forgive us as we forgive others." In other words, in effective prayer, there is no room for an unforgiving spirit. If we want prayers to be effectual, we cannot afford to harbor malice, anger an unforgiving spirit and the like against our brothers and sisters. We must forgive first before we can expect to be heard.

I used to work in New York and there was a brother with me. He was German and one day we had a red-hot German argument. Both of us blew our tops at each other. I won't take time for the reasons. As either providence, or bad luck or good luck would have it, somehow we landed next to each other at the altar in the church that night. He was here, I was there and during the day, we really gave it to each other. Whew! Neither one of us could pray, so we grunted you know, the Pentecostal fashion, "Hallelu, Hallelu, umh, umh, glory, Hallelu, amen, amen, Hallelu."

The Lord dealt with me, "You get this thing straightened out with him." I tapped him on the shoulder. I said, "Brother, would you mind coming downstairs? I'd like to talk to you."

He said, "Oh, all right," grudgingly.

So we went down. apologized and asked his forgiveness. He had reason to do the same with me. I think more so. (Laughter) If I explained it to you, you'd agree, but why take this precious time.

He said, "Oh well, I'll forgive you, but I want to tell you it will never be the same again between you and me." It wasn't either, but I did my part. But when I went back to the altar, heaven was open. My, I could pray. Him? "Hallelu, umh, glory, Jesus, Jesus." Then he packed up and went home. There is no room for an unforgiving spirit.

Now let's look at this prayer. As I told you I was sitting up with the Lord by night and that's how He unfolded the thing to me. I hadn't read it, hadn't heard it, but that's how it came to me.

"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in 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, and the power, and the glory, for ever." Matthew 6:9-13

I'll tell you what we have here. This prayer has four different scenes, pictures, or panoramas. There is a domestic scene, there is a royal scene, there is an earthly scene, and there is a triumphant scene, four sections, four scenes in this prayer. I'll touch on some of them.

The first one, the domestic scene: "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name." That's the domestic scene. Here is a reference to the family, to the Father and to His residence. Our - that's the family. Our Father - that of course is the Father. Which art in heaven - that's His residence. There is truth in this. The Lord's Prayer begins with His family - our. Effective prayer necessitates the recognition that we, as God's people, belong to the same family irrespective of our denominational dog tag and ecclesiastical fences. God has only one family.

In heaven there are no Assemblies of God people. In heaven there are no Elimites. (Laughter-someone said glory) Glory's right! In heaven there are no Four Square or Three Square, no Presbyterian, no Anglicans, no German, no Frenchman, no North nor South. You probably recognize that today, by His Spirit, God is in the process of breaking down these foolish differentiations that separate God's people and keep them from fellowship with each other.

There is one family. All who are born again by the Spirit through faith in Jesus Christ, all who are truly saved are God's family, past, present and future. That family ought to be in harmony and fellowship regardless of the particular denominational group or non-denominational group they belong. The Lord's Prayer begins with the oneness of the family of God. In heaven there are no Elimites, A/G or anything else. Thank God those things will all be behind. They'll be only one family. I hope you understand me right. "Our Father." Now the Father whom I address is also the Father of all His other children, so here what we have is the recognition of the oneness of the family of God, and the recognition that God is the Father of us all.

In Germany a lady was greatly confused by this denominationalism. She wanted to be in the right group and prayed that the Lord would show her which denomination was the right denomination. She had a

dream. In the dream she was going to a far off place. She had to take a ship and went down to the harbor and saw all kinds of ships: the Baptist ship, the Methodist ship, the Pentecostal ship, and other ships.

People were arguing with each other on the ships, "I'm getting off this ship. I think that's the right ship." Over there they were getting off that one and went to another one in great confusion. She stood there perplexed wondering which was the right ship. Then she saw another one painted white and its name was Christ. Then she knew it was not a question of belonging to any one particular group. It was a question of being found in Christ. That is the truth.

"Our Father which art in heaven." Do you notice the prayer does not begin with a shopping list? It begins with the oneness of the family. I want to be at one with all of God's people whatever denominational tag they wear. I don't care. If they belong to the Lord, we be brethren, and the other things simply does not matter. It should not affect our relationship at all. There is only one body, one church, one faith, one God and Father of us all. So here we have this recognition and this relationship to God as our heavenly Father.

"Our Father which art in heaven." The implication here is reverence. You see, which art in heaven. The thought is reverence. When we approach the heavenly Father there should be a reverential approach in our prayers. Now we can be ever so familiar with God in one sense, but not this cheap buddy, buddy type of a thing. He's our Father, which is in heaven. We need to approach Him with reverence.

"Hallowed be thy name" - worship, reverential worship. Have you ever tried worship before you prayed? Do you notice the order here? The prayer does not begin with "Give us this day our daily bread

." Oh no! Worship takes precedence over petition.

You girls, before you show the Lord your knee coming through the stocking, and you fellows, before you show the Lord the holes in your shoes, don't right away hit Him over the head with the stocking or the shoe and say, "Hey God, You..." No, do a little worshipping. "Father, I thank You for what You are." Do you know worship does wonders. It opens up the heart of God far wider.

I came home from a trip from South America and didn't bring anything to my girls. I forgot why, either didn't have it or had no opportunity to buy it or something. Anyhow, I came home and said to my little girl, Norma, who was always very affectionate and so appreciative of everything, "Norma, I'm so sorry I didn't bring you anything this time."

She climbed up on my lap, put her little arm around my neck and said, "Daddy, that all right. You know you are the best present you could have brought home because you're the best Daddy I ever had." Well, I knew that! (Laughter) She wasn't telling me anything. But when she said that, Whew! I could have gone to Wanamaker's in Philadelphia and bought the store out and put it on her lap, if you know what I mean.

Try worship. I don't mean flattery now, no, no, no, no - not using worship as a means of prying something out of God like a wife will say to her husband, "You know, you're a good husband." He knowing her would say, "Well, what do you want, a new hat?" Not that kind of a thing, but sincere worship.

Folks, it works wonders. Worship takes precedence over petition. It comes in this model prayer before the shopping list. Try to observe this order, not mechanically, but observe its principles of priority.

I was attending a fairly large young people's rally, and the leader called me up from the audience and asked me to lead in prayer, which I did. I don't remember the exact manner, but I'm giving you the picture,

and I started out something like, "Father, we want to thank You for Your goodness and Your wonderful works to the children of men," and I went on praising the Lord a little bit for what He is.

Then I switched into the prayer requests. I went back to my seat and the preacher got up and in a rather cynical way said, "Heh, Heh, When you pray, you don't have to give to God a three-year course in systematic theology telling Him what He is. He knows what He is. Ha ha ha ha ha." That was a shot at me. That was a missile.

He sort of ridiculed me, but I thought, "Preacher, I wasn't giving God a three-year course in systematic theology. I knew God knew better who He is." But I'll tell you something, "God loves to hear when we acknowledge His attributes, acknowledge who He is. He loves to hear from our voices what we think of Him." It is an excellent prelude to petition.

"Hallowed be thy name." Aren't we told in Philippians to bring our requests before Him with thanksgiving? What are you going to thanksgiving for? What thanksgiving? Oh, you give thanks for what He is. You give thanks for His goodness in the past. You mix it all up with true worship and it puts power effectiveness in your prayers. Worship takes precedence over prayer. When we worship, prayers need not be nearly as long, nor are they likely to be as long. Somehow you can present your prayers in a condensed form with much greater effectiveness. Worship takes precedence over petition.

Then the second scene: "Thy kingdom come." Oh, I pray this many times. "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." This is the royal scene. We have here a reference to the king, to His kingdom and to His subjects. We are the subjects. Thy is a reference to the king. Kingdom is the sphere of His rule, and Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is within you."

As far as I am concerned, this is not merely a reference to the rule of God over the whole earth though I think that is included, but it is not included to the exclusion of the kingdom of God within us. When we say, "Thy kingdom come," we are saying in effect, "I recognize Your sovereignty over my life." Thy kingdom come in me. "Lord, extend Your rule in my life, exercise Your sovereignty in my life and Your purpose for my life."

"Thy kingdom come." Thy kingdom come in my girls. Establish Your complete reign in their lives. Bring every faculty into subjection to Your government. Thy kingdom come. Oh! This has terrific implications: "Thy kingdom come in me, Thy kingdom come in my body, Thy kingdom come in my spirit, Thy kingdom come in my life. Bring me under complete subjection to Your sovereignty that all of Your purpose be fulfilled in my life." Now I think there is a connotation here about the Millennium, God's rule over the whole world, but not to the exclusion of us. This is a personal prayer. "Thy kingdom come."

I had a struggle while I was here, and before already, about next summer. I had been asked in Indonesia to visit the island, the Celebes and what used to be Borneo. I just didn't want to. They're so far out. The time would be the worst weather of the year. I've tried that once before.

We left on a flight from Macauser, the Celebes. We only had a DC3, a stripped down version. When we took off, the left engine coughed and coughed and sputtered and coughed, but they kept going and took off with this coughing engine, which I didn't like. We were gone for, I don't know, an hour and a half or so over very high mountains, very high.

Lo and behold! The other engine coughed, stalled and stopped. Now we just had the one engine left that coughed on takeoff, and I didn't like it one bit. The pilot turned around right away and headed for home, but we only had one engine. Those Indonesians all rushed over to the one side because everybody wanted to see what was happening there. I wondered how the pilot kept the thing even.

My first question was, "Will this thing get over those high mountains on one engine?" It did. The DC3 was some plane in its day, but they were old creatures now. Finally the airport came into view. Will he be able to land on one engine without turning over? This is Garuda Airways, and Garuda doesn't have a good reputation. I don't like to take Garuda when I don't have to. They're not trained too well. They don't keep their equipment the way they should.

We arrived all right, but when we arrived, the thing went on fire. We had a reception committee of ambulances, fire engines, what have you. As we stopped, the thing started to flame. It could have happened out there.

Remembering this, I had no particular taste for going out to these far off islands. Only yesterday on the way back from Rochester on the 3:00 o'clock bus did I agree with the Lord that I would go out to the islands. There are other factors involved. "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven," in other words, completely.

Now the third scene: "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." Now lead us not into temptation, but deliver us I understand should read, from the evil one. This is the earthly scene with its daily needs, the material needs, its spiritual conflicts. Only now is there prayer offered for our personal needs. First, thy kingdom come. But seek ye first the kingdom of God. So, give us this day our daily bread-prayer for the material necessities of life.

I don't think this word bread should be limited in connotation to what we call bread. Isaiah said, "Wherefore do you spend money for that which is not bread." He doesn't mean literally bread merely. Bread here stands, I think, in general for the material necessities of life and should not be limited to (what shall we say?) Wonder Bread. You know there is a Wonder Bread? That Wonder Bread is really wonder bread. The wonder is that anybody eats it! Rubber bread. I don't know why people eat it, I wouldn't; not even if I were...never mind.

"Give us this day." You know what I see here? You might not agree with me, but I agree with myself! Is it my fault if I'm right and everybody else is wrong? (Laughter) "Give us this day," this day. Do you know what I think? I don't blame you if you don't follow me. I think this prayer was meant to be a daily prayer by God's children. When you understand it you can readily see why this could be so. It says, "Give us this day." Well then tomorrow you have to pray again, "Give us this day," and the next day, "Give us this day."

When you understand this prayer, it is a marvelous medium of expression with words into which you can put anything whatsoever that you want. "Give us this day our daily bread." I don't think you pray that at 10:00 o'clock at night. I think you'd pray that in the morning, and I'm inclined to think this was a daily morning prayer helping God's children to express themselves to Him in the proper manner.

"And forgive us our debts (or sins) as we forgive our debtors, or those who have trespassed against us. There needs to be a forgiving spirit, and this often involves even restitution. The spirit of this prayer necessitates making restitution because we cannot be right with people, or be right, let's say, with the

school unless restitution is made.

Sometimes school has students that not only cheat, but steal. I think any school, sooner or later, has a thief among them, as they have other characters. There comes a time when such a person will have to make right what is wrong. That doesn't have to be merely money. It could be other things where we need to make restitution in a sense.

Say for instance: A girl has a boyfriend in school. Now I don't know how you folk get along here. I haven't observed, I haven't watched, I haven't seen, but I suppose there are attractions here. It would be unusual if there weren't. (Laughter) All right, a girl gets a letter from her boy. Now I don't know if that's permissible or not. They get it whether it's permissible or not. They get them anyway.

All right, here's a letter here. A girl has a letter from her boyfriend. The class bell rings, she puts it back in the envelope, puts it on her table and goes to class. The roommate comes in and sees the letter. (Demonstrates opening and reading with astonishment) Whew! (Laughter) The girl comes back from class and roommate quickly puts letter back unnoticed. She asks, "What have you been doing?"

The roommate says, "Oh, I've been reading The Lord's Prayer. It's a wonderful prayer, isn't it?"

"Sure is, I guess I better be going. I have to go to class."

There comes a time when you're seeking the Lord and you pray The Lord's Prayer, Our Father, and that thing stands before you disturbing your prayers. You may say, "Oh, that's the devil disturbing my prayers. I rebuke this Satan in the Name of Jesus." When you keep still, there is that letter. I guarantee to you, if you want to move on with God, you'll have to say, "Mate, I'll have to have a talk with you."

"Oh, yea."

"You know the letter you had lying on your table?"

"Yes."

"While you were in class, I read it. I want you to forgive me."

Now what she'll say, I don't know. Oh yes! Or that dollar we snatched out of a roommate's pocket while he was in class or some place. "Oh, I am only borrowing it." But somehow it never goes back, and even if it does go back, sooner or later, as you move on with God, you'll have to straighten that out with your roommate.

"Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our trespasses." We'll have to close. I have to break it off, more fragments. What shall we say? "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven."

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