

(God-Centered Praying) 9. to God Be the Glory

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of giving God all the glory in our lives, recognizing His sovereignty and power, and avoiding seeking personal gain in the name of God.

Scripture: Genesis 15:6, Psalm 62:11, Isaiah 42:8, Matthew 7:22, Matthew 25:31, Acts 17:26, Philippians 3:13, 1 Timothy 6:5, Revelation 1:8

Topics: "Prayer Life", "Gods Glory"

Description

Zac Poonen preaches on the Lord's Prayer, emphasizing the importance of beginning and ending our prayers with a focus on God's kingdom, power, and glory. He highlights the significance of acknowledging God as the Alpha and Omega, the center and circumference of our lives, and the One we live and move in. Poonen draws parallels between the final statements of the prayer and the temptations Jesus faced in the wilderness, emphasizing the need for humility, servanthood, and giving all glory to God alone.

Transcript

"For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen."

This prayer begins with God, "Hallowed be Thy Name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done", and it ends with God, "Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory."

God has said in His Word, "I am the Alpha and the Omega," (Rev. 1:8). God must be the very first thought and the very last thought in the life of every disciple of Jesus. God must be the centre as well as the circumference of our lives. We live and move in Him, within the circle that He has drawn for us. And within that circle we will always find Him (Acts 17:26,27).

The three final statements at the close of this prayer can be compared with the three final temptations that came to our Lord in the wilderness.

The Kingdom is God's

First of all, the statement, "Thine is the kingdom."

Compare that with the third temptation, where the devil showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world, and said "Bow down to me and take them." But Jesus said, "No. The kingdom belongs to the Father. He alone is King." And so Jesus refused to take the kingdom from Satan's hands.

That's why Jesus never wanted to be a king in the days of His flesh. When people tried to make Him a king He ran away (Jn. 6:15). He lived as a servant of all men.

This teaches us that we shouldn't seek to be kings over others either. The man who longs to be a leader, or to be known as a Christian leader, who wants to be exalted above his fellow believers in some way, is unfit to pray, "Father, Thou alone art worthy to be King." In God's church, God alone is to be the King. We are to be servants, not kings.

The Power is God's

The next statement is, "Thine is the power." Power belongs to God (Psa. 62:11). He gives us power as a temporary loan to use for His glory; but it belongs to Him. God doesn't give us power to use for our own selfish ends.

Compare this with the first temptation. The devil said to the Lord, "You've got power to turn stones into bread, and to satisfy your hunger. Use it now." Jesus said "No. All power belongs to the Father. And I won't use it until HE tells me to."

Many believers are unfaithful here. When God gives them a spiritual gift they begin to use it for their own selfish purposes.

Whatever gift you may have - spiritual or natural - whether it be the gift of prophecy or of healing, or of music, remember that power belongs to God. He never gives us a gift of power for us to exalt ourselves.

If we use God's gifts selfishly for our own personal ends, we'll end up like the moneychangers in the temple whom Jesus had to drive out. What were they doing there? They were making money for themselves in the name of religion. They were saying, "We are serving God" but they were actually serving themselves.

There are people like that today - making a name for themselves, making money for themselves and their family members, in the Name of Jesus Christ - using His Name for their selfish ends.

It is a great evil, to do something in the Name of Jesus Christ and to get some gain out of it for ourselves - whether that be money, fame, honour, position, comfort or whatever. Godliness must never become a means of gain for us (1 Tim. 6:5). Even today, God's prophets in the church need to drive out the moneychangers from God's Temple.

The Glory is God's

Thirdly, "Thine is the glory."

After we have prayed this spiritual prayer sincerely, and after we have attained to this spiritual life and after we have accomplished a wonderful ministry for the Lord, at the end of it all, we can only say, "We are unworthy slaves; we have done only that which we ought to have done." (Lk. 17:10).

And we mean what we say. We're not saying words in false humility. like those who may say, "God has helped me," but who deep down in their hearts, take the credit to themselves.

Compare this statement with the second temptation that Jesus faced in the wilderness. Satan tempted Him to jump from a high pinnacle of the Temple, claiming God's protection, and thus to arrive unhurt at the

bottom so that He could receive honour and acclaim from the people as their Messiah. But Jesus said, "No. All the glory must go to the Father alone."

God is a jealous God and He will not share His glory with us (Isa. 42:8). There will be nothing in heaven, in all eternity, for which any man gets the glory. All the glory will be God's.

And the man who has got the spirit of heaven in his heart, will have that attitude now. He will seek to be in the background, to be unseen and unknown, so that people's attention may be drawn to God and not to him or to his work. Thus all the glory will be God's alone.

Such a man will have no consciousness of what he has done for God, or of what he is spiritually. He has nothing that he has not received and so he cannot boast in anything (1 Cor. 4:7). He says with Paul, "May it never be that I should boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal. 6:14).

"Forgetting what lies behind" said Paul in Philippians 3:13. What was it that lay behind Paul? A victorious life and a mighty ministry for the Lord. He put all of that out of his mind because he gave all the glory to God for his life and his ministry.

Jesus spoke of two groups of people who would stand before Him in the day of judgment.

One group will say, "Lord, we have prophesied, cast out devils and done wonderful works in Your Name." They are so conscious of all that they have done for the Lord. And the Lord says to them, "Depart from me you who practice lawlessness." (Mt. 7:22,23).

To the other group, the Lord will say, "You fed Me when I was hungry, you clothed Me when I was naked, you visited Me when I was sick and in prison." But they have no consciousness of having done these things! Their reply is, "Lord, when did we do all that? We don't remember doing those things." Isn't that wonderful? And the Lord says, "You are blessed. You are fit to inherit my kingdom." (Mt. 25:31-40).

The righteous do good and forget about having done it! The unrighteous however, keep a mental record of all the good that they have done.

Are we conscious of all the good that we have done for the Lord and for others. Then we are in the wrong group!

For All Eternity

And then the prayer goes on to say, "Forever" - not for a few years, but for all eternity.

This is what we will be doing throughout eternity - praising God and giving Him the glory that is due unto His Name. And this is a wonderful way for all our prayers to end - giving all the praise and honour and glory to God so that no credit accrues to us to all.

We should always seek to turn the attention of people away from ourselves to God. At all times, we should aim to be hidden and in the background. Then God can accomplish so much more of His purposes - for us, in us and through us.

It Shall Be So

The final word is "Amen."

We don't want to leave out a single word of this wonderful prayer and certainly not the final `Amen.'

What does `Amen' mean? This has unfortunately become one of those idle words that Christians have accumulated in their religious vocabulary.

But have you ever thought what you mean every time you say `Amen'?

Amen means, "It shall be so." It's the Hebrew word for `believe' used in Genesis 15:6 where it says, "Abraham believed God." God told Abram, when he had no children, that he was going to have seed as great in number as the stars in the sky. And to that impossible thing - Abram said "Amen. It shall be so Lord, because You have said it."

That's what `Amen' means. It is an affirmation of faith.

In other words, we end our prayer saying, "Father, I believe that all that I have asked for WILL be granted. Your name WILL be hallowed on earth as it is in heaven. Your kingdom WILL come on earth as it is in heaven. Your Will WILL be done on earth as it is in heaven. You WILL give us our daily bread. You WILL forgive us our sins. You WILL enable us to forgive others as You've forgiven us. You WILL NOT lead us into temptation that is too strong for us. You WILL deliver us from evil. The kingdom, the power and the glory WILL be Yours alone, forever. It shall be so, Father. I believe it with all my heart."

Amen and Amen!!

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