

# The Lord's Prayer

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[ 0 : 00 ] Yes, I have a lot of material here, so I want to, thanks Alexandra, I want to jump right in and just go. The Lord's Prayer, as announced, is, you'll agree, at the heart of the Christian faith.

That's a safe thing to say for sure. And I always have the feeling, I'm sure you do, that I have the intuition at least, that more is always to be learned about this astonishing set of words that we say in the liturgy and use in our private devotions.

It's easy enough to know, for sure, but even its surface is deep, and its depths are probably beyond our reckoning.

We hardly know what we're looking at, in a sense, when we look at such words. So, to saturate the mind in such words, or to at least to begin that sort of thing, to continue to do that sort of thing, is to enter into a new thought world, really, it's been called.

A world of new possibilities opens up for us when we attend to the Lord's Prayer. A world of transformation. So, time spent here, as we begin another term at Learners' Exchange, I'm sure, is time well spent.

[ 1 : 27 ] Just a bit of background about this prayer may help. This part of this little talk, especially, if this doesn't help you, we'll just tune out as it starts.

It's the kind of thing that doesn't appeal to some people. I find it kind of interesting. We might wonder, that is to say, about how it came about. Speculate about how this prayer came about.

How it was, that is to say, how it was used at its beginnings. Here follows, therefore, some inspired guesswork, largely based on Tom Wright.

From memory, I've been reading Wright for so long, I hardly know where, and he's produced so much stuff, you hardly know where to go, and you're looking for stuff in Tom.

But from memory, but this outline, I'm sure, is his. He's given a lot of thought to the Lord's Prayer. Certainly, it's background issues about it, as he thinks may very well be there and somewhat accessible to us.

[ 2 : 30 ] We may think of Jesus, of course, this is not controversial, this is not speculation. Jesus traveling about Palestine, going about from town to village and sometimes to larger centers.

Scholars don't really know how often Jesus may have got to larger centers. There's a place like, a place like Sepphoris, just north of Nazareth.

He certainly went to Jerusalem on occasion. We know he taught, of course, we know he taught. We know he said, the kingdom is at hand. This is, the synoptics present this as a kind of summarizing statement about the ministry of Jesus and what he taught.

The kingdom is at hand. Or, and this is pure Tom Wright, as I read Tom Wright, those of you who are Wright scholars will tell me if I'm misrepresenting him here.

Or, the kingdom is at hand again. Or, the God of Israel is now going to fulfill his promises to Abraham. Through you, I will bless the nations.

- [ 3 : 39 ] The God of Israel had promised Abraham and the people of Israel. Israel will be, as the prophets would unfold, that kind of thing, a light to the nations.
- Israel's expectations, given by God, received, if you will, in different registers by Israel, all of this is about to come to some kind of crisis, some kind of fruition, says Jesus of Nazareth, as read by Tom Wright.
- The kingdom is at hand. All of God's promises to Israel are about to reach their fulfillment. When Jesus leaves town, if you will, as he goes from village to village, town to town, when Jesus leaves town, what does he leave behind, Mr. Wright asks himself, as I recall from memory.
- Mr. Wright thinks he leaves behind more or less two things. He leaves behind what we would now call sympathizers, folks who heard and showed interest or belief or a desire for more, as they listened to the young rabbi from Nazareth with his astonishing assertion that the kingdom, his announcement, the kingdom is at hand.
- And with them, this young rabbi from Nazareth would leave with them his prayer, his signature announcement.
- [ 5 : 11 ] He would leave them a prayer highlighting his message. The kingdom is at hand. He'd teach them to pray, thy kingdom come. Let's see.
- The kingdom is near. So pray, as you wait for its arrival, as I announce it, thy kingdom come. Who knows? That may be, may have been a function of, it may have been a function for this prayer.
- Taught to disciples, passed on to sympathizers. As one scholar says, it has the feel, this prayer, of a movement formation prayer.
- A community could be formed around this prayer. So there may be something to Mr. Wright's feeling, speculation, about how this prayer was used in the ministry of Jesus.
- But we must move on to the prayer itself. That's much more important. But first, a last word about this Lord's Prayer, again, in the Palestinian ministry of the Lord.
- [ 6 : 20 ] You see how it does nothing less than give us a vision, I would think, of the whole New Testament story and message.
- When you hear this Tom Wright speculation, he always has an agenda, Tom, doesn't he? Sympathizers here spread throughout Israel.
- Hear, later on, that the rabbi who taught them this prayer had been killed. Another fake Messiah, alas, exposed, they would have thought.
- Yeah. Then, then, a message further reaches them. Unexpected and beyond all thought. Out of a small community in Jerusalem, there is a story beginning to race like fire here and there.
- The story is that the young rabbi had been raised from the dead. And there are people witnessing to that fact. Or, you see, and this is pure Tom Wright as he reads the story of Israel and our Lord.
- [ 7 : 32 ] Israel in her Messiah has been raised, you see. Israel has fulfilled, has been brought into her perfect obedience. And now the Gentiles will come to the light.
- Yes. The Lord's, and so the church, you see, is born with this message. A church awaiting, of course, finally the Lord's return in glory.
- A church which obeys this expectation by praying, well, why not? The Lord's prayer. What else would it pray? Thy kingdom come, you see.
- It fits both dispensations, this prayer. It's a bridge between the Lord in Palestine and his church waiting for his returning glory.

His first coming and his second coming are bridged by the Lord's prayer. And most splendidly, as the New Testament ends, how does it end?

[ 8 : 43 ] Well, with words like, the Spirit and the Bride say, Come, Lord Jesus. Thy kingdom come.

Come, Lord Jesus. Yes. There it is. This prayer may be seen as, again, at the very center of the ministry of Jesus and at the very center of the church's life, because it bridges, again, both dispensations.

He brought the kingdom to Israel, and now Israel in her Messiah brings the kingdom message to the world. Thy kingdom come. You cannot know this prayer too well.

It means so much. Enough background, for sure, for now. Let's look at the prayer itself, the more important thing to do, I'm sure.

And how else to begin, but let us begin with a word of prayer, if I may. Lord, we thank you that you are a teacher and a Lord.

[ 9 : 47 ] And today we would attend to your teaching, to the prayer you have given to us. And may we bring honor to your name by the way we engage it in our lives. This we pray in the one who has announced and brought us the kingdom, even Jesus Christ.

Amen. Amen. The introduction concluded. Our Father. Up here, this is almost an...

There's a Luke Lord's Prayer recorded there, and there's a Matthew Lord's Prayer, much longer. So for reasons of space, if nothing else, I've sort of put the outline of the Luke Lord's Prayer in front of us.

The Lord probably taught the Lord's Prayer, as we call it, in various forms, in various ways. So there probably could be ten versions of it remembered by the Gospel rememberers who put together the New Testament and the Gospel specifically.

We have two versions of it. Our Father in heaven, hallowed be thy name. The prayer begins.

[ 10 : 55 ] Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. The obvious thing here to note right off the bat, this is emphasized by Oliver O'Donovan, a gentleman whose scholarship I'm leaning on quite a bit today as I talk about the Lord's Prayer with you.

This is a practical prayer. Very practical. Belief itself is active when you pray. That's an obvious thing to note, but it's worth noting the obvious.

Belief is active when you pray. So when we pray the Lord's Prayer, we're acting the faith. We're realizing it. Prayer is not an anxious thing, but it is urgent that we pray.

The Lord doesn't suggest we pray. He says, when you pray. It is a prayer, as we'll see later on, for this day. Today you must live your day.

Jesus tells you in prayer how to live this day. That being the case, it is urgent that we call upon, according to Jesus, our Father set apart in heaven, and that we hallow his name.

[ 12 : 14 ] Our Father begins this prayer. In Luke, it begins just Father. More urgent, if you will.

Father. Or we call upon our Father to hallow his name. The Old Testament. The Old Testament has an emphasis in it, especially clearly in Ezekiel 36.

Last year we spent so much time in Ezekiel. I am about to act, says Israel's God, for the sake of my holy name. God acts to hallow his name in the world.

So he calls upon us to participate in that by saying, hallowed be your name. It's almost like we can say, God is going to hallow his name in the world.

We better believe that. The world is in for a shock, in a sense, when it finds out that it's going to be called upon someday to hallow the Father of Jesus.

[ 13 : 20 ] The Father is in heaven, the Lord says. Father in heaven. His name is hallowed, this one in heaven. We, on the other hand, are in the world.

And God our Father is, in the words of a German theologian, the mystery of the world.

I find that very helpful. Do you ever think of God as the mystery of the world? Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

You are the mystery of the world. It's where Jesus starts his prayer. The world, the creation, comes from God and has its meaning and its fulfillment in God.

How else would you begin the fundamental prayer of your life than by saying, our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

[ 14 : 28 ] The words just speak for themselves. As I worked away at this little talk, I just kept saying, I can't say anything about it. It burns up, commentary. Our Father in heaven.

That realm which is here near us. It is never far away. The Father in heaven. Hallowed be your name.

In my experience, and I think this is the state of the church in our time, this belief, a belief like there's a Father in heaven whose name should be hallowed always.

God, in other words, as the mystery in which we live and move and have our being, if not cultivated, will fade and grow unreal. I don't know if that's how it is with you.

It easily just moves out of one's consciousness. The world that we live in and the culture that we live in is no longer seen as a kind of, you call it a sacrament of God's presence, a witness to God's presence, a sign of God.

[ 15 : 38 ] But in our culture, our world is seen profoundly as a mechanism. Isn't it? Not saying anything new there. We're taught indirectly and directly all the time to see the world as a mechanism.

That's our culture. The world investigated as mechanism is the remarkable, not to say astonishing story, after all, of science and technology.

Every time you, every time I take an aspirin, for instance, you are treating the world, in this case, the world which is your body, as a kind of mechanism.

Why not? It works a certain way. The world works. It responds to certain kinds of inquiry and action in a predictable way.

We have been taught. We live in a world which is seen as a mechanism. Where is there room for a father in heaven whose name is to be hallowed, a God who is the mystery of the world in a world which sees itself as mechanism?

[ 16 : 53 ] A very big, big question. And maybe the biggest question of the modern world, at least that one level, is simply how to think about ourselves and this, I would call it this mechanism mystique.

May we really pray in our world in Vancouver in the year now, what is it, 2016? May we pray really our father in heaven, hallowed be your name, with any kind of real integrity?

Is this kind of a romanticism, some sort of tradition from the past that we just hold on to? Or is this really the central confession about reality itself?

Is our God, a crucial word here, is our God in heaven really intelligible for us as modern people?

May we really say that the God we believe in is the mystery of the world. God, our father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

[ 18 : 07 ] The Lord teaches us all to pray. The answer is, and this is sort of a thought experiment in some sense, but it's something I believe in completely. I bet you do too, one way or another.

The answer is, if you're going to ask a very big, big question, you've got to give a big, big answer, don't you? The answer is, in a very real sense, given as we again cultivate something like the Lord's Prayer.

The Lord's Prayer answers a lot of big questions, I would think. This prayer obviously as, if you will, symbolic of our faith in its totality. I think it's good as a symbol of our faith in its totality.

To pray this prayer, you see, to pray this prayer is to accept faith as a way of knowing.

Do you believe that faith is a way of knowing? Well, if you're a Christian, you do, even if you didn't know it. Faith is a way of knowing.

[ 19 : 12 ] We do not prove faith as a way of knowing. All knowing, all knowing really, is knowing in faith. To establish knowledge, to establish knowing as independent of trust, is the real center of the enlightenment project that we're all living in, which project may very well be in the early stages of its own dissolution.

Enlightenment project would deny that faith is a way of knowing. We believe as Christians, I think as taught by our Lord, that faith indeed is a way of knowing.

So Jesus, the object of our faith, says today, every day, decide something. You are a self.

You are given into the world. Here are the inescapable facts of existence. You are a self, given into the world.

Time runs on. Call upon your Father, says Jesus, in heaven. Hallow, set apart his name.

[ 20 : 30 ] All people have a basic stance in the world. And here, this basic stance speaks to us as understood and to be understood by a disciple of Jesus Christ and as taught by him.

There's a mouthful, but I think the Lord's prayer is a worldview. It's a whole new way of understanding reality. Enlightenment doesn't believe in it anymore.

Our culture largely doesn't. But Jesus of Nazareth says, here's how to understand the world. Call upon the Father. He is in heaven.

Hallow his name. He is the Lord of all things. So Jesus, there he is. He teaches us to pray this prayer all the time.

Father in heaven. In Matthew, by the way, it is, of course, our Father. And again, as mentioned earlier, in Luke, the prayer more abruptly begins simply with Father.

[ 21 : 40 ] Father. Both, I take it, are very good and they instruct, I would think. Every I, each of us is an I, aren't we?

Every one of us is an individual. Every I is formed within a we. This I've learned directly from Oliver O'Donovan, this kind of language about this kind of issue.

Every I is formed within a we. The we, of course, is much. You were born into a family, hopefully, or some guardian who took care of you.

You were born into a culture. You were born into a language. We were born into all sorts of given facts about the world when we showed up here.

We didn't, I don't recall choosing where I was going to show up in this world. Many givens shape an I. So we pray both as we, you see, and as I.

[ 22 : 44 ] Our Father or just Father. Father has a more direct, individual feel, doesn't it? My Father. But Matthew, perhaps more liturgically minded, says our Father.

Father. It's the church praying. Eyes formed by the we. And by the way, the same holds, I would take it, I would think, for saying the creed. Sometimes this comes up.

Have you ever been asked by people, how should we say the creed? Is it I believe or is it we believe? But both make sense, you see, on this model, which I find very helpful.

Every I is formed within a we. Every we is formed by the I's within it. If you like technical language, sometimes it's fun, if nothing else.

I am an I, but I am an ecclesial I. My life is, I am me, but I am me in the church.

[ 23 : 45 ] The body which Christ called together has formed and says that's who you are. You are no one if you're not in my holy church.

You can't just be an individual Christian. It's an impossibility. Jesus came to form a body, his church. That's our identity. We're eyes, but we have an ecclesial identity, an identity in the body of Christ.

Then the prayer continues, and it continues perhaps, I think, a bit surprisingly. Our Father in heaven is acknowledged, and we call upon him, and as we hallow his name.

What next? It's funny. It's interesting that we ask next for the transformation of the world, really, don't we? Thy kingdom come.

Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Or if you will, this one that we call upon and hallow his name, the hidden mystery of the world, as I love to call it, is to become apparently the openly revealed mystery of the world.

[ 25 : 03 ] He is our Father in heaven. Hallowed be your name. What are you doing in heaven? Come down and take control of where I am. We ask him to do that.

In that sense, it's a political prayer. Thy kingdom come. Lord, come into the world. Take over here, to put it bluntly.

The way we're running the world isn't working. Is it? It just isn't. Come, Lord Jesus.

We ask him to arrive, openly arrive. Oh, mystery of the world, hidden, invisible. Make yourself evident. Take over here.

Thy kingdom come. One of the Romans are a bit worried about the Christians. This dangerous message, thy kingdom come.

[ 26 : 01 ] We already got kings. What do we need another one for? We need another one. Faith. Which instructs us, I think, further about faith as knowledge.

Faith is a kind of knowledge. Faith, we are told in Holy Scripture, is the evidence of things not seen. It's an assurance of things that we're expecting.

That is to say, faith is apprehensive as a form of knowledge. It lives in expectation. It's a rich thing, faith, as a kind of knowledge.

It is knowledge when its object is not present to the senses. That's a profound thing about faith as knowledge. When what you believe in is not present to your senses, how do you believe in it?

The enlightenment says, well, don't, because it's not there. It's not evident to your senses when all is said and done. It isn't knowledge. But Jesus teaches, no, the Bible teaches, no, faith is a form of knowledge, and it knows things which are invisible.

[ 27 : 21 ] Profoundly and perfectly invisible. Not subject to any approach by any form of the senses. You know that famous anecdote about the Russian astronaut one, the first guy up there.

He said, I didn't, at least it's tall, I don't know if it's literally. He said, apparently, Yuri Gagarin, I didn't find God up there. Somebody answered, the shocking thing would have been if you had found him.

You don't find God that way. Faith is a way of knowing. Faith is a way of knowing. And it can know the invisible mysteries.

Now, Paul says, we see through a glass darkly. Faith knows it doesn't have perfect sight of the mystery of the world, but it expects his arrival with his rule and kingdom.

There's a lot in this prayer. Now we see through a glass darkly for sure. There was always, this is an important thing, I think, in our faith.

[ 28 : 27 ] There is always a kind of distance in faith as knowledge. It's a kind of distance. But it is powerful, faith.

Rightly understood, it is even absolute. Jesus seems to teach, someone said, if you give faith a little step, it'll take over everything. Watch out. It's a grain of mustard seed faith, Jesus says, will change the world.

So watch out. Faith is very powerful. And that's just not, it seems to me, a bit of idle Christian knowledge. There's really good wisdom in knowing this.

Faith and its nature in this world has a kind of distance about it. Some Christians, rightly or wrongly, seek for intensities in their Christian walk all the time, for kind of highs in Christian living.

And frequently, I'm sure you could tell anecdotes about this, sad anecdotes, they crash along the way. They've spent too much time looking for highs, for intensities.

[ 29 : 41 ] Sometimes they crash because of the experience. It doesn't live up to what they were thinking it would do for them, or its absence makes them crash. Should we not leave intensities to God, and as our Lord teaches, possess our souls in patience?

Patience. That's what we should do along life's way. Patience is a good thing. We ask for, we seek for the arrival of God's open rule, but we know it will arrive in heaven's time, just as it arrives in our own lives in heaven's time, with greater intensity, with greater seeing.

But for now, faith as a form of knowledge has a relationship with the unseen, but it's still seen through a glass darkly.

That's the way the apostles talked to us about life in faith. Years ago, moving on in the prayer, looking at the time here, I want to have lots of time for discussion today.

This prayer, I'm sure, creates all sorts of good questions and comments. Years ago, how many is not relevant here, I belonged to a prayer and study group, which met in the home of a creative director of a large advertising firm, this was back east.

[ 31 : 10 ] These firms at one time, I hope this is still the case, I was delighted when I first heard this, the big advertising firms shared the advertising campaign for the Salvation Army.

They passed it around amongst them, and they did it for free, pro bono. It was great that the Salvation Army got a really classy advertising campaign for free from big advertising firms.

My friend's firm used the words, give us this day, as their theme for a campaign for the Salvation Army one day.

I remember seeing it in bus shelters. It was very beautifully done. You had a Salvation Army person reaching out to a needy person, and just the words were there, give us this day.

The Lord's people give. It's their calling. But they also pray, give us this day.

[ 32 : 15 ] Give us this day. Very moving words, the more you think about them. Do you find those words moving? Give us, Lord.

Give us this day. We're like children when we pray this part of the Lord's Prayer. Give us this day. Give us this day, of course, we pray, our daily bread.

Our God, you see, heads up, Karl Marx, our God is sovereign over the material conditions of the world. Our God is no absent God in heaven.

He's bringing in His kingdom, and He's sovereign over what's going on in His history that He's watching over. As we await the kingdom of God, as we await His manifest rule, we, in a sense, practice here its arrival.

We show forth gladly, in this prayer, our dependence on the Heavenly Father. We witness to Him. He's invisible, this mystery of the world, but we're depending upon Him in this knowledge we have called faith.

[ 33 : 34 ] The world sees us depending upon Him. We show forth gladly our dependence dependence on the Heavenly Father. probably here, it's been said, I take it it's true, Israel's sojourn in the desert is background here for the Lord's teaching.

He's always in Israel. He's Israel's Messiah. It may be the living by the daily manna in the desert.

As Israel travels to the place of God's rule established for her, she calls upon her Father God, give us this day.

We can rely upon this mystery of the world, this God we know through this way of real knowledge, which is faith. Give us this day.

It's wonderful to depend upon God. It removes finally all anxiety. The invisible mystery of the world, our Father in Heaven, He will give you every day what you need, everything you need from Him.

[ 34 : 50 ] Many, many things may be pondered about these words. They are meant to be engaged, I take it, by a disciple. God is able, says the letter to the Hebrews, to equip you with everything good for doing His will.

This, give us this day, can open out into an abundance of requests. Give me everything I need, God. God says, yes, I love you.

I'll give you everything you need. In my time, in my way, you can utterly depend upon me. Equip me, Lord, this day, to do everything that you call me to do.

This day, I will ask for this equipping. I will ask for this enabling bread. God will give it to you, spiritual bread, physical bread, the friendships you need, the loneliness you need, the trouble you need, the fires of testing, you are going to find out later in the prayer, that you need.

God will give it to you. He's a giver. He gives everything. I wish he'd given me about four inches more in height, but that's between me and the Lord.

[ 36 : 08 ] I just thought I'd be cleansing a bit of complaint there. Many, many things. I know, you can't end the comments and wisdom that's tied up in these short few words.

And moving on, the Lord takes his disciples right next into, does he not, right into a kind of minefield here. He now says, here's what you need after the Father has given you everything you need for doing his will in your lives.

You need forgiveness. Forgive us our trespasses. It can be forgive us our debts, forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

revolutionary words if ever they were spoken. Wow. Oliver O'Donovan, who's a scholar of St. Augustine, one of the best, quotes him as saying, in this age, says the great Bishop of Hipple, our only righteousness is this.

You can picture him preaching there to his, goodness knows what kind of a congregation that bishop spoke to in North Africa. would have been a rough and ready congregation, I imagine, but they would hear their bishop teacher say to them, your only righteousness is this, your righteousness is that your sins have been forgiven.

[ 37 : 34 ] That's gospel ethics. Yes. Your only righteousness, says Augustine, and surely he's a great witness to the New Testament teaching.

your only righteousness is that your sins have been forgiven. That is a liberating word. I don't know if you find it so.



It's a wonderful word. Sometimes a gloss and unfolding of the Lord's teaching at a point like this may just be exhilarating. I find it so.

Oliver O'Donovan, again, I'm leaning on him here. In forgiveness, what are we given in forgiveness? Well, we are given freedom. That's what the Lord wants to give you.

Have you sin and burden in your life, debt, weighing you down? The Father wants to say, I'm going to give you perfect freedom from all of that mess.

[ 38 : 36 ] Life, forgive us. Give me the gift of freedom. Yes. freedom from the burden of the past. God loves you and wants to give you perfect freedom from the burden of your past.

Perfect freedom. Forgive us our debts is so appropriate in that sense. It brings up that sense of, oh, I owe so much. The Father says, I wipe it all out. I'm giving you perfect freedom.

God is good. Our God loves freedom. His first great revelation of His character is Israel out of Egypt.

Let my people go. Give them freedom. Forgiveness gives freedom from a tormenting memory of the past.

Every sensitive person has probably had that experience. God says, I want to set you free from that. It's not a virtue to proudly say, I'm the chief of sinners.

[ 39 : 38 ] No, God wants to set you free from that. Set you free perfectly from that. The law of liberty is probably how James refers to that, I think.

Remember that you are forgiven. And in time, this freedom will grow. Live in the gospel. Always I sin and always I receive heaven's freedom.

Dr. Oliver Donovan says, when I quote him directly, no forgiveness can possibly help us unless it forgives us the task of repenting too.

You don't have to go on repenting over that sin that burdens you. That bad habit you had for 25 years. God says, stop it. You're forgiven. You're free. Totally free.

Just accept his total gift of forgiveness. It is freedom. The tormented self-knowledge of repentance is preliminary.

[ 40 : 42 ] But it leads on into that perfect forgiveness as freedom that God wants to give us. So much to learn there from all of us. Then, moving right on towards the end of the prayer, the Lord then teaches something which has often been a perplexing thing.

I know it's perplexed me. It always creates a kind of eyebrow-raising moment. The Lord goes on to say here as the prayer draws to a close, lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

We kind of, wow! Is this God our Father, the mystery of the world whose name we hallow, is he going to lead us into temptation? deliver us from evil explicares, coming right to the point here, deliver us from evil explicares, the preceding clause, lead us not into temptation.

It's really all summarized perfectly as that deliver us from evil. And here, if you'll allow me, since I've mentioned his name any number of times here, I lean all together on Oliver O'Donovan as he ponders this particular teaching.

So forgive me a somewhat lengthy quote here, but I think it is worth a listen. This is the best thing I've ever come across about this particular teaching of the Lord, lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

[ 42 : 19 ] So bear with me as I draw to a close here in this talk but I want to give Oliver O'Donovan a more extended word here. Oliver O'Donovan was a professor at Wycliffe College.

He was the Regius Professor of Pastoral and Moral Theology at Christ Church Oxford for many years. He once preached at the other place at Nanton. He was a good evangelical if ever there was one.

A good friend of Harry Robinson went to Harry's church in Toronto. This is all by way of saying I'll trust this guy for a bit of at least his teaching is good.

You may not agree with this but I think it's good. It gives you a taste of his prose which is rather I find deeply condensed and a bit strange in some ways but I find it delightful.

Temptation he says is a testing which is kind of an obvious thing to say to Oliver but then he continues not some passing external difficulty we might be expected to circumvent okay but a testing of ourselves our weakness our potential for self-destructive betrayal of what we are called to be.

[ 43 : 37 ] So far so good I like that that's good stuff eh? it is for our good he continues that God permits such testing I think we hear that often that sounds I'm still on board it is for our good that God permits such testing now he says but it is not a good we can take the measure of and embrace therefore it is not a good we can ask for knowing what we ask but a providence that we can recognize in the event of our deliverance yes now there's a professional ethicist he gets paid to teach ethics and to write sentences like that you know but then he finishes with a very good word here well the time for a conversation praying not to be led into testing we acknowledge the deadly threat that it presents and then he has a gift for this he ends with scripture harden not your hearts as in the day of testing in the wilderness yes this is right in scripture if we see it if we look long enough yes harden not your hearts don't let yourself be hardened as you experience testing know what comes from god but don't be casual about it learn from it but don't be don't think that you can ask for it's it's a mystery the lord takes us into deep waters as he ends his prayer lead us not into temptation deliver us from evil this prayer reminds us as it ends that we're in a dispensation of danger of trouble of we have to be watchful in it don't we is this a good end or completion to such a central symbol of our faith the lord's prayer i suppose the question is kind of a presumption for thine is the kingdom as the prayer traditionally ends in psalm say the old king james version for thine is the kingdom the power and the glory forever and ever is not well attested in manuscripts so its addition may have been still does indicate a kind of anxiety about the prayer's conclusion perhaps but how bold i will be it is best that it so end with this protect us from evil lord deliver us from evil here again is the prayer's urgency it ends with an urgency it's a prayer for action it's not a prayer finally for contemplation it's this is for a disciple who is on the way isn't it here again is the prayer again it's do this the lord is teaching his disciples it's here's a note of practical relevance this is another form of knowledge therefore knowledge is affective knowledge is for our our emotional lives our emotional lives are to mature in the gospel jonathan edwards famously said didn't he true religion in great part consists in holy affections the lord's prayer will teach us to cultivate our affections so that they're in line with what the lord wants us to be in this world this knowledge in other words rests in its object and its object wants us to know and love him our father who art in heaven our father

again the mystery of the world i must draw to a close may i say i'm getting bolder and bolder if matthew were here the one who did the remembering work and remembers for the church the lord's teaching here on prayer if luke were here they would say remember they are called evangelists they are teachers of the gospel the one who gave to his holy church this prayer has been raised indeed from the dead as those palestinian people heard him teach it and the one who taught they heard that he'd been raised this is the son of the father prayed in this prayer and in him we may pray this prayer in deep assurance we're taught by the father's son to pray this prayer there it is just a postscript before discussion and it simply ponders this last bit about deep assurance is there a way to an immediate and intuitive assurance assurance about the faith this goes back again to faith as a way of knowledge would you like an immediate and intuitive assurance about the faith an overcoming a beginning to overcome that distance that faith as knowledge inevitably has in this world an immediate and intuitive assurance about the things of our faith faith faith after all does wax and wane faith is contested in our culture there are those in the gospels even who are called of little faith there are others thank goodness who are apparently of great faith these of course are deep and searching questions for sure but for sure there is one response we will grow into this immediate and intuitive assurance as we pray this very real urgent engagement with our faith pray this prayer taught by the son who is the son of this father this mystery of the world trust in Jesus is rational it is warranted it is in need of no apology because faith is a way of knowing we have a way of knowing which is better than the enlightenment's way of knowing and we need to learn to know that and to confess it and to live deeply in the mystery of prayer for as

Luke reports just after he gives us the Lord's prayer he tells us that the Lord expanded on this prayer by saying will not the father give the holy spirit to those who ask him do you want an intuitive and immediate knowledge of the father do you want faith as knowledge to grow into that intuitive and immediate knowledge the spirit will give it to you along life's way we can grow into these things make your calling and election sure says Peter grow grow into these things the spirit he's good at these kind of things he's very good at an immediate and intuitive assurance of these things why not make a focus for that desire in your life the Lord's prayer why not suggest something better to me I'll go with it Edwards got it right that 18th century genius of a

Christian who as I'm sure Robert Jensen a great explicator of Jonathan Edwards said he understood the enlightenment and he overcame it in his theological vision remember true religion in great part consists in holy affections we can grow into these things through the Lord's prayer why not it could be some other symbol of the faith seems to me the Lord's prayer is a very good place to start very good place I hope to start the learner's exchange for the winter session we prayed today in the liturgy did you know it's in the liturgy the Lord's prayer and someone was telling me how moved they were how moved they've been in the past by hearing it sung what a prayer let me pray and then we'll have time for conversation

Lord we thank you for the gift of this treasure this prayer may we enter into its richness always and pray it until your kingdom arrives openly for which we pray in this prayer Lord Lord the spirit and the bride say come Lord Jesus Amen the Lord's prayer before it's not 10 yet right yes yes yes yes sorry yeah sure I can zip through it sure about temptation is a testing not some passing external difficulty so this is a significant thing you enter into in life it's not you know the neighbor's dog is barking again should I go out with my dog and solve this problem you know this is something we might be expected to circumvent in other words this temptation that the

[ 54 : 07 ] Lord is referring to in his prayer but a testing of ourselves perhaps the Lord our weakness he says our potential for self destructive betrayal of what we are called to be the Lord may be warning us that there's a path that's good for you and you're getting too close to another path it is for our good that God permits such testing he says then but it is not a good we can take the measure of and embrace we're not to be casual about these temptations oh Lord send me troubles so I'll grow in you no these troubles may destroy you there are the evil one protect us from evil is the evil one is included there of course it is for our good again that God permits that therefore it is not it is not a good we can ask for knowing what we ask but a providence that we can recognize in the event of our deliverance from it I see that the

Lord has given me an escape from my great evil and then he relates it to I think very helpfully to Psalm 95 where the psalmist recalls Israel in the desert and says harden not your hearts as in the day of testing God gave that day of testing but he didn't want his people to be hardened by it but to seek his protection from it it's a very subtle point that's why I wanted to lean on him a lot because I find it very a challenging thing to understand but the Lord gives his people things which are challenging to understand that's good for us I guess this is a brilliant prayer sorry sir yeah just a couple of comments so I would look at I'm looking at Matthew 6 verse 6 the first thing it says here is when you pray it says go to your closet and pray privately it's not a congregational prayer I don't see it's an individual prayer he's telling those men as they saw him pray individually look you pray and number in verse 7 it says don't be repetitious it's a danger just rhyming the words up here the faster

I can do it every day I can dispense my prayer oh well no no no it's a model prayer yeah yeah but it's also yeah we can be like children and just start with the model and that's okay that's okay on the first point I would just lean heavily on Calvin Calvin says when we pray this prayer we include the whole world we're praying for the whole world and if anybody in the world doesn't belong to this father that's the father's business not ours so this is a prayer for the whole world the church the lord never sees his disciples merely as individuals it's always it's an individual but part of his body so but that's a big issue we could discuss that forever but the the disciple privately praying isn't isn't separate from the church it's separate but it is private

I don't I think it's a waste of time I saw saying it publicly because it's going to deal with personal issues here like forgive us our sins we don't to name our sins publicly it's just going to get primed off what happens but I think we are part of a praying family in other words I can't just pray selfishly but I can pray for others sure sure no well that's those are deep issues I would just say it's the idea that there is such a thing as a private world Tom Tom back to Tom right he contests that there is such a thing it's a fantasy of the enlightenment that there are individuals there are no individuals in the world there are persons in relation you can't be an individual in God's creation it's an impossibility because there's always the other so our Matthew says our it's the community praying but that doesn't contradict that it's the individual praying well no okay no oh no yeah no no when I'm alone

I'm still the church yeah so that it is a private prayer well I I we we'd have to work out the difference between private and together yeah I think the Lord always has his church praying sorry go ahead okay so this is not a question it's a response and you'll have to mediate if we get into a debate but for me I I understand that you know the lure of the model of the person who goes and stands and you know does a public display and God says you know don't don't don't be that person who's just doing it as a display but for me it's very much a corporate prayer it talks about our father and it talks about we and I'm really enriched in church and I understand it can become could become perfunctory and recitative recitative what is the word recitative yes

[ 59 : 34 ] I try to try new words but for me to be beside someone it's a spiritual breaking breath sharing with people to pray side by side with someone that acknowledgement that we are family and it is our father is has really really helped me no no no well yes I I mean it's I mean it's an old rather I mean I find a rather old tedious debate isn't it between the Anabaptists don't don't pray by rote you know don't use set prayers and all that it's an old issue that it gets nowhere there's just rich ways of praying that you can enter into both when you're physically by yourself but being physically by yourself doesn't mean you're an individual being physically by myself I am part of the holy catholic church and I pray with the holy catholic church as

God set apart people who are being made holy eschatologically catholic everywhere in the world confessing the same thing and they're his body the body of people together the church so the whole debate is usually wrong footed but anyway that's another please that's just a footnote to this discussion I think one thing that the use of the plural pronoun does is it recognizes that we not only sin individually but we sin corporately yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah that's right that's yeah but I'll give Luke does begin father and yeah and Matthew begins our father so I think there's wisdom in attending to that yeah yeah but that's you know these are good issues yes

I'm just wondering would you suggest praying a Lord's Prayer every day as part of meditation meditation after the word or how would you suggest that we best use it so that it becomes something meaningful and useful to us in our growth of our faith well yeah just I would just I have nothing to say there that has any any I've just my own personal practice is I prayed every day I either begin or end or both my personal prayer with the Lord's Prayer I'm in a reading group and this afternoon we're going to be talking about our last reading which is Bonhoeffer's Life Together which is one chapter about the Psalters that to me one of the most sublime things ever written by a

Christian and he ponders praying the Psalms and his vision of praying the Psalms is that Jim or other people in the group will correct me that Jesus is the perfect prayer of the Psalms and that in him we pray the Psalms there's a Christological aspect to prayer that we forget about especially with respect to the people who emphasize individual initiative in the world and we're always in Christ so we pray in Christ so we pray the Psalms in Christ and that throws light on what about the difficult Psalms Christ can pray the difficult Psalms with perfect wisdom and insight which I don't have because some of them are disturbing but in him I can pray them so finally I think we pray the

Lord's prayer in Christ we don't come before the Father ever just as ourselves as individuals we come in in his mystery so I never pray as an individual in that sense either I come in Christ to pray in my prayer I I I don't come before him just me I if I may say brother do we go into the closet with Christ do we not go in there with him he in his spirit praying with us if you will the prayer groan the spirit groans in us so I never just me if it's just me praying it's useless I think I think we probably agree about most of these I think we pray in the Lord's name you have only access to God in his name you pose it in the name of our Lord Jesus prayer absolutely he is the one teaching this prayer

[ 64 : 50 ] Mr. Norman it seems this prayer has many functions under our Lord one of them being when there are dry moments great inspiration even from the pulpit is not to be guaranteed so here's something you can fall back on here's something you can turn to either as a great or as an entity to say at times of great suffering or extreme distress and the other thing I think it is perhaps one of its purposes is to stop which I've seen having worked in different denominations as a music director the extremes to which the much valued improvisatory prayer can go and it stops it going mad I like to think of God and also sets the priorities that is we start with God not the shopping list we start with him but not us so it seems to have many functions yeah at a personal and a collective level yeah that's especially important if this is a normative prayer it's good to be reminded that as much as I'm permitted to pray help

Lord help as in the Psalms the normative prayer is to turn to the Father Halloween his name that I remember if this kind of anecdote is helpful I don't know but I remember the wonderful evangelical preacher Desmond Hunt sharing with a few of us that he always remember visiting an old saint who was dying and the old saint shared with him that the thing that gave them the most comfort as they lay a dying was saying the creed the great objective facts of the faith was what they held on to not all my emotions and I'll share with you you know put yourself out of the picture pray as the Lord taught pray the great creed of his body the church you know but so there's value in that that's underrated in some circles maybe overrated in others

I don't know it just seems that things being formal and repetitive are going to happen in any Indian you choose yeah yeah yeah there's a church prayer time when it becomes almost a pattern of its own yeah so it takes on a kind of yeah an fast slowest prayer yeah yeah the shortness of this prayer is often has been coming it's so short it's uh all of our donovan says about free prayer please get to the point you know so the Lord doesn't need a lot of your elaboration especially in public it's yes all right um knowing you hey um I really was very touched by this part of your talk and relating to um the faith that thinks that is invisible

I also relate this to science um for example in chemistry formal um I think when I was learning first learning it I never thought really takes the faith took the faith to believe in it um nowadays yes I very much understand that's also the faith on my heart to believe the Lord and Mother who created is correct because that assurance is very instant and it's um very assured at least to this day if I don't come up with a compound that defies the model but this faith in the Lord is often to me it is so he can as he says and as you said it has a distance um yes it also takes patience because through the daily prayer that I do feel even closer to that faith but on the other hand in science

I find if I rest my faith in science I consider myself as bright as somehow advanced because on a daily basis that assure me that I can use this model to conquer the world to learn further but in this faith I sometimes feel that I have to rest in the sense of I am after all sin but forever it is a sense of surrender when they let me go it's not a sense of comfort and I find these two senses recently becoming more and more as a matter of thank you thank you faith as a way of knowing I think is a theme we should unfold more than we do

[ 70 : 41 ] I think it's a great counter blast to it's just we're saturated with the denial of that and the world we live in but that's a big issue isn't it but that's Dr.

Sleymaker did I see your oh I was fired as an auctioneer once because I couldn't do it I want to have a question really it's just that a friend of mine suggested a way of using the Lord's prayer to pray for others and just inserting things so our our father and just continue the prayer that way and I know another way that you can do it yeah yeah yeah that's um yes thanks Beth that's yeah yeah we can festoon it as C.S.

Lewis famously said about we can festoon prayers expand them use them they're meant to be used this is this is as our brother says this this is a great prayer for the private for your and also when we're together it's it's maybe that's why our and just father are there it's I wonder and just John John the Baptist apparently he taught his disciples to pray and then the Lord and then the disciples said to him one day like John will you teach us how to pray what a wise request and this is what the Lord gave them so it must here's a treasure of this is the divine prayer for his people I didn't want to cut Terry off but just a quick comment you mentioned one of our most important individuals in the Christian history the Bishop of HIPAA oh that guy yes

St. Augustine and in the context of what he said his great work the confession St.

Augustine came immediately to mind and we should keep that on your list of things to read even though it's a difficult book but if you find a good translation it's worth it you don't recommend we read it in Latin you mentioned it we can't read it in Latin you don't recommend it most people in this room are multilingual I'm an exception in the last hundred years nobody learned the visual out there you go there you go thank you thank you