**Closing in prayer**

Text: Matthew 6:13b

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**Scriptures:** Revelation 4:5-11; 5:6-14; Matthew 6:9-13

**Songs Chosen:** [SttL] 145, 511, 138, 206, 160

**Series:** Heidelberg Catechism (LD52)

**Theme:** The Lord’s Prayer ends with praise to God

**Proposition:** As we pray the Lord’s prayer, we praise God for His kingdom, power and glory.

**Introduction**

Today as we come to the end of our series through the Heidelberg Catechism, we also come to the words at the end of the Lord’s prayer in Lord’s Day 52. These closing words are recorded in the catechism as being: “*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*” (Q&A127). “*For yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever*” (Q&A128). “Amen” (Q&A129).

You might have noticed that these last words are missing from our English Standard Version Bibles. Why is that? You’ll find a clue in a footnote to Matthew 6:13 which says “some manuscripts add ‘*For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.'”*

The Bible has been very well preserved down through history through meticulous copying of manuscripts which took place over many centuries before the invention of the printing press (and now photocopiers, digital printers and electronic documents). The accumulated copying differences between all the manuscripts we have today in the world are less than 1% of the total Bible. Providentially, the Bible has been incredibly well preserved.

The different New Testament manuscripts which exist vary in age, some are very early such as the Alexandrian manuscripts: Sinaiticus (A), Vaticanus (B). Others, such as the Byzantine texts are later. The Byzantine or ‘majority text’ is similar in many places to the ‘Textus Receptus’ from which the King James English Bible is translated. The ‘critical text’ is derived from earlier Greek manuscripts, which include the Alexandrian texts. Many modern English translations such as the English Standard version, the New American Standard version and the New International version are based on the earlier ‘critical text’.

It’s worth noting that the words *For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*' are absent from Lord’s prayer in Luke’s version (11:1-4). The earlier Alexandrian texts had not been discovered in the 16th century when the Heidelberg Catechism was written. We could legitimately ask the question should the closing words of the Lord’s prayer as identified in the catechism actually be considered part of Holy Scripture? I am not going to answer question, but I can confirm that the content of these words is Biblical!

To close in prayer with these words is helpful and reminds us that the Kingdom which has authority over all other kingdoms is the Kingdom of Christ. The Power of God is a higher, greater power than any other. The Glory of God is the greatest glory, above all other.

Remember that the Lord’s prayer is a “model prayer”. It conveys principles and patterns for our prayers, but it is not a rote formula. For example, some people say that we can only pray to God the Father, not to Jesus. Certainly, the pattern of Lord’s prayer is to pray “Our Father…”, however, Christ is one of the three persons of the Godhead {“*In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*”. (John 1:1)}. It is a matter of personal conscience as to whether you predominantly pray to God the Father or exclusively so.

We are now going to look at the closing of the Lord’s prayer ‘*For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*’ under three points which mirror the order of these words:

1. The eternal kingdom of God
2. The eternal power of God
3. The eternal glory of God
4. **The eternal kingdom of God**

When we considered the 2nd petition of the Lord’s prayer (LD48) “Thy Kingdom Come” we saw that a kingdom is the realm over which a King (or Queen) rules. Visible evidences of a kingdom include palaces, armies, courts, and tax-paying citizens. The Kingdom of God may be defined as the “*realm over which God is acknowledged as King*”. When we pray “Thy kingdom come” we express our desire that the Kingdom of God would come, both in our own hearts, in the church, and in the world.

When we pray this we are praying about Christ. Christ is the King of the Kingdom because God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name (Phil 2:9). Why this high position? Because Christ was obedient to the point of death on the cross. We cannot separate God’s Kingdom from Christ’s rule as King. “Thy Kingdom Come” reminds us of Christ the suffering saviour, Christ the exalted King, Christ our Lord. To love Christ is to have the kingdom in your own heart.

Jesus said, "*If you love Me, you will keep My commandments*” (John 14:15). Christ rules us by His Word and Spirit. His rule is that of an easy yoke, a light burden. He is a gentle Master, a kindly King, as sympathetic sovereign. Desiring this rule is expressed in the Lord’s Prayer with the words “Your Kingdom Come”. Our catechism (LD48) explains this: thy kingdom come *means, rule us by your Word and Spirit in such a way that more and more we submit to You.*

When we pray “For yours is the kingdom” we are praying a Christ-centred prayer. “We have made all these requests to you because you are our King. You are the Lord of our lives, the Lord of my life. You are ‘in the driving seat’ determining the direction of my life. Jesus is the centre of the being of all who love Him. God has given all authority in heaven and on earth (Matt 28:18) to Christ, who is the “ruler over the kings of the earth” (Rev 1:5)

At times we can think of ourselves as being the centre of our own ‘kingdoms’ our own family, our work. Praying after the pattern of the Lord’s Prayer reminds us that it is Jesus the King who is in charge. We are reminded that the Kindly King is our High Priest who intercedes for us. In the words of Heidelberg Catechism Lord’s Day 52 “*He wants to give us all that is good*” (A128).

When we pray “Yours is the Kingdom” we are also thinking forward to the return of Christ, to the fullness of His kingdom in the New Heavens and New Earth. We are longing for a better country, a heavenly one. (Heb 11:16) We are thinking of dwelling in the radiant presence of God forever because His is an eternal kingdom. When we pray “Yours is the kingdom” we praise Christ for ransoming a people for God from every tribe, tongue and nation (Rev5:9). The Lord’s prayer is a prayer of hope and expectation. It is a Christ-centred prayer.

1. **The eternal power of God**

Power can be defined as the“ability to act or affect something strongly”. When we have electrical power, we can turn the lights on! When we have mechanical power, stuff moves. “Yours is the power” is a confession that God is all-powerful. This is why our requests are made to Him in prayer. He can do all things; nothing is impossible with God (Luke 1:37). He is the God who fully supplies **“***all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus*” (Phil 4:19).

The prayer of the Christian is a confident one, because God has the power to give all that we ask for: both materially and spiritually. We as for our daily bread: *“take care of all our physical needs” (HCLD50).* We pray that the Lord would care for our flesh and blood bodies by providing what we need to look after our physical needs. All physical resources came into being through Christ. The power of God created everything: all created material and spiritual force were created by Christ and for Christ (Col 1:16).

Forgiveness of sins came into being through Christ. He takes away the burden of guilt for sin so that we can be in a right relationship with God. Jesus has endured God’s wrath against sin: *“He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Cor 5:21).*  “*For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God*” (1 Cor 1:18).

Christ is the all-powerful King because God raised Him from the dead. He said before He went to the cross *“...but take courage; I have overcome the world."* (John 16:33). “*He is the head over all rule and authority*” (Col 2:10). He has the power to forgive, the power to save. Paul writes about the power of Christ in these words: *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek”.* (Romans 1:16). In the words of the Heidelberg Catechism, “He not only wants to, but is **able to** give us all that is good”

When we pray “yours is the power” we confess what is true, as those loved of God we remind ourselves: “*Jesus loves me this I know...for the Bible tells me so*” *“Little ones to Him belong; They are weak, but He is strong”.* God’s Power in Christ to save someone like me. God’s Power in Christ to keep someone like me saved. “*For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord”* (Rom 8:38-39*).*  His power does not fade, does not diminish; it is eternal. His kingdom and power display His glory which brings us to our 3rd point:

1. **The eternal glory of God**

The word ‘glory’ conveys the idea of weight, of heaviness, of worthiness. It is used of people to describe their wealth, splendour or reputation. With God, His glory is the revelation of His being, His nature, and His presence. His glory was seen in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night as He led His people Israel out of their captivity in Egypt (Ex 13:21). Moses saw the glory of God (Ex 24:15-18). God’s glory filled the tabernacle (Ex 40:34) and the temple in the most holy place.

The glory of God expresses His majesty, His importance, His worthiness. We certainly see this in what He has made. In the intricacies of the seahorse, the orbiting moons of Jupiter, the songs of whales, the turquoise blue of a coral atoll, in the migration of butterflies, in the speed of a cheetah, in the growth of an acorn into a towering oak. In the vision which the prophet Isaiah saw we read that **“***And one called out to another and said, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory*." (Isaiah 6:3).

God’s glory is most clearly seen in the person and work of Christ: *“And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power”* (Hebrews 1:3). The glory of Christ is the glory of God. We heard earlier from Revelation 5 (12-13): "*Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honour and glory and blessing!" And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honour and glory and might forever and ever!*"

The Heidelberg Catechism says that we pray the closing words ‘for yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever’ because “*your holy name, and not we ourselves, should receive all the praise, forever*”.

Whether or not the phrase *For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.'* was in the original manuscript penned by gospel writer Matthew, we will not know this side of the New Heavens and New Earth. We can be certain that it is true that: The Kingdom above all kingdoms, the everlasting Kingdom, is the Kingdom of God; Christ is the King who rules over this Kingdom; Christ is worthy to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honour and glory and blessing in our prayers!

We can be certain that it is true that the Power above all power, the almighty power of creation and redemption is the Power of God; that it is through Christ, the Word that this power comes to save sinners like you and me. Christ is worthy of our praise in our prayers, because He was slain and with His blood He ransomed people for God from every tribe and tongue and people and nation

We can be certain that it is true that the glory of God is seen by us most perfectly in Christ, who is the image of the invisible God. To see Christ, is to see God. To know Christ is to know God. To be loved by Christ is to be loved by God

Christ is all-glorious, our resplendent King, coming in power, returning to bring us into the fulness of His Kingdom forever.

*‘For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.'*