Congregation of the Lord Jesus Christ,

If you look at page 5 of the front of your hymnbook, you will see that both the old English and modern English versions of the Lord’s prayer end with: For Thine [or Yours] is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.” And our Lord’s Day concludes by asking what those lines of the Lord’s Prayer mean. And they are words we know well, if we have memorized the Lord’s prayer. And as usually happens, when we sung the Lord’s Prayer, earlier, we all sort of slow down and raise the volume of the last line: “For thineeee is the kingdommmm, and the powerrrr, and the glooorrryyyyyy…” And so we should; for these words are doxology. Doxology means glory-word. And it is fitting that we conclude the prayer by glorifying our glorious and good God!

Buuuttttt, those words are not in our ESV or NIV Bibles. Verse 13 ends with the words that I preached about last Sunday: “*Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil*.” And then there is a number to a footnote, which says that the words “*For yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen*” are only found in *some* manuscripts (just hold that thought for a moment). But the reason for the footnote is that the words are included in all older Bible versions, like the King James. So, generations of Christians have grown up with those words as part of the Lord’s Prayer. But in the 1800s, some manuscripts were found, which many Bible scholars believe are the oldest and most accurate copies of the Bible. And they do not include those words. And so, ever since then, they have been consigned to a footnote. But coming back to that footnote, what you need to know is that the words *are* found in over 98% of all the ancient manuscripts. They do not appear in just under 2% of the manuscripts. And we are talking around 6000 manuscripts. So, when the footnote says that these words only appear in *some* manuscripts, that means around 5900 of them! Now, the debate about whether or not those words are original is a little more complex than straight percentages, but today we will put it like this: **We have around 5900 really good reasons to view these words as the doxology of the Lord’s Prayer**.

And we want to see that praying about God’s **Kingdom**, **power**, **glory**, **Amen** is a message of great comfort and hope for believers And these will be our four, brief points this afternoon.

1. So firstly then, let’s think about **God’s** kingdom as the end of our prayers.
   1. This coming Saturday, many of us will vote for a government. Some of us may have done so already. We do this every three years. Well, it wasn’t all that long ago that the idea of each citizen voting for a government was unheard of. And that is because the usual form of government was a king or queen. And you didn’t vote for kings and queens. They ruled by what was called a divine right. As they saw it, God made them king or queen. Well, in 2005, I had the opportunity to visit **Gettysburg**, the site of a famous battle in the United States Civil War. And several months after the battle, President Abraham Lincoln returned there to deliver a speech that has come to be known as ‘the Gettysburg address.’ And in that speech, he said, “that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that *government of the people, by the people, for the people*, shall not perish from the earth.” And the idea behind those words is what is known as the **social contract of government**, which states that people voluntarily agree to surrender some rights to an elected government for the benefit of social order. And it is why we here in New Zealand also get to elect our government.
   2. But while that might be all well and good with earthly government, when we pray, “*Yours is the kingdom*,” we are recognizing that this is not how it is with the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is not of the people, by the people, or for the people. God is not the King of creation because we voted for Him or because we consent to His rule; He simply is the King of creation!
      1. **Psalm 10:16**, “*The Lord is king forever*.”
      2. **Psalm 47:7-8**, “*For God is the King of all the earth … God reigns over the nations; God sits on His holy throne*.”
      3. **Psalm 95:3**, “*For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods*.”
      4. **Psalm** **145:13**, “*Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations*.”
      5. And because of this, in **Psalm 145:1**, the Psalmist sung, “*I will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name forever and ever*.” And in **1 Timothy 1:17**, Paul said, “*To the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory forever and ever. Amen*.” And when you pray, “*Yours is the kingdom*,” you are doing the same; recognizing the truth that God is King; that He reigns supreme over all things and that His kingdom shall have no end.
   3. And we need to remember this, every day, because there are many out there who believe that Allah or Buddha rules the world, or that there is no God, but they are all wrong. **Philippians 2:9-11** looks forward to a time when “*at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord [ or King], to the glory of God the Father*.” So, whether it be now or on Judgment Day, everyone will recognize Jesus as King. But it is only those that do so *in this life* who will be welcomed into His eternal kingdom. And this is the urgent message we need to share with unbelievers.
   4. But we need to remember this also because the power of government can seem so strong at times. But in **Daniel’s prayer** in chapter 2 of his book, he prayed this about God: “*He removes kings and sets up kings*.” So, kings and queens, Prime-ministers and presidents, will all come and go. Governments will rise up and topple over, and be voted in and voted out. But there is one King who is above all and who rules over all, and whose kingdom shall never pass away. And one day, Jesus Christ will return and bring in the fulness of His kingdom. And this is what we confess and proclaim when we pray, “*Yours is the kingdom*.”
2. But secondly, what do we confess and proclaim when we pray about God’s **power**?
   1. Well, perhaps you have heard before that the Greek word translated as power is ‘**dunamis**.’ It is the word from which we get the word dynamite. And dynamite is a powerful explosive. You might have a very heavy stone that you just cannot budge even a centimetre. But put a stick of dynamite inside it, attach some det cord and roll it out to a safe distance and attach it to a plunger and electricity, and there will be no more stone! Boom! So, God’s power is dynamite power!
   2. And we saw this recently in our creation sermons. If you could travel at 300,000 kilometers per second, it would take you four years to reach the nearest star in our Solar system – Alpha Centauri. And at that speed, it would take you 100,000 years to get from one end of our galaxy to the other. And there are over 100 billion galaxies in the known universe. And how did it all come into existence? Well, Psalm 33:5 6 tells us: “*For [God] spoke, and it came to be; He commanded, and it stood firm*.” And the Bible tells us that the heaven of heavens can’t contain Him, and that He spans the universe with His hand. So, the power of God is power to create!
   3. But the power of God is also power to sovereignly rule over all things and all people:
      1. **Psalm 66:3**, “*Say to God, "How awesome are your deeds! So great is your power that your enemies come cringing to you*.”
      2. **Psalm 93:1** says, “*The LORD reigns; He is robed in majesty; the LORD is robed; He has put on strength as his belt. Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved*.”
      3. **Psalm 147:5**, “*Great is our Lord, and abundant in power*.”
      4. And it is God’s power that led David to pray, as we read earlier, “*Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours … You are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all*.”
   4. But another place where we see the power of God is in the **resurrection** **and ascension** of the Lord Jesus. In **Ephesians 1**, Paul spoke about God’s power “*that He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places*.” And he prayed that each believer might know and experience this same power. He said, I pray that each believer might “*know … the immeasurable greatness of His power*.” And later on in Ephesians he put it like this: “*Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us.*” So, the power of God is the power to save those who are dead in sin and the power to help us live the Christian life.
      1. And so, keep praying that this powerful God might bring your unbelieving family member or neighbour or workmate to faith in Christ. And keep praying that the power of God might give you victory over that habitual sin that you keep falling into. For God “*is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us*.”
      2. But also, as we heard in our earlier **Jude** **reading**, it is God’s power that can preserve you in faith and bring you to glory: “*Now to Him who is able [same word – dynamite!] to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy*.”
      3. But in 2 Timothy 3:12 we read these words: “*Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted*.” And many believers throughout church history have experienced this. And we will too, one day, to one degree or another. And the temptation to despair at the power of persecutors will be real. And they and kings and presidents may seem to get away with opposing Christ and His people for a while. But remember what **Psalm 2** says: “*He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision*.” And that is because He has set His king, the Lord Jesus, on His royal throne. And to Him belongs all the power. So, when you pray, “*Yours is the power*,” you are reminding yourself and declaring to the world that Jesus Christ possesses all the power, and that He is *able* *to* and *will* *do* all that He has purposed and promised to do!
3. But thirdly, what do we confess and proclaim when we pray about God’s **glory**?
   1. Well, way back in the Garden of Eden, the temptation that the serpent put to the woman was to usurp the glory of God; to be like God; to enter into the divine; to enjoy the glory that only God deserves. And he did this by saying to her, “*For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God*.” And you know, ever since then, this has been a constant temptation of the devil – don’t listen to God! Be your own god! Seek your own glory!
   2. But that is not what we were created to do. Can anyone tell us **what man’s chief end is**, according to the shorter Catechism? It is “to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.” We were created to glorify God; to live for Him and to bring Him the worship that He deserves. And we do this, first of all, by believing in the Son that He sent. And then we submit ourselves, each day, gladly and willingly, to His rule; we offer ourselves as living sacrifices of love and obedience and praise.
   3. In Romans 9-11, the Apostle did his level best to explain the doctrine of election. And there never has been nor will there ever be a more masterful attempt to explain that pretty complex and wonderfully mysterious doctrine. But do you remember where he ended up? Do you remember how he concluded his explanation? We find it in **Romans 11:33-36**: “*Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and how inscrutable His ways! "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been His counselor?" "Or who has given a gift to Him that he might be repaid?" For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory forever*.” You see, Paul was prepared to let God be God. Paul was satisfied with what God had revealed and what he could understand, and he was prepared to leave the rest with God and to worship Him!
      1. And those words at the end of Romans 11 are doxology. They are a glory-word to God. And Paul would often break out in doxology. And he often ended his letters with a doxology, just like Jude does.
      2. And this is why we end every worship service by singing a doxology – a glory-word to God. We want our last words in worship to be a glory-word to God!
   4. And in terms of our prayers, in **John 14:13**, Jesus said, “*Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son*.” So, the main purpose of prayer is not that WE get what we want, but that the name of God would be glorified. And so, having brought all the requests of the prayer that the Lord Jesus taught us to pray before the Lord, it is fitting that we remind ourselves and declare to the world that the name of God “should receive all the praise, forever,” as our Lord’s Day puts it.
4. And that brings us, fourthly and lastly, to the **meaning** of “Amen.”
   1. The word ‘Amen’ is actually a Hebrew word. It basically means ‘sure’ or ‘truly.’ Several times in the Gospels, Jesus would say, “*Truly, truly, I say to you*…” Literally, He said, “*Amen, Amen, I say to you*…” And He did this to emphasize the truth or certainty or reliability of what He was saying. Hebrew dictionaries tell us that “Amen” means: “To confirm, support, uphold; to be established, be faithful, be true; to be certain, i.e. to believe.” So, when we say “Amen,” we are expressing agreement and belief that what we or whomever has been praying is true and certain and established and reliable.
      1. For example, when Moses listed the curses of the covenant in **Deuteronomy 27**, He commanded all the people of Israel to say. “*Amen*.” They were to agree that what was said would certainly come true.
      2. But at other times in the Old Testament, we read about a prayer of thanksgiving, and “*then all the people said, "Amen!" and praised the LORD*.” So, the whole congregation added their agreement to the thanksgiving!
      3. So, it is certainly appropriate to say an “Amen” out loud in worship. At the end of prayers or in agreement with truth in the sermon, you may say, “Amen.”
   2. But another important part of the meaning of “Amen” is revealed in **Revelation 3:14**. For there we read this: “*The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation*.” And it is a *person* being described there – the Lord Jesus Christ. And in **1 Corinthians 1:20** we read, “*For all the promises of God find their Yes in [Jesus]. That is why it is through Him that we utter our Amen to God for His glory*.” So, to say ‘Amen’ is to confess that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and your Saviour and Lord. It is to recognize that He is “*the way, the TRUTH, and the life*.” It is to recognize that all God’s promises have their fulfilment in the person and work of the Lord Jesus. So, to say and mean ‘Amen’ is to honour Christ as Lord. It is to put Him at the centre of your prayers, indeed, of all your worship.
   3. And then, finally, in **John 16:23**, Jesus said, “*Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, He will give it to you*.” And this promise of Jesus is why the catechism says, “It is even more sure that God listens to my prayer, than that I really desire what I pray for.”
      1. Isn’t that incredible! Do you always absolutely desire everything that you pray for? I know I don’t. Sometimes when other people are praying, I am thinking about the next part I will fit on my car or last night’s rugby game. Sometimes my own prayers are just a bunch of words rolling off my tongue, because I am not truly concentrating on or meaning what I am saying. Is it the same with you? And sometimes even as I am asking for something, even if it is a good thing, I am doubting that it will really happen.
      2. But brothers and sisters, young people and boys and girls, if you truly trust in Christ for your salvation, and you are praying because God commands you to pray, and according to the pattern of prayer that the Lord Jesus taught us to pray, and you are asking for things that you need and that God has promised, and you end your prayer with an “Amen,” then “it is even more sure that God listens to [your] prayer, than that [you] really desire what [you] pray for.” Isn’t that incredible? What a gracious God we serve! What a blessing to know this!

So, with all that we have learned about the prayer that the Lord Jesus taught us to pray, let us turn to God now in a time of prayer patterned after that prayer, which I am borrowing from Kevin DeYoung’s book on the Lord’s Prayer.