

The Fifth Sunday in Lent  
March 22, 2026  
St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Cleveland Heights  
The Reverend Patricia Rose

Today on this 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent, we conclude our 5-part sermon series on the Lord's prayer with these final words:

Join me if you wish: ***For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.***

Unlike the other parts of the Lord's Prayer we've talked about, these are not the words of Jesus as he taught the disciples to pray. These words were not recorded by Matthew or Luke. They are not found in any of our earliest papyrus or parchment manuscripts of the gospels.

The earliest record of these words being added to the Lord's Prayer was in a first century document, the *Didache*, or Teachings, about the basics of the very early church. These words are called a doxology, which is simply a short phrase meant to praise, or give glory to God.

Other common doxologies include: At the end of the Eucharistic Prayer, Through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory are yours almighty God now and forever Amen. Or Glory be to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Words similar to this Lord's Prayer doxology are found in the Hebrew scripture, such as in 1 Chronicles – "Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom."

Or in the book of Daniel, praise is given to the earthly [King Nebuchadnezzar](#), – "You, O king, the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, and the might, and the glory."

We can see that these words are embedded in and arose from the ancient world view of patriarchy and of kings as chosen agents of God's power.

So that's some background about this doxology. But there's so much more to the Lord's Prayer than just words that arose out of an historical context.

Sacred words are portals. If we choose to enter them, not just in our minds, but with our whole being, heart and soul, they take us to a vast landscape of peaks and valleys and tunnels and rivers, sun and moon and the wonder of the starlit cosmos. As Father Alexander Schmemmann wrote it in his little book about the Lord's Prayer: "*Behind each word, there lies a world of spiritual realities, spiritual connections that regularly escape our attention, that have vanished in the turmoil of our daily lives...From this point of view this is more than a prayer; it is an epiphany and revelation of that spiritual world for which we are created.*"

In other words, the prayer points us to the wisdom of the Truth, which we were created to know, an experience-able revelation given to us by an outrageously generous creator.

This is in alignment with the wisdom tradition of which Jesus Christ was a master, a tradition embodied in many wisdom books throughout scripture and sacred texts, a wisdom personified in the apostles, in the inconceivable change

and fire in them after the sightings of the risen Christ – a complete change of spirit, understanding, and courage. The wisdom tradition was deeply practiced by the early desert fathers and mothers, and by mystics and monks and contemplatives through time and around the world.

This wisdom as taught by Jesus says that your faith is not about memorizing facts or following rules with rigid adherence to look good. Jesus calls us instead to a radical change in consciousness, a shift that comes at a great cost, As Jesus said, “For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for the sake of Truth will find it”. This is a core paradox taught by Jesus, meaning that surrendering everything we think we are leads to knowing who we truly are in God, to feeling the fullness of life flowing through us as courage, peace, gentleness, compassion, forgiveness. So let’s look at these words through this lens of Christ’s wisdom.

### **For thine**

What is this “thine?” We use the word God in a cavalier way, as if we know exactly what it means and we have it in a little unvarying box in our pocket. To our great loss. This thine includes living energy of grace and life. the highest truth of life, the inconceivable miracle and marvel of whatever causes there to be something and not nothing. The preciousness of experiencing love, the wonder of all that we are inside, and all that is.

In this doxology, we’re celebrating all of this in awe and gratitude, that we are part of it, that we can experience it. John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist branch of Christianity called this doxology “a solemn Thanksgiving, a compendious acknowledgement of the attributes and works of God”

### *For thine **is the kingdom***

Is this kingdom about a great and mighty King, a super man, who rules over us and doles out punishment and reward to control us? Did the earthly life of Jesus point to that type of kingdom and king in any way?

On Good Friday, we’ll hear again how, out of human ignorance, Jesus was mocked as a king. But his life was not about an elite kingdom or a patriarchal king lording power over others.

It was about being a vulnerable peasant baby, a humble healer, a prayerful soul in the desert. It was above all about radical inclusive love, especially to people like our immigrant siblings who are being demonized and brutalized every day and like the hungry children in poverty in Cleveland, mostly due to systemic racism. Ron Carleton of the Greater Cleveland Food Bank told us in a recent forum that Cleveland has one of the highest rates of childhood poverty in the United States.

Another translation for the Greek word for kingdom is realm. Not an elevated place grandly appointed with velvet thrones and guarded, but something more subtle, an energy like Love. The Kingdom of God is the realm of Love.

And what Jesus said about this kingdom is that it is near, in the midst of, or within us. We have the incredible choice to undergo the radical transformation that unleashes that realm of love in the midst of us.

### *For thine is the kingdom and **the power,***

And what of power? Did Christ come flaunting forceful power, crushing others in his way, showing people who is the boss, no matter the harm and hurt it caused? What is the greatest power?

Jesus told us about our power to know the Truth, and through it to become truly free. Is there anything worth not following this? Jesus told us about our power when he said, “A new commandment I give to you: that you love one another as I have loved you. “

And this power is not about living up to an impossible standard and you should try harder and what’s wrong with you, you should be loving 100% of every day.

It’s about our power to trust the power of something greater than just our own efforts. In the truest miracles of life – we just plant the seeds, water them, nourish them and the branches and flowers and fruit will miraculously manifest.

So just pray. Meditate. Examine yourself with compassion and truth. Lovingly look for what’s in the way of your willingness. Find a way to help your neighbor. Be in a community like this to support you. Take care of your body, this sacred vessel. Read sacred texts. Love yourself and know you are loveable. Just plant the seeds and trust.

*For thine is the kingdom and the power and **the glory.***

The root meaning of the Greek word for glory is actually weightiness. That is, a substantial presence, an abundance. The glory of God is this abundant presence of God, miraculous life, the self-expression of what God is. The glory of God is the goodness of life, visible and invisible, it’s the miraculous potential in a Redwood seed and in every heart and soul, every one, the immigrant family, in you and I, the children in poverty, the arrogant and the tragically confused and lost.

Father Schmemmann writes “how illusory, brief, and fragile is any glory in this world.” True. But the more precious everlasting glory of the sacred manifest presence is revealed in us and in this world.

*For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, **forever and ever.***

The precious glory of the Holy and most real exists in the forever, the eternal, that is- the timeless presence here and now, where we are existing. We and this moment are not a drop in the ocean but the ocean in a drop.

The closing word is **Amen.** Meaning. And so it is.

The wonder of life is that we may realize that it is so, not as an abstract belief but as a felt experience, not just with intellect but with our whole being, our deepest senses, pure consciousness, deep courageous willingness, surrender. We are in God and God is in us.

And we celebrate this great, unfathomable blessing and opportunity with the closing doxology of the Lord’s Prayer. Join me in slowly saying it if you wish.

*For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, **forever and ever. Amen.***