



“For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.”

When you read your Bible, that last phrase is typically in the footnote section of most translations. At Matthew 6:13 you’ll see a footnote after the phrase “but deliver us from evil.” And then the footnote will say something like this, “Some manuscripts add ‘For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.’” What’s all this talk about “some manuscripts . . .” etc.?

Well, the books of the New Testament were the most widely copied documents in the ancient world. In fact, we have more documentary evidence that Jesus lived than Julius Caesar. No kidding. These copies were called manuscripts. Since we don’t have the originals (how would we know if we did?) we’re dependent on the thousands of manuscript copies to figure out what the originals actually said. It would be like depending on copies of the Gettysburg Address, were we to lose Abraham Lincoln’s own autographed originals. That said, there are copies of the Lord’s Prayer which include the phrase “For Yours is the kingdom . . .” and there are copies which don’t. The earlier (and perhaps more accurate) copies don’t have this doxology. That’s why you’ll find it in the footnote of your Bible.

Does that mean we shouldn’t include it? No, and here’s why: it would have been unthinkable for a Hebrew to let Satan (“deliver us from evil”) have the last word in a prayer to the Father. The Hebrews *always* ended prayer in a doxology. And the most common Jewish doxology was: “Blessed be the name of the glory of his kingdom forever and ever. Amen.” Jesus may not have included this part of the prayer verbatim because that’s how they ended it anyway. Which—by the way—is the best way to end your prayers. Because in the end, it’s all about God.



Jesus' Prayer and the Capitol

I love America. I really do. I wouldn't want to be born in any other country on the face of this earth. I could spend a month in Washington DC, touring the Capitol, the White House, the Lincoln, Jefferson, Washington, WW2, and Vietnam memorials and monuments. Just the thought of climbing those steps and beholding the sculpted granite and marble. It all looks bigger than life. Mortals are immortalized. Archeologists will one day sift through the rubble of these American legends—I dare say, gods.

The Lord's Prayer has issues with all this.

Jesus' mother, Mary, gave us all a head's up about this in her song, "The Magnificat."

And Mary said:

*"My soul glorifies the Lord
[47] and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
[48] for he has been mindful
of the humble state of his servant.
From now on all generations will call me blessed,
[49] for the Mighty One has done great things for me--
holy is his name.
[50] His mercy extends to those who fear him,
from generation to generation.
[51] He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;
he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.
[52] He has brought down rulers from their thrones
but has lifted up the humble.
[53] He has filled the hungry with good things
but has sent the rich away empty. (Luke 1:46-53 NIV)*

When the poor are lifted up and the rich are sent away empty, God's kingdom is breaking out. When the hungry get food, God's kingdom is erupting among us. When your congregation prays "Yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory," the folks at City Hall ought to get nervous. (Willimon 1996, 97)



The kingdom is God's

Satan offered Jesus the kingdoms of the world if Jesus would simply bow and worship him.

The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. [6] And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. [7] So if you worship me, it will all be yours." (Luke 4:5-7 NIV)

It's a ploy he uses today. Satan was offering Jesus the world without the Cross. He's like that—he's into short cuts. He's all about deception—like offering to give away that which isn't his. Always has. Always will.

But Jesus knew better. He knew that Satan has been liar from the beginning. Jesus knew the truth: *"All authority on heaven and earth has been given to me.[that's Jesus, not Satan]" (Matthew 28:18)*

For Christians, the Lord's Prayer determines what is true. We wouldn't know truth except through this prayer, which teaches us to whom we belong, where we are moving, what we really look like under our assorted masks, and what true kingdom, power, and glory looks like. (Willimon 1996, 107)

*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.
Yours, O Lord, is the kingdom;
you are exalted as head over all.
[12] Wealth and honor come from you;
you are the ruler of all things.
In your hands are strength and power
to exalt and give strength to all. (1 Chron. 29:11-12 NIV)*



The power is God's

And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. (Revelation 19:6 KJV)

One of the reasons we need to pray is because we're not God. God is God. God is omnipotent. God is Almighty. That means that there's nothing He can't do. *Is anything too hard for the Lord? (Genesis 18:14)*

Me, there's lots of things too hard for me to do. Organic chemistry is too hard for me. Learning Russian is too hard for me. Hanging drywall is too hard for me. Sinking a 3 foot putt downhill on a fast green with 3 others watching—too hard! On vacation, I thought it would be a cinch to ride my bike 46 miles the day after riding my bike 34 miles. Didn't happen. Too hard. Don't get into deep discussions with me after 9:18 p.m. I start drifting. In fact, when it's all said and done, I'll have spent 1/3 of my life in the sack. As will every ruler on the face of this earth. Every 16 or so hours, God causes even the kings and commanders of earth to yawn, nod off, and get glazed eyes. Their eyes get droopy and their body gets drowsy. It's off to la-la land. So much for being in charge.

But God doesn't need sleep. He never tires. He never slumbers. Nothing is too hard for Him. For His is the power. Do you sleep like your God is sovereign?

*I will lie down and sleep in peace,
for you alone, O Lord,
make me dwell in safety. (Psalm 4:8 NIV)*



The glory is God's

Kings like their glory. They want to be remembered for something. They want to leave a legacy. We have a version of that in America. It's called "Presidential Libraries." I've seen two: Lincoln's and Truman's. I may have to go by myself if I want to see any others. My boys have never greeted me at breakfast with, "Dad, can we go see another Presidential Library?"

The book of Luke leaves us with two versions of glory. One captures the glory of earthly empires, whose stage is occupied by the likes of Augustus Caesar and Herod. A glorious empire at the cost of countless lives. A glory secured by brute force and military domination. That's just how it works on the sun's third rock.

On the other hand, Jesus' glory is other-worldly.

His glory was revealed first in his birth at Bethlehem. Immanuel. God with us. God clothed in flesh.

His glory was unveiled through miracles like raising a four day dead man back to life.

His glory was marveled at through words like, "Love your neighbor and pray for those who persecute you."

His glory was made known by death—His. It occurred at the least likely place—a crucifix; a slave's death.

His glory was validated by an empty tomb. (If you can't kill me, what can you do to me?)

His glory is why we gather every Sunday in worship.

And, His glory is remembered, not in a magnificent library, but around a table with earthy elements like bread and juice.

See you at the table.

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. . . . From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another. (John 1:14, 16 NIV)