

Steps  
into the  
Larger Life

(Studies in The Lord's Prayer)



By  
John Mackay

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"For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in Heaven and Earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height and to know the love of Christ that passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled with all the fulness of God."—Eph. 3:14-19.

"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."—Eph. 4:13.

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## Preface

"Send us something to make us think," said one of the men in the trenches, when asked what he and his comrades would like to read.

Those who are facing serious issues always learn to think and as they think, prayer and the unseen things become very real to them. We only live deeply and triumphantly as we too, think and pray.

The prayer our Master taught was meant not only to supply language with which we might draw near to the Father on special occasions, but to stimulate us to meditate upon the great realities of our own inner life and its relation to the source of all life.

These short studies are the product of such meditation extending over a number of years and are now printed with the hope that they may encourage others to give more attention to prayer and the fuller life of which it is the richest expression.

JOHN MACKAY.

Westminster Hall,  
Vancouver, July 15th, 1916.

207423

After this manner therefore pray ye:  
Our Father which art in heaven, hal-  
lowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom  
come. Thy will be done in earth, as  
it is in heaven. Give us this day our  
daily bread. And forgive us our debts,  
as we forgive our debtors. And lead  
us not into temptation, but deliver us  
from evil: for Thine is the Kingdom  
and the Power and the Glory, for  
ever. Amen.

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## Attunement

### "Our Father"

To think of Prayer is to raise the question "To what or whom do we pray?" In all ages the answer to this question has determined the character of prayer.

Polytheists believe in a multitude of gods, not clearly defined as to nature and sphere, sometimes half human, sometimes quite unlike what seems most human. With such a belief there can be no consistent theory of the universe and no prayer in its fulness. Instead of satisfying mind and heart, it leads to confusion and unrest.

Pantheists hold that All is God and God is All; that the world we see is only a passing phase of a great ocean of being, without heart or personality, called God. Man is only a fleeting bubble on this great deep. The highest task of life is to give up all desire and all aspiration for the realization of one's personality and to sink into the All, into a kind of dreamless sleep, as a drop falls into the ocean and disappears. Sin and the evils of life are accompaniments of the individual's

separation from the All and disappear as the individual is merged into it. Prayer is the assertion of our oneness with the Divine and ends in the complete fusion with that infinite deep of being from which we came and to which at last we return.

However imposing such a thought may be, there can be no real prayer as Christ taught prayer, in the approach to an impersonal ocean of being of which we are but a drop, emerging for a few brief moments only to disappear again. The prayer of the pantheist is mere assertion and passive acceptance of what he believes to be the facts about himself in relation to the All of which he is but a passing phase. Pantheism gets rid of life's unrest and tension only by getting rid of the individual life, by submerging it in the All.

Christ, on the contrary, taught us to lift up eyes of child-like faith and love and call the object of our prayer, Father. Men of earlier, simpler times found it hard to realize the nearness and therefor the most intimate phases of the Fatherhood of God. He was a God dwelling in a place called Heaven, far above the earth, entering the course of nature only at intervals,

though always willing to interfere to advance the interests of His children. Modern thought, however, has shown us the immeasurable extent in space and the almost incalculable minuteness of the processes of nature. The thought of the Psalmist finds echo in the heart of the modern scientifically trained man, "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars which Thou has ordained; what is man that Thou art mindful of him? .and the Son of Man that Thou visitest him?"

That same science, though it has given us an overwhelming vision of the universe, has brought us the knowledge of an all pervading presence, the underlying reality beneath the world of things. It is called by many different names, power, force, energy, but the one theory that meets all the facts is that it is a personal spirit which assumes the formes we call Nature and by its living activity indyelle all and sustains all. Thus the words of Paul and the words of modern Science are one and the same, "In Him we live and move and have our being." His power, His wisdom, His all pervading presence surround us like an atmosphere and pervade the innermost

fibres of our being, yet His name is Father and His character is love.

But we are taught to say "our" as well as Father, and the first movement of prayer makes it necessary for us to have some conception of what we ourselves are. What am I who pray? If I am only a body, a physical somewhat, part and parcel of the material world amid which I dwell, and nothing more, bound helplessly by its laws and subject to the change and decay which is its character, there can be no real prayer.

We never think of a stick as praying or of a stone lifting up its inner self to God. It is only man who prays and he prays because he knows within his innermost self, deeper than theory and philosophy, that he is spirit, like the great all pervading spirit and capable of fellowship with Him. His expression of that conviction may be crude and childish, but the whole history of humanity is the story of man's striving to lay hold on God, to realize the God likeness which he feels to be his own real nature.

Even when we get some understanding of the soul as the essential inner man, we are too prone to limit it by



of the spirit because of their power to make their own something of the full life of the All soul, God. Yet even the least responsive soul has that quenchless thirst to drink from the fountain of realized life, the source of its being, the goal of its quest, the Eternal One. Prayer, the supreme attitude of the soul to God, is the holding of the Eternal before the adoring gaze of the soul. In it we may attempt to spell out in terms of thought, feeling and volition what He means to us, but its highest form is attunement, the complete giving over of the self to Him. In this we absorb and make our own what in this higher harmony we apprehend through the whole of our souls.

Our physical bodies are parts of that physical world which is, in infinite variety, the forms assumed by the continuous forth putting of God. The physical world is a meaningless stream of unceasing change unless we see it as the rich activity of the All spirit. "My Father worketh hitherto and I work," says the Christ. Being and becoming are blended in one in the all embracing spirit, ceaseless activity and unbroken rest are side by side in Him.

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We are linked by our bodies to that side of the divine which is constantly active, constantly becoming, that which we call nature. It is interpreted to our inner life by the senses, and through nature we apprehend God who is in nature. All our intellectual activities, all our scientific searchings spell out for us some meanings of the world about us and thus make what is enfolded in that world a part of our enlarging and unfolding soul life. Thus all physical science is a medium through which God unfolds Himself to us. "We think God's thoughts after Him," says the astronomer. "Verily Thou art a God that hidest Thyself," says the Psalmist. Of all such knowledge gained, each whit is a discovery of some phase of God which in the discovery becomes our own, without being lost to Him.

Prayer is greater than all these imperfect searchings. It overleaps the slow progress of science and philosophy, laying line on line the whole soul, the whole self on the All spirit, in so far as He is known. The inner sanctity of a great friendship or a great affection is a guide to this experience. In words and looks and

acts is the ordinary intercourse of those who love. Moments come, however, when soul seems wholly attuned to soul, when there is a complete fusion of life with life, when all of each is fully revealed to the other, not by words or looks or acts, but some wondrous pervasion of soul and soul in which each is its very self and yet altogether the other's. So is it in the mystery of prayer. It is the losing of self in the Infinite soul, a losing which is yet full realization. "Our Father" means this ineffable oneness of all that we are with all that He is, means our enrichment by all that we have thus apprehended of Him.

But there is more to saying "Our Father," than this attunement to the Father spirit. "Our" reminds us that we do not stand in the universe alone with Him. We are compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses. No one of us can for a single moment separate ourselves from the presence and the influence of a multitude of other spiritual beings like ourselves, in this life and the beyond. When we are attuned to God, His attitude to all spiritual beings becomes ours. That attitude is love. Wherever other

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souls assume the same openness of being, the same harmony with God and with us, we are together raised to a higher degree of the vision of the Eternal. Though their attitude to us be indifferent or hostile, we must still love them with the great vicarious passion which forever speaks from the Cross. When we say "Our Father" we cannot ignore any human being with whom we have ever come into contact. In the saying of these words we stand in the centre between the great nexus of human souls here and in the unseen, who are linked to our lives because of our oneness to God. We speak for them because we are one with them in the inner union of sympathy, or being attuned to the Divine we enfold them in our love, even though they hate us.

Each spirit has its focal centre in a body, but we, the real we, reach wherever our sympathy, our thought, our feelings, our volitions extend. A multitude of spiritual beings may be present at the same point in time and space. We mingle with those who are about us in a more intimate way than any physical figure can convey. Yet we need sympathetic intercourse through our conscious life to make us

really aware of each other. It is the business of life to widen the circle of that sympathetic contact, by seeing to it that we are always in tune with the All spirit, God, in all our relations with our fellow men. By praying "Our Father" in thoughtfulness and sincerity we are attuned to Him and to those whom we lift up in this way to the All Spirit.

Standing thus, united with all the universe of men through those of whose presence we are conscious, we lift our own innermost selves and theirs into an experience of the presence of God in which we are attuned to Him and He to us. Then only can He be to us what the Perfect One is capable of being to those who long to be like Him, in that Universe of souls which love holds in one.

*As Others have expressed it:*

"Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy Presence?"

If I ascend up into Heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there.

If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

Even there shall Thy hand lead me,  
and Thy right hand shall hold me.

If I say, Surely the darkness shall  
cover me, even the night shall be light  
about me.

Yea, the darkness hideth not from  
Thee; but the night shineth as the  
day, the darkness and the light are  
both alike to Thee.—Ps. 139:7-12.

“If a man love Me, he will keep my  
words; and My Father will love him,  
and we will come unto Him and make  
our abode with Him.”—John 14:23.

“We should establish ourselves in  
a sense of God’s presence by continu-  
ally talking with Him.”—Brother Law-  
rence.

“A presence actual as the heart  
From whence my own life motions start,  
A Being, real though unseen,  
More true than trace where form hath  
been;  
A Spirit to my soul is nigh,—  
Alone, yet not alone am I.”

## PRAYER

Our Father

## Apprehension

### "Which art in Heaven"

There is grave danger that, surrounded as we are by objects of sense, we may think of God in terms of these. To apprehend Him thus is to conceive God in terms of the lowest forms of our own life. But when with heart and understanding we pray "Our Father which art in Heaven," this danger disappears.

The child mind and the child periods of the history of the race think of heaven as above the earth and of God as great because He is elevated beyond the limitations and the changes of the things we see, in a far off region, where these things are unknown.

Maturity and experience, on the other hand, show us that heaven is not a place so much as it is a state, a condition of existence which underlies and is back of earth or the physical world. So, when our souls reach out to lay hold upon Him, we do not need to ascend into a place afar off,

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but we reach back of the world that is all about us and experience Him as its sustaining power, its underlying reality; yea, in our own innermost being we find Him. "Closer is He than breathing and nearer than hands and feet." He is in heaven, in the great Ocean of reality of which the passing show we call the Universe is but the outward appearance, the forms assumed from time to time only to be merged into other forms as the ages roll. Heaven is the real, back of the seen and the changing, and our Father makes it. It is His life and we find heaven when we apprehend Him and live in Him and He in us.

There is, however, another contrast in the words "Which art in heaven." Heaven implies all that is holy, pure and good, and the God whom we worship as our Father in Jesus Christ is Himself all these. Dwelling in Him the sin and the weakness of which we are so conscious here have no more power, the unrest and the uncertainty of life is unknown and the soul finds that fulness of experience which we call Rest. Thus when we pray "Our Father which art in heaven," we penetrate behind the fleeting, changing

world of sense and sin and lay hold upon Holy Love and perfect fulness of life that transcends time and dwells in Eternity.

So, the Master of Life, when He taught us to attune our souls to the Divine and to our fellow human souls by saying "Our Father," taught us also to say "Who art in heaven," lest we should attempt to pray to some creature of our own imagining, formed after the fashion of the things that are seen, instead of to the living God in whom we live and move and have our being and in whom is the heaven of our souls. The only two abiding realities are God and the souls of men, and we, as we truly apprehend Him, take on His likeness and enter into the unchanging eternity of His being. When thought, feeling and will are all blended and lost in the sense of His oneness with us and ours with Him, then we are in the region where real prayer is possible, then we begin to know something of the peace of God which passeth understanding.

**As Others have expressed it:**

"The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of the isles be glad thereof.

Clouds and darkness are round  
about Him; righteousness and judgment  
are the habitation of His throne.  
—Ps. 92:1-2.

“For My thoughts are not your  
thoughts, neither are your ways My  
ways, saith the Lord.

For as the heavens are higher than  
the earth, so are my ways higher than  
your ways, and my thoughts than  
your thoughts.”—Isa. 55:8-9.

“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard,  
neither have entered into the heart of  
man, the things which God hath pre-  
pared for those who love Him. But  
God hath revealed them unto us by  
His Spirit.”—1st Cor. 2:9-10.

“The Lord is in His Holy Place  
In all things near and far,  
Shekinah of the snowflake He,  
And Glory of the star;  
And Secret of the April-land  
That stirs the field to flowers,  
Whose little tabernacles rise  
To hold Him through the hours.”

—W. C. Gannett.

### PRAYER

Our Father which art in heaven,  
Thou all pervading spirit, author and

source of our lives and of all things that are, who lookest upon us in the face of Jesus Christ; we draw near unto Thee to know our oneness with Thee, to surrender wholly to Thy presence, to experience the life which is life indeed. Still all the voices of time and sense; purge us from sin that blinds the soul. Save us from that false self which seeks to live apart from Thee. May heaven shine through the things of earth so that our souls may meet and respond to Thee in them. Thus shall we be enabled to pray without ceasing, and to live the life which is hid with Christ in Thee.—Amen.

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## Adoration

### "Hallowed Be Thy Name"

For us, a name is often only a mark or badge which sets apart one individual from another, but for the Jew it was loaded with all that could be expressed in a word of the character and inner life of the person named. The name Jehovah was so sacred to him and conveyed so much of the Divine that he would not utter it in ordinary speech, but used a substitute. It is with such a fulness of meaning that the word is used in the prayer our Master taught.

Coming near to God and apprehending Him as "Our Father which art in heaven," we are overwhelmed with adoration before His glorious majesty and His unspeakable wealth of life.

All Nature speaks of Him, the heavens declare His glory and the firmament shows His handiwork, to the thoughtful, prayerful heart. The quest of all the ages in Science and philosophy, in art, in literature and in religion has been to spell out some syllables of the name that is above every name.

Then, too, each one of us has a life-long experience of His unceasing care, of His unchanging love, in every phase of life and His name means all this. So, also, the whole history of humanity is the story of how man has slowly, Oh, how slowly! come to comprehend what He is and therefore what His name means.

Jesus the Christ, in all He is and does, spells out to us the name of God in its fullest significance. In Him we see God, not only as the high and Holy One who inhabits eternity, who is glorious in majesty, dominion and power, but as the Father who loves to the uttermost His unworthy and ungrateful children. Whatever we see in Christ of infinite tenderness and undying love, belongs to the name of God. And the history of the Church from that day to this, in its struggles and aspiration, in its failures and its triumphs, spells out that name of names.

When we think of it, when we hear it spoken, or when we attempt to realize it in the solemn sanctity of the prayer attitude, it means for us all that we have learned of God, from nature, from Providence, from experience, from history, and most of all

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from the face of Jesus Christ. With all that it thus means borne in upon us, how can we fail to bow in adoration, saying, "Hallowed be Thy Name."

As Others have expressed it:

"Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory."—Isa. 6:3.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle."—Ps. 24:7-8.

"Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

Unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."—Eph. 3: 20-21.

"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come."—Rev. 4:8.

"Lord of all being, throned afar,  
Thy glory flames from star to star,  
Centre and soul of every sphere,  
Yet to each loving heart, how near!"

—O. W. Holmes.

## PRAYER

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty: Heaven and earth are full of the majesty of Thy glory. Before the mountains were brought forth or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God. Thou art worthy to receive blessing and honor and glory and power. The earth is Thine and the fulness thereof, the world and all that dwell therein. One generation shall praise Thy works unto another and declare Thy mighty acts, and we shall speak of the glorious honor of Thy wondrous works. We have looked upon Thy boundless love in the face of Jesus Christ and in His cross we glory. Our fathers trusted Thee in Him and Thou didst never fail them; Thy goodness and Thy mercy have followed us down the days and the years. Call Thou, O God, upon our souls and all that is within us to hallow Thy holy name. Amen.

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## Aspiration

### "Thy Kingdom Come"

When we realize that round about us, indwelling and sustaining all, is "Our Father in heaven"; when we know that the Universe amid which we dwell is essentially spiritual and that the only ultimate realities are God and the souls of men; when we feel that, pressing on us from every side and pervading the very warp and woof of our beings is the All Spirit, God; when we fall in lowly adoration before the glorious majesty of His presence, overwhelmed by His wisdom, His holiness and His love, then comes the question, "What shall be our relation to him?"

We cannot escape Him. He acts and reacts upon us with every breath we breathe, at every stage of our existence. We can shut Him out of the innermost recesses of our being where love and all the sacred things of life have their abode and occupy that sacred region with thoughts and impulses born of the passing and the fading things of time and sense. Or we can allow Him free access to every

corner of our souls, making Him King over all we have and are and thus becoming a highway through which He may obtain access to our fellow men to all the world. When we pray with all our hearts "Thy kingdom come," we invite the incoming of the Divine with all His high demands on character and life, we become a highway along which the kingdom of God may move to its ultimate victory over the souls of men.

We are first and supremely responsible that the kingdom shall come and come completely in our own lives and beyond that, we are only responsible for the extent of our influence upon others. A God filled life may thus be ours, and who can estimate what such a life may mean for time and for eternity. We must beware of trying to put the rest of the world right and worrying over the evil and the sin that is in others, while we cherish the same things in our own hearts. We ourselves must first be a part of the kingdom before we can bring it into other lives or understand what it means for them and for us.

It is right that we should plan and work for the betterment of social and political conditions and of the lives

of our fellow men, but we must beware lest our interest in these things blinds us to the one thing needful, the one thing for which we are responsible, that in the whole extent of our lives the kingdom of God may come, and remain.

When it is there we become a sensitive medium through which God can move into other lives, into the social institutions of which we are a part, into all the world. Nor can the kingdom come in any other way. It is useless repetition to pray for it until we let it come into our own lives in all its fulness. We do not even know what the kingdom is until it dwells within us.

Nor do we need to wait for some new order of things, for some new approach to the Almighty. He is as near to us now, in space, as He can ever be. The only thing that can keep Him from dwelling with us and in us is our own unwillingness. The saints and the martyrs of old found what the coming kingdom meant, and we may make the same great discovery. Who can estimate what a life in this age may mean with all the wealth of experience of twenty centuries energized by the fulness of

the Almighty. That is what we may find out, that is what we must find out, if we are to pray in sincerity, "Thy kingdom come."

As Others have expressed it:

"God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause His face to shine upon us;

That Thy way may be known upon earth, Thy saving health among all nations."—Ps. 67:1-2.

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God."—John 3:3.

"The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, Lo, here! or Lo, there! for, behold, the Kingdom of God is within you."—Luke 17:20-21.

"I cannot dread the darkness, where  
Thou wilt watch o'er me,  
Nor smile to greet the sunrise, un-  
less Thy smile I see;  
Creator, Saviour, Comforter, on Thee  
my soul is cast;  
At morn, at night, in earth, in heaven,  
be Thou my First and Last."

—Eliza Scudder.

## PRAYER

Almighty and all present God, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; we have felt Thy presence, we bow in awe before Thy majesty and Thy holiness, we are constrained by the Cross of Calvary and we would know Thy love which passeth knowledge. Indwell our spirits and reign without a rival there, so that thought, feeling and will may all be responsive to Thee. May our lives be so filled with Thee that we no longer live to ourselves but Thou livest and movest in us and through us, into the lives of our fellow men, into all the institutions amid which we dwell, unto the uttermost bounds of earth. Amen.

## Acceptance

### "Thy Will Be Done"

The hour of His deepest need was the occasion of our Master's richest spiritual experiences. With the bloody sweat drops coursing down His brow, with His flesh shuddering back from the terrible cup held to His lips by the sin of the world, with the cry escaping from His very soul "Let this cup pass from me," it seemed as if He had plumbed the deeps of agony. But when, from out the deeps, He was able to say, "Not My will but Thine be done," He realized His oneness with the Father as never before and found the strength that carried Him in triumph through all that lay before.

Though surrender to another will may mean slavery, in this surrender there is perfect freedom. The tyrant is outside of and unlike his unwilling victim. We are made in the image of God. His will is what ours ought to be. He is in Himself all that we are made to be, and His commands are the expression of the law of our innermost selves. When we accept

His will, we follow the dictates of our own highest nature. He is the All wise, All Holy One whose name is Love and whose will for us is based on perfect wisdom and perfect love. Surrender to Him, acceptance of His will is then discovery for us. It is the highest freedom, for it is the fullest expression of what life ought to be. It may lead us to the Cross, but beyond the Cross is the Crown of life.

Yet that perfect will of God is no simple thing to be stated in a sentence and grasped without effort. It is as rich and full as life itself, yea, as the character of the Almighty. Through the long history of the race, He has been revealing Himself to men. In the pages of the Bible we have the records of a nation specially responsive to His presence and of men richly endowed for knowing His will. That long succession of prophets and inspired men led up to the Incarnate One Himself, who showed in the limitations of time and sense the very heart and life of God. The New Testament gives the record of that life in so far as the writers of the Gospels could grasp it and the writers of the other books interpret it to men. The life of the Church, too,

from that day to this, has been a continual unfolding of the meaning of the Christ revelation, under the guidance of His own presence. To make sure that what she took to be the voice of God was not her own human speech, the Church has ever gone back to the norm of all our knowledge of God and of His will, the Bible. There, in contact with the lives He indwelt and made His own and with the record of the life of the Master Himself, she has always had a test of the truth or falsity of what she felt to be the will of God.

So, if we are to understand the will of the Father, we must move in the atmosphere of that marvellous book. And yet we are not wholly dependent on any book, however rare its riches, and however great its spiritual value. God lives and loves to-day as in the days of old and the devout heart attuned to Him may know His will at every moment of its experience. He meets our spirits in their innermost recesses and makes Himself and His purposes known to us at every turn, if we will but let Him.

So complex, however, are our lives, and so prone are we to mistake our own perverse and little thoughts for

the thoughts and purposes of God, that we need the whole experience of the good men of all ages by which to test and rectify our own. When our minds are filled with thoughts and experiences of those whom God has led and blessed in all ages and most of all with the memory of the life and words of the Incarnate One Himself, we come to know the voice of the Divine as it speaks to our innermost being and we learn, through it, the will of God. It is the contact of spirit with spirit, of life with life, too sweet and intimate, too rich and deep for any words to express, yet clear and sure as the eternal One Himself.

"Thy will be done," uttered out of the fulness of the heart, puts our whole being into harmony with God and up to the measure of our capacity we become one with Him as He works through us both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

This is how His will is done in Heaven. All who dwell there dwell in perfect oneness with Him and find their highest life in the doing of His will. As we pray, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven," and live as we pray, we are doing our part to bring the Kingdom of Heaven into

the affairs of earth, and to hasten the coming of the day when Christ shall rule over every living thing, and the Kingdom of Heaven shall be wherever men are.

As Others have expressed it:

"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" Then said I, "Here am I; send me."—Isa. 6:8.

"Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will, but Thine, be done."—Luke 22:42.

"Thy way, not mine, O Lord,  
However dark it be!  
Lead me by Thine own hand;  
Choose out the path for me.

The Kingdom that I seek  
Is Thine; so let the way  
That leads to it be Thine,  
Else I must surely stray.

Not mine, not mine the choice  
In things or great or small;  
Be Thou my guide, my strength,  
My wisdom, and my all."

## PRAYER

O Thou whose will for us is holy love, who dost surround and indwell our spirits, hear us pray. We are sinful and weak and foolish. We do not know Thee and we seek our own ways. Look upon us in the face of Jesus Christ and transform us into His image. So fill and master us that we may know that Thy will for us is perfect life, that only in Thee can we know our own best selves. We are restless and troubled with many things, because we try to live apart from Thee. Help us to pray with all our hearts "Thy will be done," and in that glad surrender may we find our lives in Thee and Thy life in us, to the glory of Thy great name in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Petition

### "Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread"

Where men live close to nature it is easy to feel dependence on the power behind it. The shepherd and the husbandman, the fisherman and the sailor have always had some kind of religious life, however crude and rough.

In a highly organized society, however, where our food and clothing reach us through many complex ways and all the world ministers to us at every turn, it is easy to forget God and think of some vague thing called civilization, or not to think at all. Yet when we truly pray "Thy will be done," we see that all this machinery of society is the expression of His will through human wills, as far as they respond to it. The sensitive soul that sees God everywhere despite the complex nature of social institutions, can still pray with simple, direct faith "Give us this day our daily bread."

We must also remember that to pray thus puts us under obligations to see that the institutions amid which we dwell express the will of God; that

the provisions which he makes for our physical well being reach those for whom they are intended. There is wide room for difference of opinion as to how much or how little any one may keep for himself of the good things of this world, but, if we have faith in God at all, there can be no difference of opinion as to His intention that all should have enough to live out a full orb'd life, unhampered by the lack of physical necessities. God may give us our daily bread, enough of earthly things to enable us to live as we ought to live, but if, from carelessness or greed we hold too much for ourselves, we suffer in body and in soul, and His little ones suffer despite His tender care and love for them. If there are those whom we allow to be thus handicapped, we cannot pray this prayer in sincerity, till we have done our best to right their wrongs. The prayer is for them as well as for ourselves and our Father always gives us a part in answering our own prayers.

Then, too, we stamp with dignity all that has to do with our physical life when we pray "Give us this day our daily bread." How sacred it must

be and how jealously it should be guarded if we are thus encouraged to claim for it the tender care of the Almighty.

The asceticism which neglects or maltreats the body has no place in the teachings of the Master. His was a sunny, happy life, which used the good things of life without abusing them, which drew to it the little children and all sweet and wholesome things, and took part in the marriage feast as well as in the funeral rites. The body is holy. It is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is within us. In nothing is it contemptible or indifferent. When we ask for what we need to keep it as He intended, we own that it has a place in God's order and a part to play that is worthy of His attention and ours.

On the other hand, there is here no encouragement to physical excess. We pray only for "daily bread." We sin against God and our own best selves when we make the body an end instead of a means to an end, taking for it more than its needs require.

All that has to do with our physical well being is included in this personal appeal to the Almighty source of all good. Our health is in His care and

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we may pray in simple faith for health and strength and food convenient for each day, knowing that no such prayer was ever prayed in vain.

As the successive generations have thus prayed, they have been learning how to use His bounty, they have been coming to understand His will in the laws of nature and the institutions of Society. By obedience to it they have been removing the obstacles that stood between the Almighty hand which freely pours out its bounty on all men and the hungry mouths that wait everywhere to be fed and the bodies that wait to be clothed and kept in fitness for their task of right living.

And we who love the Master who taught this prayer believe that as we pray it in sincerity we shall come to understand more and more of the marvellous Universe amid which we dwell and the Almighty Father who is at the heart of it; we believe that some day by His grace, we shall so understand and obey His will that poverty and ill-health shall have vanished from the earth and we shall be gathered to the other life like ripe grain when our full period of earth development is complete; when we shall be holy

and responsive to the will of Him who made us and who knows us every whit.

*As Others have expressed it:*

"Thou visitest the earth and waterest it: Thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water; Thou preparest them corn, when Thou hast so provided for it.

"Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness; and Thy paths drop fatness."—Ps. 65: 9-11.

"Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?"—Matt. 6:26.

"If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him."—Matt. 7:11.

"The child leans on its parent's breast,  
Leaves there its cares, and is at rest;  
The bird sits singing by its nest,  
And tells aloud  
His trust in God, and so is blest  
'Neath every cloud."

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"He hath no store, he sows no seed,  
Yet sings aloud, and doth not need:  
By flowing streams or grassy mead,  
He sings to shame  
Men who forget, in fear of need,  
A Father's name."

—Isaac Williams.

### PRAYER

Our Father who art in Heaven, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the eyes of all wait upon Thee; Thou openest Thy hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing. The cattle on a thousand hills are Thine, the silver and the gold are Thine. Give us this day our daily bread and teach us to use it in the way of Thy holy purposes. Forbid that we should make our own our brother's portion or that we should ever forget the helpless little ones in Thy great family. Give us hearts wholly responsive to Thee that we may keep our bodies as temples meet for Thy dwelling and use Thy gifts to Thy glory and our brothers' good. And to Thee, source of all good, shall be the praise and the glory. Amen.

## Confession

"Forgive us our debts as we forgive  
our debtors"

How closely "give" and "forgive" follow each other in the prayer of prayers. To recognize our Father as the source of daily bread is to make us conscious of our great debt to Him. All that we have and are, our life, our health, our food, our raiment, our safety in action and our joy in life, all these find their source in Him. He dwells in and works through us, so intimately that each breath we draw is a fresh gift from Him.

He is all things to us, yet how little we have been moved by His unceasing goodness. We accept His gifts and forget the Giver. We fail to feel the compelling power of His unchanging love. How then can we ask him for "Daily bread?" Ingratitude is the most potent barrier against real fellowship, even in our human relations. Who dare ask a favor of one with whom the most intimate spiritual fellowship has been broken by ingratitude. Forgiveness and restoration

alone make such a request possible. So, when we lift up longing hearts to God for daily bread, we become conscious of our lack of harmony, of the multitude of acts contrary to His will, which stand between us and Him. How can we say "Give" without in the same breath saying "Forgive."

Daily bread supplies strength for daily life, but forgiveness restores that spiritual harmony between ourselves and the Divine, without which, having a name to live, we are really dead. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Only the heart that feels its need of forgiveness and prays to be put right with Him can feed upon that living bread, can make God Himself a part of the very warp and woof of its life.

We owe Him an infinite debt for the continuous ministry which surrounds us, but this costs Him little compared with our sins. So long as we sin, we run counter to Him, we are a force in the world opposing His pure and holy purposes. Every impulse of opposition, every duty left undone, every unworthy thought or desire stands between him and His

purposes for us and His universe. The Cross of Christ is the eternal witness to what these mean to the Divine, whose love is crucified by our indifference, as well as by our open hostility.

In the prayer the Master taught, all our past conduct which has been out of harmony with the will of the Father is described as debts. We have been piling up thoughts and words, impulses and actions contrary to His all embracing purposes, and even our best service is marred by failures and lapses into sin. Then how can we ask Him to put us under new obligations to His love until we have received forgiveness for what we already owe.

Forgiveness and the mood which asks for it are two sides of one process, originating in the love of God and leaving the soul in a new attitude to Him.

When we pray "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors," we confess that the Divine forgiveness makes an entire change in our lives, makes us new men, able to forgive others what they owe because of their sins against us. We have met in some little measure the same treatment we

have been meting to our loving Father and how largely that bulks in our experience! Until we can freely forgive those who have trespassed against us, we do not know forgiveness, we are not in harmony with the God whom we ask to forgive us. We cannot be attuned to Him without adopting His attitude to all those made in His image. Yet, the same power which forgives us makes us capable of forgiving them. The measure of our repentance, of our restoration to harmony with the Divine, is willingness to forgive.

When we are forgiven, when the burden of debt has been taken out of the way, we are open to receive His presence, to become one with Him, so that His work is wrought in us and we are restored to fellowship with Him.

It is only when we are at one with Him, only when we are the instruments of His purposes in the whole range of our souls that we have the right to ask for daily bread, for that which sustains us and keeps us fit to work His will.

**As Others have expressed it:**

**"I acknowledge my transgressions;  
and my sin is ever before me.**

**Create in me a clean heart, O God;  
and renew a right spirit within me.**

**Then will I teach transgressors Thy  
ways; and sinners shall be converted  
unto Thee."—Ps. 51:3-10-13.**

**"For if ye forgive men their tres-  
passes, your Heavenly Father will also  
forgive you.**

**But if ye forgive not men their  
trespasses, neither will your Father  
forgive your trespasses."—Matt. 6:  
14-15.**

**"'Tis not enough to weep my sins,  
'Tis but one step to Heaven:—  
When I am kind to others—then  
I know myself forgiven."**

**—F. W. Faber.**

## **PRAYER**

**Giver of all good, whose love is  
measured by the Cross of Christ, for-  
give us our debts. We have prayed  
for daily bread and have used it upon  
our lusts or our selfish ambitions.  
Thou hast bountifully supplied our  
every want and we have grown fat**

of heart and dull of eye, failing to feel Thy goodness or to see Thy bounteous hand. Thou hast sought to lead us nearer Thee by Thine unceasing ministry to our needs: we have taken Thy gifts and forgotten the Giver. Thou has wooed us to follow in the way of Thy purposes; we have followed our own paths and chosen our own devices. But now, we turn again to Thee for daily bread and our sins rise up before us. Our debts are more than we can number and we stand condemned in Thy sight. Out of Thine infinite love, we pray Thee, for Christ's sake, forgive us, O God, and work in us that spirit which is at one with Thee and enables us gladly to forgive those who are our debtors. Amen.

## Intercession

"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil"

Prayer is more than a request or series of requests to a higher power for things of which we stand in need. It is an attitude of the whole life and it lifts the most commonplace experience into the light of the eternal.

When we are attuned to the All Spirit, knowing Him as Father and to the world of spirits that live in Him; when we know in our innermost being that back of the world that is seen is the real world which is His presence: when we have opened our whole being to His incoming: when we have put ourselves by definite surrender in harmony with Him; when, remembering that though we are spirits, we indwell bodies and these bodies are wholly dependent upon Him for their every need, we cast ourselves upon Him for "daily bread," then if not before, we feel that there is an element which continually breaks the mood and the power of prayer, which continually rises between us and God, between us

and our fellows, the terrible power of sin. Then, casting ourselves on the Love of the Eternal, laying bare our innermost lives to Him in confession, there comes, like the dawn of day, a new sense of the wonder and the sweetness of the prayer life, of the harmony of our souls to God, in which the springs of life stand revealed. In that experience of forgiveness, life is recreated and love wells up from deeper fountains; the heart, being pure, sees God with a new fulness and wonder and realizes the far-reaching significance of its own slightest impulse. Sweet and wondrous as that experience is, it puts us on our guard against the forces that made forgiveness necessary and we intercede with God "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

We have been changed, we have risen into a new experience of the Eternal, into a newer, richer life in our own souls, but the world remains the same, the old currents and tendencies of our nature have still one by one to be changed.

We know not what the future holds in store for us, but we know how varied experience is and how easily we

are tempted. Our ambitions, our aspirations, our tasks so often monopolize the centre of life and exclude the Divine. Our appetites and desires clamor for more than their rightful place, putting dreams of earthly things in the place of the Vision of God. The evil that is in our environment, in books and papers, in institutions and customs tends to distract our attention and to revive impulses within us that are hostile to the Highest. Evil habits whose power seemed broken become strong again under the stimulus of influences too subtle for our unaided powers. Any one of these is enough to disturb our harmony with God, to interrupt the currents of our prayer life. We have just had fresh proofs of the greatness of that life, we have realized its glory as never before in the miracle of forgiveness. So, shuddering back from anything which could rob us of so rich a treasure, we cry "Lead us not into temptation."

When we thus pray, we get a new sense of the meaning of temptation and a new realization of the goodness of God and His ability to so surround and indwell us that these things break harmlessly against His love and

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power, leaving us unscathed. At the same time it puts us on our guard against anything which could throw us out of union with the Divine, leaving us to face these things in our own wisdom and strength.

Each day closes a chapter in our experience and the next leads us out into new regions where we may have to face strange and unexpected situations. Unless our whole souls are attuned to God with the beginning of the day, we are almost sure to be tempted and perhaps to fall. The same set of circumstances which would overwhelm our own powers pass us by unscathed or leave us helped and strengthened, when we are one with God. We need to be kept so fully one with Him that we may never meet alone any situation through which we are called upon to pass. We are kept from temptation by being delivered from evil. There is no evil apart from the evil will. The temptation in any given situation is its appeal to us to take a wrong attitude to God. "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," means then, "save us from the wrong choice at each new moment of our life," for life moves out to fuller life

through successive choices of good, each of which is a rejection of the evil. Intercession is really a new act of consecration, a taking firmer hold upon God that our reaction upon our environment may be His, not ours, may therefor be holy and not sinful. In it we embrace all the children of men, praying that the Father of us all may be so enthroned in individual lives and in the institutions of Society that none may fall before the pressure of events but may rise through them to closer fellowship with God, into richer and fuller life.

As Others have expressed it:

"If Thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence. For where in now shall it be known that I have found favor in Thy sight, I and Thy people? Is it not in that Thou goest with us?"—Exodus 43:13-16.

"I pray, not that Thou should'st take them out of the world, but that Thou should'st keep them from the evil. Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth."—John 17:15-17.

"Be Thou my soul's preserver,  
O God, for Thou dost know  
How many are the perils  
Through which I have to go.

O Loving Jesu, hear my call  
And guard and save me from them  
all."

—J. M. Neale.

### PRAYER

O Thou loving Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we pray Thee "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

Thou knowest how weak we are, how prone are our hearts to turn away from Thee and choose the things of time and sense. Give us pure hearts that we may see Thee and understand Thy purposes in all life's experiences. Make us sensitive to the promptings of Thy spirit that we may hear Thee say "This is the way, walk ye in it." May life's pleasures not be so sweet or its pains so bitter as to dim our faith in Thy love. Draw us into such close union with Thyself that all our lives may show forth Thy praises by overcoming the temptations and escaping the evils that are in the world. So shall Thy kingdom come and Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Amen.

## The Doxology

"For Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, forever. Amen."

This little Doxology, though not a part of the Lord's Prayer, is the fit out-pouring of hearts that have followed the steps He has taught us to take.

We begin with the attempt to realize His presence and to come into inner harmony with Him. We rise from our knees, if we have truly prayed, with that presence, in kingly majesty, in us and all about us. Life is no longer meaningless or discordant. The Universe is radiant with the living presence of the living God and vibrant with unresting energy and resistless purpose. Though it is too vast for us to grasp its full meaning, we dimly feel that it means the slow oncoming of His Kingdom, the sure winning of all other wills to perfect harmony with His will and we cry "Thine is the Kingdom."

We have often been defeated, we have failed in our best plans and highest purposes, yet He is the Almighty and we are one with Him. So, thrill-

ing with the boundless tides of power that sweep through us in Him, with perfect confidence of certain victory over everything that can be against us, we exultantly confess "Thine is the power." We are no longer the sport of circumstances or chance, the slave of weakness or hesitant uncertainty, but strong in the strength of the Almighty whose purposes are steadily and surely being wrought in us and through us each passing hour.

Wholly in harmony with Him, we are pure in heart and our eyes are opened to the radiant brightness of His wondrous Universe and the brighter radiance of that inner life which dwells in Him. And each new experience reveals, in fuller measure, the unspeakable greatness of the things that lie before the soul that follows, step by step, the way the Master trod and showed us how to follow in His footsteps.

Eye hath not seen nor ear heard the things which He day by day reveals to us by His spirit, and out of the deepest convictions of our souls rises the glad confession, "Thine is the glory."

And we know that the experience upon which we have entered does not

lead us into some blind alley, but goes on from height to height, from deep to deep, from glory to glory, forever and forever. . "For Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

### Doxologies

Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord, God, the Almighty, who was and is, and is to come.—Rev. 4:8.

Blessing and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever. Amen.—Rev. 7:12.

Now unto the King, eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory forever and ever. Amen.—1st Tim. 1:17.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow:

Praise Him all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above ye heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.  
Amen.

—Thomas Ken.

## **"Hallelujah!"**

For the Lord God omnipotent  
reigneth.

The kingdoms of this world are be-  
come the

Kingdoms of our Lord and of His  
Christ;

And He shall reign forever and ever;

King of Kings, and Lord of Lords:

Hallelujah!"



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