



We started this series with the words of Dr. Barry Black, Chaplain of the U.S. Senate, spoken as he concluded his address at the International Prayer Breakfast in the Delegate's Dining Room to an audience of over 200 delegates from 60 countries who had convened at the United Nations on 12 September 2006. His topic was "Praying Effective Prayers" and he based his message on the Lord's Prayer:

"When you learn to pray an effective prayer—praying in secret, praying sincerely,
praying reverently, praying with submission, and being willing to forgive—
this United Nations will become a powerful force
for God and for good."

We have been reminded in the first part of the *Pater Noster* that God our Father is far but He also calls us to be near to him. He is both beyond us and with us, transcendent and immanent. We have been reminded of his love, holiness, power, authority, and wise direction for our lives.

Furthermore, it has been suggested that the final three petitions of the Lord's Prayer allude to the trinity. The Father's creation and providence are the source of our daily bread, the Son's atonement secures our forgiveness, and the Holy Spirit's presence is our power against temptation. All are revealed through the Word of God, the truth that sets us free from Satan, the Father of Lies, to live a life of love for God and others.

This prayer reminds us to start with our loving, all powerful God, and to conclude in the same manner. He is the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end. In light of this, we can say with Saint Paul, "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain." As we conclude this series, consider the following implications of the 57 words of this timeless and universal expression of corporate prayer:

If I say "our," I cannot live only for myself.
If I say "Father," I must endeavor each day to act like His child.
If I say "who art in heaven," I will lay up treasures there and not here on earth.
If I say "hallowed be Thy name," I will live a life of purity.
If I say "Thy Kingdom come," I will allow Him to be my King and rule my life.
If I say "Thy will be done," I will obey His word.
If I say "on earth as it is in heaven," I will be an example by serving Him here and now.
If I say "give us this day our daily bread," I will give to others in need.
If I say "forgive us our debts," I will forgive others and harbor no grudges.
If I say "lead us not into temptation," I cannot deliberately place myself in its path.
If I say "deliver us from evil," I will put on the whole armor of God and pursue good.
If I say "Thine is the kingdom," I will give up the rights to my kingdom.
If I say "and the power," I will depend on His strength and not my own.
If I say "and the glory," I will not try to take all of the credit.
If I say "forever," I will make my decisions in light of eternity.

1. Which of these statements is the most significant to you? Why?
2. Which of these statements poses the greatest challenge? Why?
3. How has this study changed your perspective on prayer, on God, on the people in your life?

"The LORD is far from the wicked but he hears the prayer of the righteous."

(Proverbs 15:29)