

13th May 2022

Praying

**“They never sought in vain
that sought the Lord aright.”**

Robert Burns, *The Cotter's Saturday Night*

A few months ago, I was guest preacher in a church I didn't know well. I sent them my "Order of Service" for the Service Sheets and PowerPoint system. When I got there, a lady said: "Thank you for giving us your Order of Service in good time. And thank you for including the Lord's Prayer. Our current minister doesn't do that." I was surprised, to say the least.

I conducted a wedding recently, and, in preparation for the marriage service, the bride asked: "Where does the Lord's Prayer come? We must have it included!" So, we did. But when we came to say the Lord's Prayer, only the bride, along with a couple of others, joined in with my words.

The Lord's Prayer, it would appear, has gone out of favour – which is a great shame. For when the disciples asked Jesus, "Lord, teach us to pray", this is the template they were given. And if you were to say now, "Teach me to pray", the Lord's Prayer has all the elements you'll ever need.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name: reverence for the greatness of God. *Thy kingdom come:* awareness of a better way to live than we have now. *Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven:* trust in a right way to live that's greater than our own human efforts. *Give us this day our daily bread:* all that we have to live on is not created by our own efforts. *And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors:* in seeking forgiveness for own faults, we are in a better state of mind to forgive others. *And lead us not into temptation:* oh, how we need to be aware of pitfalls. *But deliver us from evil:* we can see a way through the bad times. *For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever:* while we change, God remains constant. *Amen.* Yes indeed!

A prayer? Yes, that's how it's labelled. A hymn of faith? Certainly so. Do I understand it all and agree with it all? We shall see ...

But don't let's ditch this great prayer. If you know it, say it over and over again, and that will be enough. And if you don't know it yet? Give it a try, and your prayers will have a pretty good beginning.

A prayer for today

Lord, teach me to pray. Oh! You have! ... Amen