

# St Martins C3 – May 19, 2024

## *The Hardest Prayer – Prayer for Life*

### **Sermon Notes:**

We are exploring the most famous prayer in history: “The Lord’s Prayer.” So far we have seen the importance of spending time with God and beginning that time in worshipful intimacy.

### **Read Matthew 6:10**

That is the most powerful and the hardest prayer you will ever pray, even if it doesn’t sound like it.

There is no prayer you can pray that will have more of a global impact than praying for God’s Kingdom to come. When we pray “Your Kingdom come”, we ask for the world to be as it would be if God was in charge. That’s powerful.

We want to see God’s will be done. God is sovereign and his way is right. In Heaven, God’s will is like a raging river that a dam or boulder cannot slow. On earth, we believe that through the resurrection, Jesus reigns. However, God’s will has many barriers slowing its flow.

This prayer forces us to do more than just pray about God’s will being done. It requires us to do all we can to make God’s will a reality.

It is a global prayer with a personal grip.

It is impossible to pray this prayer in sincerity without committing to its course. Our yearning for it shows we use our freedom and responsibility to make it so. It changes our thoughts and actions.

### **1) Choose to Think About What God is Doing**

When you pray for God's Kingdom to come you begin to become aware of what God is doing around you. The only way to see these things is time in God's presence. If we don't spend time with God, we miss what He is doing. When we do spend time with Him it becomes much more likely for us to see where He is at work.

### **1) Commit to His will not our own**

Prayer is the place where our will comes into alignment with God's. This is why this is the hardest prayer you will ever pray. Because it will require you to lay down your way of doing life and take up God's way of doing life. It requires surrender.

We are people of desire. We want things. Whether it is a certain lifestyle, recognition, success, food, or sex. Our desire is infinite. It can never be satisfied. We need to surrender it.

Here are three ways for you to pray this prayer.

- 1) Ask God to reveal His big plan for the world. What would it look for His Kingdom to come and what can you do about it?
- 2) Ask God what negative things you are hanging onto that are not His will and surrender them to Him.
- 3) Ask God to allow a positive truth of His Kingdom to fill all your life.

## **Connect Group Material:**

### Key Point

*Praying for God's Kingdom is the most powerful and difficult prayer you will ever pray as it leads you to surrender*

### Questions

*What stood out to you from this week's message?*

*What does this message tell you about God and humans?*

*What is your experience of the Lord's prayer? How easy is it to pray without connecting with the ideas behind the words?*

*Where in the world do you want to see God's Kingdom?*

*What makes it hard to pray, "Your will be done" with sincerity?*

*Why might this be the hardest prayer you will ever pray?*

*Discuss scriptures where surrender is a key theme.*

*In what way is surrender the key to spiritual growth?*

*How easy do you find it to give up your way of doing things?*

*How did it go for you when you chose to do what you wanted, instead of what God wanted? When did surrendering your way work out well for you?*

*What truth of God do you want to permeate your whole life?*

## **Monday Devotion: My Heart Christ's Home**

This week, we are going to read excerpts of a classic illustration of surrender called [My Heart Christ's Home](#) by Robert B. Munger.<sup>1</sup> It takes scriptural guidance from Ephesians 3:16, John 14:23 and Revelation 3:20. As we read let's determine to surrender all of our lives to Jesus:

One evening I invited Jesus Christ into my heart. What an entrance He made! It was not a spectacular, emotional thing, but very real. It was at the very centre of my life. He came into the darkness of my heart and turned on the light. He built a fire in the cold hearth and banished the chill. He started music where there had been stillness, and He filled the emptiness with His own loving, wonderful fellowship. I have never regretted opening the door to Christ and I never will - not into eternity!

If you are interested in making your life an abode of the living God, let me encourage you to invite Christ into your heart and He will surely come

After Christ entered my heart and in the joy of this new relationship I said to Him, "Lord, I want this heart of mine to be Yours. I want to have You settle down here and be perfectly at home. Everything I have belongs to You."

He was very glad to come, of course, and happier still to be given a place in the heart

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<sup>1</sup> The full version can be found by clicking the highlighted link or by googling "My Heart Christ's Home".

## **Tuesday Devotion: The Library**

The first room was the study - the library. Let us call it the study of the mind. It is an important room. In a sense, it is the control room of the house.

He entered with me and looked around at the books in the bookcase, the magazines on the table, and the pictures on the walls. As I followed His gaze I became uncomfortable. There were some books there that His eyes were too pure to behold. There was a lot of trash and literature on the table that a Christian had no business reading, and as for the pictures on the walls - the imaginations and thoughts of the mind - these were shameful.

I turned to Him and said, "Master, I know that this room needs a radical alteration. Will You help me make it what it ought to be? - to bring every thought into captivity to you?"

"Surely!" He said. "Gladly will I help you? Take all the things that you are reading and looking at that are not helpful, pure, good and true, and throw them out! Fill the library with Scriptures and meditate on them day and night. As for the wall pictures, you will have difficulty controlling these images, but here is an aid" He gave me a full-size portrait of Himself. "Hang this centrally," He said, "on the wall of the mind."

I did, and I have discovered through the years that when my thoughts are centred upon Christ Himself, His purity and power cause impure thoughts to back away. So He has helped me to bring my thoughts into captivity.

## **Wednesday Devotion: The Living Room**

We walked next into the living room. He seemed pleased with it. He said, "This is indeed a delightful room. Let us come here often. It is secluded and quiet, and we can fellowship together."

I couldn't think of anything I would rather do than have a few minutes with Christ in intimate companionship. He promised, "I will be here early every morning. Meet me here, and we will start the day together." So morning after morning, He would open the Bible and then we would read together. He would make my heart warm as He revealed His love and His grace He had toward me. These were wonderful hours together.

But, little by little, under the pressure of many responsibilities, this time began to be shortened. I thought I was just too busy to spend time with Christ. Finally, not only was the time shortened, but I began to miss a day now and then.

I remember one morning when I was in a hurry, rushing downstairs, eager to be on my way.

As I passed the living room, the door was open. Looking in, I saw a fire in the fireplace and Jesus was sitting there.

"The trouble with you is this: you have been thinking of the quiet time, of the Bible study and prayer time, as a factor in your own spiritual progress, but you have forgotten that this hour means something to me also. Remember, I love you. I have redeemed you at great cost. I value your fellowship."

## **Thursday Devotion: The Workroom**

Before long, He asked, "Do you have a workroom in your home?" Down in the basement of the home of my heart, I had a workbench and some equipment, but I was not doing much with it. Once in a while, I would play around with a few little gadgets, but I wasn't producing anything substantial or worthwhile.

He looked over the workbench and what little talents and skills I had. He said, "This is quite well furnished. What are you producing with your life for the Kingdom of God?" He looked at one or two little toys that I had thrown together on the bench and held one up to me. "Are these little toys all that you are doing for others in your Christian life?"

"Well," I said, "Lord, that is the best I can do. I know it isn't much, and I really want to do more, but after all, I have no skill or strength to do more."

"All right. Let me have your hands. Now relax in me and let my Spirit work through you. I know that you are unskilled, clumsy and awkward, but the Holy Spirit is the Master Worker, and if He controls your hands and your heart, He will work through you." And so, stepping around behind me and putting His great, strong hands over mine, controlling the tools with His skilled fingers He began to work through me.

Do not become discouraged because you cannot do much for God. Your ability is not the fundamental condition. It is He who is controlling your fingers and upon whom you are relying. Give your talents and gifts to God and He will do things with them that will surprise you.

## **Friday Devotion: The Hall Closet**

One day I found Him waiting for me at the door. He said to me, "There is a peculiar odour in the house. There is something dead around here. It's upstairs. I think it is in the hall closet."

As soon as He said this, I knew what He was talking about. I knew in the hall closet some things were dead and rotting left over from the old life. And yet I loved them, and I wanted them so for myself that I was afraid to admit they were there.

Reluctantly, I went up with Him, and as we mounted the stairs the odour became stronger and stronger. He pointed at the door. "It's in there! Some dead thing!"

I was angry. That's the only way I can put it. I had given Him access to everything, and now He was asking me about a little two-by-four closet. I said to myself, "This is too much. I am not going to give Him the key."

"Well," He said, reading my thoughts, "I can't put up with this odour. I will take my bed out on the back porch." Then I saw Him start down the stairs.

I had to surrender. "I'll give You the key," I said sadly, "but You'll have to open the closet and clean it out. I haven't the strength to do it."

"I know," He said. "I know you haven't. Just give me the key and I will take care of it." So with trembling fingers, I passed the key to Him. He took it from my hand, walked over to the door, opened it, entered it, took out all the putrefying stuff that was rotting there, and threw it away. Oh, what victory and release to have that dead thing out of my life!