

Bringing Heaven Down

Study #1 in 57 Words that Change the World

Presuppositions for Life Group Discussions

1st presupposition → We are teachers to one another. Your leader does not stand before or above you, but with you, with the hope that we can learn together.

2nd presupposition → Discourse/dialogue is the best way to learn, not through a leader's monologue. Therefore, this study has questions (not statements) to stimulate dialogue with one another.

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1. What is prayer? What does it accomplish? What is the point? What is the difference between a "good" prayer and a "bad" one?
2. What are some things for which we pray? Are there things that don't get on the list?
3. What do you think of when I say "The Lord's Prayer?" Free associate.
4. Darrell Johnson says, "The Lord's Prayer." A mere fifty-seven words in the original Greek of Matthew's gospel, it manages to gather up all of life and brings it before God' (11). Do you see all of life gathered in this prayer? Explain.
5. The only thing the first disciples of Jesus are recorded to have asked Jesus to teach them is how to pray. Why do you suppose that is?
6. Read the first and second paragraphs on p. 12. Darrell interprets the disciples' question as "teach us how to relate to the one you call 'Father' the way you do." How is prayer a relational-building tool?
7. This prayer is a gift to us because it:
 - a. Frees us from the universal anxiety of wondering if we are "praying right." He doesn't say that this is the only way to pray, but he offers us a model to help us enter into authentic communication with the Father.
 - b. It reveals to us the heart of the living God.
 - c. It grants us the privilege to partner with God in bringing about the realization of God's desire for the world.How would such a view of prayer change how you prayed?
8. Read the first paragraph on p. 17. Can you imagine your prayer life, guided by the Lord's Prayer, becoming the primary catalyst for your growth in Christ? Imagine out loud what that would look like. What would have to change in your life and in your prayer life to see this begin to happen?
9. Read the paragraph that begins at the bottom of p. 23 and through the end of p. 24. Discuss any preconceptions you have about prayer that do not line up with Darrell's summary of prayer here. Do you agree or disagree with Darrell's conception of prayer? How would adopting Darrell's conception of prayer change how you pray?
10. Darrel says, 'We often say, or hear said, "prayer works." That is only so because of the one to whom we pray works' (21). Would your prayers change if you *really* trusted that the one to whom you pray is able? Try it as a group today.

Make Yourself Real

Study #2 in 57 Words that Change the World

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1. What is your full name and what does it mean? Do you know why you were given that name?
2. Is the language of "father" problematic for anyone? In what ways? How do you respond to what DJ says with regard to this?
3. *What exactly are we praying...* Darrell suggests that by asking God to "holy-fy his name" we are asking him to reveal, manifest, make known and make real his name. What are we asking God to do when we ask him to make his name manifest, known, real? What are we praying?
4. *What's our role in this prayer...* The Greek verb here, *hagiasotheito*, is in the imperative mood, which means it's a bit of a command, like, "God, holy-fy your name!" It is commanding God to do the task of holy-fying his name. What is the implication for our role in God's name being holy-fied?
5. *Making things a bit more concrete...* In ch. 1, Darrell shows us that the prayer's scope includes past (forgive us), present (sustain us) and future (deliver us) as well as physical (sustain us), spiritual (holy-fy your name) and relational (forgive our debtors). How has God's name been holy-fied in or through you in the past? Today? And what is one way you could imagine it being holy-fied in your future?
6. *It's all about Jesus...* Heb 1:3 says, "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being..." Darrell says that in Jesus, "the nature and character of God is fully manifested for the entire world to see" (39). What do we learn of God's nature and character (i.e., his "name") through Jesus Christ? Be as specific as you can by referring to specific things Jesus said or did.
7. How do you internally respond to these ideas? Joy? Fear? Confusion? Excitement?

Prayer Exercise:

Choose as many of the names of God listed below as you have time for. With each name, pray that God would do what his name suggests is in his character to do. For example, using "Bread of Life," a leader could open the prayer by saying, "Jesus, you are the Bread of Life. It is your very presence that satisfies my heart's deepest hunger. Yet I still find I feel as though I am starving to death in the following areas in my life... (leave silence for participants to name those areas or pray in their own words). A print friendly format of these names has been provided so you can hand out a list of names everyone.

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| a. <i>El Shaddai</i> = Mighty God | i. Counselor |
| b. <i>El Roi</i> = the God who sees | j. Everlasting Father |
| c. <i>El Rophe</i> = the God who heals | k. Prince of Peace |
| d. <i>Yahweh</i> = I am with you | l. Good Shepherd |
| e. <i>Emmanuel</i> = God with us | m. Light of Life |
| f. <i>Adonai</i> = Lord, master | n. Bread of Life |
| g. Jesus = Joshua, Yahweh saves | o. The Vine |
| h. Wonderful | p. Alpha and Omega = first and last |

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Rule Without Rival

Study #3 in 57 Words that Change the World

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1. The Kingdom of God is the subject of Jesus' first sermon, which is also the only place that the term "gospel" is defined (Mk 1:14-15). The Kingdom of God is also Jesus' favorite subject of teaching ("kingdom," in reference to the Kingdom of God, is found on Jesus' lips 53 times in the Gospel of Matthew, 19 times in Mark, 45 times in Luke and 5 times in John). The Kingdom is obviously very important. What did you learn about the Kingdom in this chapter of 57 Words that surprised you? What did you learn about the Kingdom?
2. The gospel ("gospel" simply means "good news") is often narrowed down and individualized to refer to nothing more than the forgiveness of your sins so that you can go to heaven. Jesus says the good news is that the Kingdom of God has drawn near (Mark 1:14-15). In what ways does Jesus' understanding of the gospel differ from this common misconception of the gospel? Hopefully some of your reading of chapter 3 in 57 Words can be of help to you in this.
3. Darrell Johnson says the Kingdom is already here, but not yet here. What does he mean?
4. Darrell clarifies by saying the Kingdom is NOT "partially here" in the sense that some of it is here but not all of it has arrived yet. That would lead us to conclude that Jesus is only partially present, when in fact he is entirely present through the Spirit. Alternatively, he suggests the Kingdom is entirely present, but it remains partially hidden/veiled. If the Kingdom is truly entirely present (although hidden), how is it that the kingdoms of the world appear to continually prevail?
5. Darrell helpfully summarizes what we are asking in this petition: "Reverse the effects of sin. Restore broken humanity. Come and reign without rival in all the earth!" (52) Reverse, restore and reign. What does it mean that God reverses the effects of sin? What does a restored humanity look like? And what does God reigning without rival in all the earth look like?
6. Read p. 46 beginning in the final paragraph ("This is why...") through the last full paragraph on p. 47 ("Isn't this exciting?"). Darrell gives numerous examples of the Kingdom drawing near. Describe a time or experience when you have seen the Kingdom clearly.
7. Darrell says this petition is nothing less than asking God to "bring about the most massive revolution imaginable" (42). That is why Annie Dillard can say, "It is madness to wear ladies' straw hats and velvet hats to church; we should all be wearing crash helmets. Ushers should issue life preservers and signal flares; they should lash us to our pews" (quoted on p 41). What would a "massive revolution" look like in your life? At CPC? In the Tri-Cities?
8. *Our Father in heaven, your kingdom come, on earth as it is in heaven!* That is the petition of the Lord's Prayer that Darrell paraphrases, "Our Father in heaven, rule without rival, on earth as it is in heaven!" What areas in your life do you long for this petition to be answered? What areas in your life are you afraid or simply reticent to pray such a prayer? Why?

Prayer Exercise:

For each of the three prayer segments below, begin by having one person read the corresponding written prayer by Darrell (in you → bottom of p. 51; through you → first paragraph on p. 52; in/through our local churches → middle of p. 52). Then invite participants to continue praying in these areas using their own words.

- A. Pray for the Kingdom to come in you.
- B. Pray for the Kingdom to come through you.
- C. Pray for the Kingdom to come in and through CPC and other local churches in the Tri-Cities.

Rule Without Rival

Study #4 in 57 Words that Change the World

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1. *Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.* What did you think about this prayer before you read this chapter? What did "God's will" mean to you?
2. "We are naked, and instead of praying for clothing we pray for bonbons" (quoted on p. 54). We pray for such things because we "do not know the deepest wants and necessities of our life at all" (*ibid*). To what degree do you believe God knows what our hearts truly long for and what we truly need? Do you really believe that? Why or why not?
3. If it's true that we don't know what our real and deepest needs are, why pray? How can we pray if we are so confused? Do you think God's good pleasures will be accomplished in us and our world even if we don't pray for it?
4. Darrell says that many often pray this petition with "gritted teeth" (56). Can you relate to the gritted-teeth-prayer? Explain. How does a prayer uttered with this attitude demonstrate a misunderstanding of God's will?
5. This petition is not "Let us do your good pleasures on earth as it is in heaven," but rather, "Father, you do your good pleasures." What is the difference? Why is that difference important?
6. Discuss each of the nine aspects of God's good pleasure which Darrell explains:
 - a. The Father's will is that we humans be as creative as he is.
 - b. The Father's will is that we humans be blessed and then bless.
 - c. The Father's will is to set us free from all that keeps us from being blessed so that we can be a blessing.
 - d. The Father's will is that we grow into this freedom, which is why he spoke the Ten Commandments.
 - e. The Father's will is that we live the kingdom life.
 - f. The Father's will is that we know him.
 - g. The Father's will is that we be filled with his life.
 - h. The Father's will is that we be holy by being filled with a Holy Presence.
 - i. The Father's will is that we look on Jesus Christ.

Prayer Exercise:

Using the nine aspects of God's good pleasure outlined above, spend some time praying for God to accomplish each of those good pleasures in you, in our church, in our neighborhoods and ultimately in all the world. For example,

1. Father, unleash the creativity that you have implanted in each one of us... (then leave space for everyone to pray in their own words or in silence)
2. Father, pour out your blessings into our lives so that we might burst at the seams with your goodness, overflowing onto all of your good creation... (then leave space...)
3. Father, unlock the shackles that bind us, break through the darkness in our lives, bind Satan so that he has no power over us... (then leave space...)
4. Father, grant us the courage we need to step into obedience that we might truly experience the freedom of living for you and no one or nothing else... (then leave space...)
5. Father, open our eyes and unplug our ears that we might behold your Kingdom breaking forth and ultimately seek your Kingdom first... (then leave space ...)
6. Father, thank you that you invite us into the most intimate relationship in the universe – the relationship between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Grant that we might come truly know you... (then leave space...)
7. Jesus, you said, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; [but you] have come that [we] may have life, and have it abundantly” (Jn 10:10). We accept your gift of life now... (then leave space...)
8. Father, fill us with your Holy Spirit that we might be holy, that is, wholly dedicated in mind, body and spirit to glorifying you... (then leave space...)
9. Father, the most beautiful gift you give to the world is your son Jesus Christ, for only when we are *IN HIM* are we able to participate in all your good pleasures for each one of us. Open our eyes and our hearts to this good gift that we might look on Jesus for everything we need... (then leave space...)

Be Our Provider

Study #5 in 57 Words that Change the World

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1. *Our Father in heaven, give us this day our daily bread.* Before reading this chapter, what did you think we were asking God to provide?
2. Many suggest that in this fourth petition of the Lord's Prayer, "we have dropped from what is lofty and cosmic to what is mundane and parochial" (66). We have shifted from prayers about the glorification of God, the coming of the Kingdom and the Father's will being accomplished to a prayer about providing dinner. What does Darrell have to say about that? Do you agree or disagree? Why?
3. Darrell outlines six layers of meaning in this petition for daily bread. Discuss each of those six layers. Can you see more layers in this petition?
4. Dale Bruner calls this petition the "political-economic prayer" (quoted on 71). What does Bruner mean by that? If he is right, what does that tell you about the Father's involvement in the whole process from planting wheat to placing a loaf of bread on your table?
5. Darrell outlines three life-style implications of authentically praying this prayer. The first is that it calls us to a life-style of solidarity with the Body of Christ. The prayer is give us, not give me. What does a life-style of solidarity look like for you? For CPC? For the Universal Church?
 - a. One Latin American prayer goes thus, "O God to those who have hunger give bread; and to those who have bread (give) the hunger for justice" (quoted on 75-76). How do you respond to that prayer?
6. The second life-style implication of authentically praying this prayer is one of radical dependency upon God. Name ten reasons it makes sense to depend upon God. Name ten reasons why depending on yourself might not work out so well.
 - a. Why is it often so difficult to trust God? Why do we often find it easier to trust ourselves?
 - b. Read Matthew 6:25-34. What is the source of anxiety? What is Jesus' suggested "cure" for this anxiety? Has anyone experienced the effectiveness of this cure?
7. "Every time we take bread in our hands we are handling an answered prayer" (77). In what ways might that change the way you say grace before a meal?
8. What would happen to you if you authentically prayed this petition of the Lord's Prayer every morning and every evening?

Prayer Exercise:

Use the six layers of meaning Darrell outlines as an outline for praying this petition over and over again. For example, one person pray the written portion for layer one, leaving silence for others to contribute. Then have another person pray the written portion for layer two, leaving silence for others to contribute, and so on.

1. Father, give us our daily bread, the physical bread that our bodies need in order to be nourished and healthy... (silence/space for others to contribute...)
2. Father, give us our daily bread, everything necessary for functioning in the world... (silence/space for others to contribute...)
3. Father, give us our daily bread, everything necessary for living a Kingdom life: wisdom, courage, strength, patience, holiness, vision... (silence/space for others to contribute...)
4. Father, give us our daily bread, all the resources of the Holy Spirit: faith, hope and love that manifest themselves in our lives through joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control... (silence/space for others to contribute...)
5. Father, give us our daily bread, Jesus himself, the Bread of Life, that we might eat and drink of the fullness of life Jesus grants... (silence/space for others to contribute...)
6. Father, give us our daily bread; give us hope, peace, joy and rest as we eager await the final day when the Kingdom of God comes in its fullness.... (silence/space for others to contribute...)

Be Our Provider

Study #6 in 57 Words that Change the World

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1. What is forgiveness?
2. *Father, forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.* What questions/issues about this petition did you have before reading this chapter?
3. The word often translated as “debt” is the Greek *opheilema*. How does Darrell's explanation of that term help you understand what we are asking for in this petition?
4. The word translated as “forgive” is the Greek *aphiēmi*. How does Darrell's explanation of that term help you understand what we asking for in this petition?
5. Why is this perhaps the “boldest” petition of the Lord's Prayer?
6. *As we also have forgiven our debtors.* What have you come to understand the word “as” to mean after reading ch. 6?
7. Explain what Darrell introduces as the three characteristics of forgiveness: justice, mercy and grace (87).
8. John Stott says, “God forgives only the penitent, and one of the chief evidences of true penitence is a forgiving spirit” (quoted on p. 88). Do you agree? Why or why not?
9. Lewis Smedes says, “To forgive is to set a prisoner free, and discover that the prisoner is you” (quoted on p. 88). In what ways does NOT forgiving someone actually imprison you?
10. How can we grow in our ability to exercise forgiveness?

Prayer Exercise 1:

Pray as a group in three stages. In the first stage, offer a time for participants to ask for forgiveness for the debts they owe to fellow humans. In the second stage, offer a time to ask for forgiveness for debts they owe to themselves. Finally, offer a time to ask for forgiveness for debts they owe to God. Page 84 offers some examples in each of those areas.

Prayer Exercise 2:

Do the debt cancellation exercise on p. 89. Have someone lead this corporate exercise by being the voice for the group. This is very sacred and sensitive ground upon which we are trotting, so this corporate exercise is probably best done in silence while the leader leads the group through the prayer.

“Rescue Us!”

Study #7, 57 Words That Change the World

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AN IN DEPTH LOOK AT THE TEXT

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil

... is better translated as...

Do not let your test be turned into a temptation, instead, deliver us from the evil one.

1. Review of why “deliver us from the evil one” instead of “evil”
 - a. *poneros*, the Greek adjective for “evil,” is used with the definite article “the” → “*the evil*”
 - b. In Greek, when using the definite article + adjective and there is no noun, the adjective acts as the noun.

Example: every time you read “saints” in the NT, it is a rendering of the definite article + the Greek adjective for “holy,” which is *hagias*. Literally, it is “the holy.” It is translated (correctly) as “the holy ones” or “saints.”
 - c. The context in the Sermon on the Mount helps too. Mt 5:37, 13:19 also both use definite article + *poneros*, “the evil,” and are obviously referring to “the evil one.”

Question 1 → How does this personalization of evil inform your understanding of evil? In other words, does the fact that we are asking for protection against the evil one as opposed to general evil-ness inform your prayer?

2. Review of why “do not let your test be turned into a temptation” instead of “lead us not into temptation”
 - a. “*but*” informs the entire clause.
 - b. “***but*** *deliver us from the evil one*” interprets “*lead us not into temptation*”
 - i. Rather than allowing us to be led into temptation, deliver us from the evil one.
 - ii. Do not allow us to be led into temptation; instead deliver us from the evil one.
 - c. God does not tempt us, but he does test us

Question 2 → What do you understand to be the difference between a test and a temptation? Why does God test us?

3. A pretty important concept → If you come across a Scripture that you think is completely out of character with the God of the Bible, there is a good chance you are not interpreting it right. This concept protects us from interpreting this verse as a request for God not to tempt us. Of course he would never do such things! Satan is the tempter, not God. So we are required to take a second look at the verse.

SEWING THE SEEDS OF SUSPICION

Satan’s primary strategy, or at least the foundation of all he does, is to have us question the trustworthiness of God. Consider the Genesis account:

Gen 2:15-17

15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.”

Gen 3:1-3

1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’” 2 The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3 but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”

Question 3 → Go through these Scriptures with a fine tooth comb and discover how the Serpent has fooled Eve into thinking God is not generous and can’t be trusted.

1. God said Adam/Eve are **free** to eat from **any** tree, but one – tree of the knowledge of good & evil.
2. The Serpent asked if God **really** said they could **not eat** from **any** tree.
3. Eve said God told them they may eat from the trees – no reference to **free** or **any**
4. Eve said God told them **not to touch** the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
5. The Serpent has fooled Eve into thinking God is not generous and can’t be trusted

A SENIOR DEVIL’S APPROACH

In the following excerpt from C. S. Lewis’ *The Screwtape Letters* (chapter XIX), the senior devil Screwtape is trying to convince his nephew Wormwood, a novice devil, that the Enemy’s (God) motive for creating and taking care of humanity cannot be pure love. The Enemy must have a secret motive.

MY DEAR WORMWOOD,

I have been thinking very hard about the question in your last letter. If, as I have clearly shown, all selves are by their very nature in competition, and therefore the Enemy’s [God] idea of Love is a contradiction in terms, what becomes of my reiterated warning that He really loves the human vermin and really desires their freedom and continued existence? I hope, my dear boy, you have not shown my letters to anyone. Not that it matters of course. Anyone would see that the appearance of heresy into which I have fallen is purely accidental. By the way, I hope you understood, too, that some apparently uncomplimentary references to Slubgob were purely jocular. I really have the highest respect for him. And, of course, some things I said about not shielding you from the authorities were not seriously meant. You can trust me to look after your interests. But do keep everything under lock and key.

The truth is I slipped by mere carelessness into saying that the Enemy really loves the humans. That, of course, is an impossibility. He is one being, they are distinct from Him. Their good cannot be His. All His talk about Love must be a disguise for something else—He must have some real motive for creating them and taking so much trouble about them. The reason one comes to talk as if He really had this impossible Love is our utter failure to out that real motive. What does He stand to make out of them? That is the insoluble question. I do not see that it can do any harm to tell you that this very problem was a chief cause of Our Father’s [Satan] quarrel with the Enemy. When the creation of man was first mooted and when, even at that stage, the Enemy freely confessed that he foresaw a certain episode about a cross, Our Father very naturally sought an interview and asked for an explanation. The Enemy gave no reply except to produce the cock-and-bull story about disinterested love which He has been circulating ever since....

Your affectionate uncle
SCREWTAPE

Question 4 → Based on this short letter, describe the character of Screwtape. What can we learn of the devil’s strategies? How do these strategies inform your understanding of what you are asking in this petition of the Lord’s Prayer?

Question 5 → Temptations are all around us. We know that the Father does want to test us, but he does not, like Satan, want to tempt us. Satan is hurling temptations at us all the time. How do you understand the interaction between our own responsibility when facing temptations and trusting in God’s strength in the midst of temptations? What is God’s role? What is our role?

“Not All That Complicated”

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2nd presupposition → Discourse/dialogue is the best way to learn, not through a leader’s monologue. Therefore, this study has questions (not statements) to stimulate dialogue with one another.

3rd presupposition → These questions are only guides to help us begin dialogue and to create boundaries in which we can talk. The goal is creative thinking about today’s Scripture.

1. The disciples ask Jesus, “Lord teach us to pray” (Luke 11:1). “I [Darrell] understand the disciples’ request to mean more than, ‘Jesus, teach us some new spiritual techniques that will help us to stay awake when we pray and make us feel that our prayers matter.’ I take their request to mean, ‘Jesus, will you teach us how to relate to the one you call ‘Father’ the way you do?’” (12) In what ways do you see this prayer as instructions on how to enter into a relationship with the Father?
2. Darrell sees in the Lord’s Prayer a pattern for discipleship – a vision of the Christian life. On page 109, he goes through each petition and names the categories in which Jesus teaches us to be his disciples. They are outlined below.
 - a. In which of these areas do you sense that you are growing in and have grown in the most?
 - b. Which area have you learned the most about through reading this book together?
 - c. Which area do you sense that the Lord is challenging you to grow the most in now?
 - **NAME:** we come to know the character of God. Who God is and what God is like.
 - **KINGDOM:** we come to know how God works and reigns in the world, and how we cooperate with him. What God’s kingdom is all about and how to live in it while living in the world.
 - **WILL:** we come to know what God desires, and how he is fulfilling his good pleasures in us. His great purpose for his people and for the world.
 - **BREAD:** we come to know how God provides for the disciples of Jesus, learning how to trust him one day at a time. We learn to trust him for our bread and we learn to take greater risks for him as we can trust him more.
 - **FORGIVENESS:** we come into the reconciliation God has worked out in Jesus’ death, and learn how to live in reconciliation. We begin to experience the grace and mercy of God that cancels all of our debts, which then frees us to extend mercy to others, even to our enemies.
 - **TEMPTATION/ EVIL ONE:** we learn how to deal with spiritual opposition, learning how to stand in the victory of Jesus. We begin to understand the nature of the spiritual battles in which humanity is caught.
 - And again, **NAME:** getting to know the character of God even more fully.
3. “Every good and perfect gift comes from above, from the Father of heavenly lights” (James 1:17). Beginning on p. 104, Darrell names eight ways in which this prayer is a gift to us. Discuss these gifts. Which gifts are most precious to you? Which gifts are the most difficult to receive?
 - a. The gift of **identity** as children of the Father
 - b. The gift of **access** to the Father
 - c. The gift of **revelation** of the Father’s character
 - d. The gift of **relief** from worry about our praying techniques
 - e. The gift of his **vision** of the Christian life
 - f. The gift of **meaning**
 - g. The gift of **boldness**
 - h. The gift of the **Father** himself

The Lord's Prayer Liturgy
In Response to 57 Words That Change the World

Italics = everyone

Non-italics = leader

Use a different leader for each line of the Lord's Prayer (each page here)

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, on earth as it is in heaven.

Father above,
Father of the Lord Jesus Christ,
Our Father,
hallowed be your name,
You are very close at hand,
Reveal your name, make it known, and manifest who you are,

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, on earth as it is in heaven.

Our Father who is all around us,
make your infinitely good name valued as it ought to be,
honored as it ought to be,
and glorified as it ought to be,

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, on earth as it is in heaven.

Our good Father,
make your character known,
magnify your personality,
spread your reputation throughout Tenth Ave Church, the city of Vancouver, and the whole world,

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, on earth as it is in heaven.

(silence)

Our Father in heaven, your kingdom come, on earth as it is in heaven.

Father, your reign of light and joy and power and justice and wholeness is now veiled.
O God, unveil your kingdom here on earth just as it is in heaven!
King of Kings, break through the veil of hiddenness & manifest your royal splendor & might & healing & goodness!

Our Father in heaven, your kingdom come, on earth as it is in heaven.

Father, manifest the already-ness of your rule in my life.
Break through any darkness;
King Jesus, illuminate every corner of my life with your healing light.
Break through any resistance in my soul;
King Jesus, humble me, forgive me, cleanse me.
Break the bondage that enslaves me;
King Jesus, free me, restore me.
Break through the patterns of my life that support or perpetuate injustice;
King Jesus, give me courage to follow you no matter what.

Our Father in heaven, your kingdom come, on earth as it is in heaven.

Father, manifest the already-ness of your rule through my life;
I am yours, I make myself available to you for your purposes in the world.
King Jesus, through me, make yourself real in my part of the world; make me an instrument of your peace.

Our Father in heaven, your kingdom come, on earth as it is in heaven.

Father, make us, your church, a clear and engaging sign that the future is breaking into the present.
Grant, O God, that when the city looks at us, it sees you and your new world order.
King Jesus, do through us what you did when you walked the earth in visible form.
Through us heal the sick, free the captives, reconcile enemies, raise the dead to newness of life.

Our Father in heaven, your kingdom come, on earth as it is in heaven.

Bring on your revolution.
Reverse the effects of sin.
Restore broken humanity.
Come and reign without rival in our lives and in all the earth,

Our Father in heaven, your kingdom come, on earth as it is in heaven.

(silence)

Our Father in heaven, your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

Almighty God, fulfill all your good pleasures, accomplish all your good purposes.
Creator of the Universe, grant that we, who were created in your image, might be as creative as you.
Father, you have blessed us abundantly, grant that we might embody a culture of blessing.

Our Father in heaven, your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

Lord Jesus, set us free from all that closes our eyes and ears to you,
and captivate us with your goodness.
Father, open our eyes to what is most true about us, that we were created to be with you.
Father, set us free so that we might live in obedience to you.
Jesus, make us alive.

Our Father in heaven, your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

Father, help us to know you as Jesus knows you,
help us to love you as Jesus loves you,
help us to love Jesus as you love Jesus.
Father gives us eyes to see Jesus, ears to hear Jesus, and humility to receive him.
Here we are, we have come to do your will, our God.

Our Father in heaven, your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

(silence)

Our Father in heaven, give us this day our daily bread.

Yahweh, you provided manna and quail for the Israelites in the desert.
Father, you brought forth water from a rock for a nation that thirsted.
Jesus, you multiplied 5 loaves and 2 fish in order to feed thousands of Palestinians.
Provide like this for us, we pray.

Our Father in heaven, give us this day our daily bread.

Our Father, you gave Israel manna EVERY day they needed it.
You never failed to be trustworthy or faithful to your people.
Grant, O God, that we would trust in your faithfulness.

Our Father in heaven, give us this day our daily bread.

Father, we need more than bread,
and so we ask that you give us everything necessary for the preservation of this life.
Grant us wisdom, courage, strength, patience, holiness, vision – especially vision.
Father, we want to seek first your kingdom;
We want to be kingdom people in the world.
Keep our vision clear.
Do not let it dim.
Give us courage to follow the kingdom way, the way of the cross.

Our Father in heaven, give us this day our daily bread.

Jesus, you said that people do not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.
Your words are full of the Spirit and life.
We need sustenance from your mouth.
Grant us the resources of the Holy Spirit – faith, hope and love.

Our Father in heaven, give us this day our daily bread.

Jesus, you yourself are the Bread of life.
Give us this bread that is your very self, the bread that satisfies.
I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, so give me this bread that satisfies.
You alone are the source of water that quenches my desire, give me this water that comes from you.

Our Father in heaven, give us this day our daily bread.

Thank you, Father, for once again providing.
Thank you, Father, for once again making your good earth work.
Thank you, Father, for once again being faithful to your children.

Our Father in heaven, give us this day our daily bread.

(silence)

Our Father in heaven, forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

Father, we ask the boldest prayer we know how to articulate when we ask you to forgive us our debts;
Erase from every ledger every failure of duty to you, our fellow humans and ourselves;
Cancel our debts we owe to you, our fellow humans and ourselves.

Our Father in heaven, forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

Father, forgive us our debts we owe to our parents, to strangers, to the poor, to the elderly, to those in authority.

Father, forgive us the debt we owe to ourselves,
for not having cared for our body as your temple;
for being intellectually lazy with our minds;
for not watching over our soul by living in holiness and vitality.

Father, forgive us the debt we owe you,
for not loving you with all our heart and all our soul and all our mind and all our strength.
Forgive us for not trusting you with all our needs and worries.

Our Father in heaven, forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

Oh Father, you have every right to give us what we deserve – judgment – but we are asking you not to do it.
Oh Father, we ask that you not only DO NOT give me what we deserve, DO GIVE us what we DO NOT deserve;
Give us life with you.

Our Father in heaven, forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors

And Father, just as we ask that we may stand in your presence as forgiven people,
give us the grace to allow others to stand in your presence as forgiven people.
Just as you invite us to walk up the hill to the cross,
by your grace, help us to bring those who have wronged us up the hill with us that they might be forgiven also.

Our Father in heaven, forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors

(silence)

Our Father in heaven, do not let your test become a temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Father, you know we cannot stand up under very much pressure.
As you lead to the test, as you seek to prove and improve our faith,
do not let the test become a temptation, a seduction to sin,
but deliver us from the subtle wiles of the deceiver against whom we are no match.

Our Father in heaven, do not let your test become a temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Living Father, protect us from the evil one who is constantly sowing seeds of suspicion about your goodness.
Good and Gracious God, help us to remember your goodness when you don't seem to be good.
God of hope, help us to be people of hope in a world plagued with pessimism.

Our Father in heaven, do not let your test become a temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Our Father, help us to remember that things are not always as they seem.
There is more than meets the eye.
There is a God. A living God. A good God. A faithful God. A powerful God. A reigning God. An ever-present God.
There is never a time when this God is not faithful.
There is never a time when this God is not powerful.
There is never a time when the God of the Bible is not on the throne of the universe.
There is never a time when the God we meet in Jesus is not present.
Immanuel, help us to remember your promise that you will never leave us or forsake us.

Our Father in heaven, do not let your test become a temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

(silence)

*Our Father,
very close at hand,
on the throne of the universe;
Be hallowed (!) your name,
On earth as it is in heaven;
Come (!) your kingdom,
On earth as it is in heaven;
Be done (!) your will,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day all we need to be your people.
Cancel our debts,
As we have cancelled the debts of our debtors.
And as you lead us to the test,
Do not let the test become a temptation,
But rescue us from the twisting wiles of the evil-one.
He wants us to think that you are not as good as Jesus says you are.
All this, and more, you can do,
for yours is the kingdom, and the power and the glory. Forever!
So be it.
Amen.*

*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, on earth as it is in heaven.
Our Father in heaven, your kingdom come, on earth as it is in heaven.
Our Father in heaven, your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.
Our Father in heaven, give us this day our daily bread
Our Father in heaven, forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
Our Father in heaven, do not let your test become a temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.*