

IT IS SETTLED!

"Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13b)

By Howell Lasseter

Jesus' Kingdom: The Model Prayer

"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed 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" (Matthew 6:9-13).

Luke 11:1-4, a companion passage to the one in Matthew 6:9-13, tells us that, as Jesus was praying, one of His disciples asked Him to teach His disciples to pray, as John also taught his disciples. The model prayer which Jesus taught His disciples has been incorrectly labeled "The Lord's Prayer." Several of the Lord's prayers are recorded for us, the most lengthy record being in John 17. An example of a prayer of Jesus is found in Matthew 26:39: *"O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."* Would it be correct for Jesus to pray this prayer today? , because the Father answered that prayer. Is it correct for any man today to plead, "not as I will, but as thou wilt," as petition is made for an upcoming challenge in life? Yes, we can follow Christ's example as we pray, "not as I will, but as thou wilt." However, the prayer recorded in Matthew 6 and Luke 11 was not prayed by Jesus; He was setting forth a model for His disciples who were with Him that day.

While much of the model prayer can be used by us today, there is one phrase which isn't applicable. That phrase is, *"Thy kingdom come."* The disciples with Jesus could correctly pray for this event, for it was in the future. We today cannot pray for the kingdom to come because the kingdom has already come! Hear Paul's Spirit-inspired words in Colossians 1:12-14: *"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."* All saved ones are presently in the kingdom! As we learn more about the saved, we see all of them are in the church: *"And the Lord added to the church daily those that were saved"* (Acts 2:47; ASV). We further learn that the church is Christ's body: *"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body,..."* (Ephesians 1:22,23a); *"Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church"* (Colossians 1:24). Baptism is the act of obedience which puts one into Christ: *"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ"* (Galatians 3:27). Pulling together what we've learned in this brief study, it can be confidently said that the body, the church, and the kingdom are synonymous terms. One who has believed, repented, confessed the name of Christ, and been baptized (immersed), in water, for the remission of sins, is added by the Lord to the church. Bible-believing students know that each saved person is in the one group, designated in the New Testament as Christ's body, Christ's church, and the kingdom! No, today Bible-believers do not pray for the kingdom to come – it is already here!