

Friday, July 17, 2020

Amen! So be it!

- Pastor Hank French

Amen

Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen (Ephesians 3:20-21).

The Lord's Prayer ends with a resounding "Amen!" This little word affirms that this is our prayer. Amen is a Hebrew word that carries the meaning of certainly, verily, truthfully. When it follows a prayer or hymn of praise, this little word indicates the assent and desire of the one who prays. It could be translated as a confident "So be it!"

So be it—God's name shall be made holy, God's kingdom shall come, God's will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven. So be it—God does and shall continue to provide "daily bread," God does and shall continue to draw us into a circle of forgiveness where we forgive as we have already been forgiven. So be it—God stands with us in times of trial and when faced with evil. The kingdom and power and glory are God's alone, forever. Amen! So be it!

The central words in this prayer—Father, name, kingdom, will, bread, forgive, trial, evil—are shorthand, symbols that convey worlds of meaning for people of Christian faith. These few devotions have played around the edges of these meanings, but we have not by any means plumbed their depths. That is the work of a lifetime of prayer and meditation, reading and study, and living faithfully in the places and relationships where we spend our lives.

I suggest that you begin and end each day with the Lord's Prayer. If you live alone, let it be your first words upon awakening and your last words before sleeping. If you have a spouse, begin and end the day praying this prayer together. If you have children, begin and end the day as a family with this prayer. And then throughout the day—in the situations and circumstances of your daily life—meditate on one petition each day (there are seven—one for each day of the week). You might begin with "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name" on Sunday, then move on to "Your kingdom come" on Monday, and so on. Daily examine the events and relationships of your life in the light of this prayer. In this way, your life *becomes* prayer.

Prayer: Jesus, as we pray the prayer you taught us to pray, we know that, as our journey through continues, you are our constant traveling companion. Thank you. Amen. Amen. Amen.