

Sunday June 12, 2016 Pentecost 4 The Lord's Prayer

We all know the Lord's Prayer. And before this service is over we will sing and say it in more ways that we know. Almost all of us are old enough to have recited it every week day, way back in elementary school.

We all know the Lord's Prayer. But do we really? Which version do we know?

Roman Catholics have their version which ends at

“Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Amen”

The Greek Orthodox one ends at the same place.

From our perspective we Protestants go all the way through

***“For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.”***

But this ascription of glory is actually a later addition.

However, the United Methodists in the USA drop the last ***and ever***. Go figure.

And then there is The Gospel of **Luke** which ends in a confusing way

***“And forgive us our sins,
for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.
And do not bring us to the time of trial.”***

And finally The Gospel of **Matthew** is even more confusing

***“And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And do not bring us to the time of trial,
but rescue us from the evil one.***

But the King James Version adds ascription of glory ***For thine is the Kingdom...*** The Gospels are the earliest recorded versions so we might wonder, why aren't we following them more closely?

The Presbyterians stuck with the biblical record of forgiving *debts* and then recently update to sins. They bypassed all the other denominations who had change debts to *trespasses* which was taken from the explanatory verse following the prayer in Matthew's Gospel. Now the Presbyterian's ends like this:

"Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil.

*For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen"*

We United Church folk now recognize new alternative versions not only from the Presbyterians but also the United Church of Christ USA not to mention the New Paraphrase all of which are printed in the hymnal at #914 and #916.

Now this brings me to a growing issue today, which some folks have raised over the last couple of years: inclusive language.

The United Church of Christ USA begins with *Our Father-Mother*.

The New Paraphrase begins with *Eternal Spirit*.

And **Jesus'** original beginning word in his mother tongue of Aramaic was '*Abba*' or "Papa, Dada" that was later translated formally as "**Our Father.**"

Every part of our Sunday liturgy is rendered gender neutral except the Lord's Prayer. Some like it this way, some do not.

So the **Application for Today:**

With all the changes, alterations, embellishments, translations and paraphrases circulating today feel free to address **God** in this prayer with whatever name suits your sensibilities.