



Rev Dave Brown  
Rector of St Nicholas Stevenage & St Mary Graveley  
2a North Road, Stevenage. Herts. SG1 4AT  
Tel: 01438 213587  
Email: [revdmbrown@gmail.com](mailto:revdmbrown@gmail.com)



**Briefing 33: Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October, 2020.**

Dear friends,

**For yours is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory... for ever and ever, Amen!**

We've reached the end of the Lord's Prayer, and what an ending. Here the prayer ends with an exclamation of praise, declaring to the world the everlasting authority and rule of our God! But in this short song of praise we find the reason why we have prayed the rest of the prayer, and why we pray at all. We've covered some of this already, but as we close let's remind ourselves why we pray.

Prayer is a **privilege**: Through prayer we talk to God, even being able to call the LORD of the universe our dear Father! Knowing that- how can we fail to pray?

Prayer is a **command**: In explaining some rules for Christian discipleship, Jesus tells his disciples that they must pray and give and fast. Prayer is expected. And why wouldn't we want to talk to the one who loves us and gave himself for us?

Prayer brings us **peace**: In Philippians 4v6 and 7, Paul tells us *not to be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, to bring our requests to God*, because as we do... *The peace of God will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*

Prayer **changes things**: or more correctly, through the prayers of his people, God works in his world. That isn't to say that if we do not pray God does nothing. God is always at work, he never sleeps or slumbers (Psalm 121.) It is to say that God has sovereignly decided that he will use the prayers of his people to bring about his purposes. Prayer to God has an effect. If it didn't there would be no point praying!

In the Wizard of Oz, Dorothy went behind the curtain and discovered that the Wizard was all words and no power. The thought of him brought her comfort. Speaking to him was a privilege. Approaching him might even have been seen as a command- but ultimately, he had no power.

But our God is not like that, far from it. All power and authority belong to him, for the whole world is his! God made the world and sustains it, and exercises total control over all that goes on, even using the evil schemes of the devil to accomplish his greater purposes. Only a God like that is worthy of our praise and glory- and such is our God! Only a God like that is worth praying to, but that is our God! We pray because it's a privilege, a command, because it brings us peace, but also because God has the power to intervene in his world however he likes!

That's why we pray. That's why we should pray more.

Rather than suggesting some of my own words to use in prayer, today I want to take you to some verses from Psalm 145. Why not use some of these verses to end your prayers and let them remind your soul that the one to whom you pray is able to do far more than you can even imagine (Ephesians 3:20).

*I will exalt you, my God the King; I will praise your name for ever and ever.*

*Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom.*

*One generation commends your works to another; they tell of your mighty acts.*

*They celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness.*

*The LORD is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love.*

*The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made.*

*Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations.*

*The LORD is trustworthy in all he promises and faithful in all he does.*

*The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth ....he hears their cry and saves them.*

*My mouth will speak in praise of the LORD. Let every creature praise his holy name for ever and ever. Amen!*

**PODCASTS AND ONLINE MEDIA:** Two weeks ago I spoke about the need to grow in our understanding of God and his ways, and of the need to read the Bible and good Christian books to help renew our minds! Not everyone enjoys reading (*although that shouldn't stop us! I hated English but I knew the lessons were valuable!*) But today we are fortunate to live at a time when we can listen to audio books and podcasts to help us grow in faith. Below I've listed a few podcasts you might like to try out. If you are not used to thinking about Christian doctrine you might find some of them a challenge. But please don't give up! Learning about God should stretch our minds- but the benefits of a biblically informed and shaped mind are worth some hard thinking! So do persevere!

- **Speak Life:** thinking through Seeing the world, with Jesus at the centre. Encouraging apologetics and evangelism to **speak life** to a needy world.
- The **White Horse Inn** has endless content focused on helping Christians “know what they believe and why they believe it.”
- **Renewing Your Mind** broadcasts a daily message and related resources that exposit the glories of God revealed in the Bible against the backdrop of culture, philosophy, apologetics, ethics, and church history.
- **5 Minutes in Church History** offers an “easily digestible glimpse of how the eternal, unchangeable God has worked in the church over prior generations, and how this can encourage us today.”
- **Theology Gals** is a podcast really geared towards women. Hosted by Coleen Sharp, Ashley Glassick, and Angela Whitehorn, this podcast excels at applying God's word to the daily life of Christians.
- The **Black Berea podcast** is hosted by a vibrant group of Black Christians from the City of London. Biweekly commentary on matters of faith and culture, in addition to analysis of news and events from a biblical perspective.
- **The Good Book Company Podcast**, is a show where we have lively conversations with authors about church, culture and the Christian life.
- **The Briefing:** A daily podcast from Dr. Albert Mohler, President of Southern Theological Seminary, offers analysis from Christian worldview perspectives on current events, politics, morality, and theology.

**PRAY WITH US!** Next Tuesday morning we'll be praying again via ZOOM from 7am-8am. Contact Anthony Taylor on [anthonyjtaylor@btinternet.com](mailto:anthonyjtaylor@btinternet.com) for a link.

**EXPLORING CHRISTIANITY:** Over the autumn, we are planning to run another course for people to explore the Christian faith. **The Identity Course** (*more information here:* [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJ691ji\\_6-0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJ691ji_6-0)) works through the gospel of John over 7 sessions that also cover some of the big questions people ask, such as why does God allow suffering, how can I believe the Bible and why do I have to go to church? For more information, please email Martin Bailey on [martin.bailey2663@gmail.com](mailto:martin.bailey2663@gmail.com)

**OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD.** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E5VVDymhGr4> Watch the new video + get inspired! If you'd like to volunteer to help with collection and processing, speak to Stuart Marshall. His email address is [stuart.j.marshall@ntlworld.com](mailto:stuart.j.marshall@ntlworld.com)

**THIS SUNDAY'S SERVICES:** The service at St Nicholas at 9.30am will include sharing the LORD's Supper. The 11:30am service at St Mary's Graveley will be a service of the Word. The main reading will be Matthew 12: 1-14. Why not read it before you come.

If you are yet to book in, you can do so here: <https://forms.gle/fNn5zTjL1mhwwbxP6> If you're not able to make it, do make sure you join us either live on Facebook or catch up later.

#### **ARE YOU BEING CALLED TO SERVE IN THESE WAYS?**

**CHURCH CLEANERS:** Just one or two more people or pairs needed to join the rota of those cleaning inside the worship space at St Nicholas Church? (email [Stephen.bamford@talktalk.net](mailto:Stephen.bamford@talktalk.net)) or the rota to clean the kitchen, toilets and parish rooms? (contact Judy on [mrsvicar16@gmail.com](mailto:mrsvicar16@gmail.com)) Each clean should take no longer than 2 hours- and it should work out to be no more than once every 4-6 weeks.

**PPT and SOUND:** more volunteers required to join the team operating the AV system on Sunday morning at St Nicholas. Please contact Anthony Taylor for more information: [anthonyjtaylor@btinternet.com](mailto:anthonyjtaylor@btinternet.com).

**CHURCH-SITTERS:** if you could spare an hour or two each week, or occasionally, at various times of the week, to sit in church so it can be open for private prayer, please contact Karen Walker: [churchwardens@saintnicholaschurch.org.uk](mailto:churchwardens@saintnicholaschurch.org.uk)

There will be a further short update on Friday. Until then, may God bless you and your families.

Yours in Christ, *Dave*