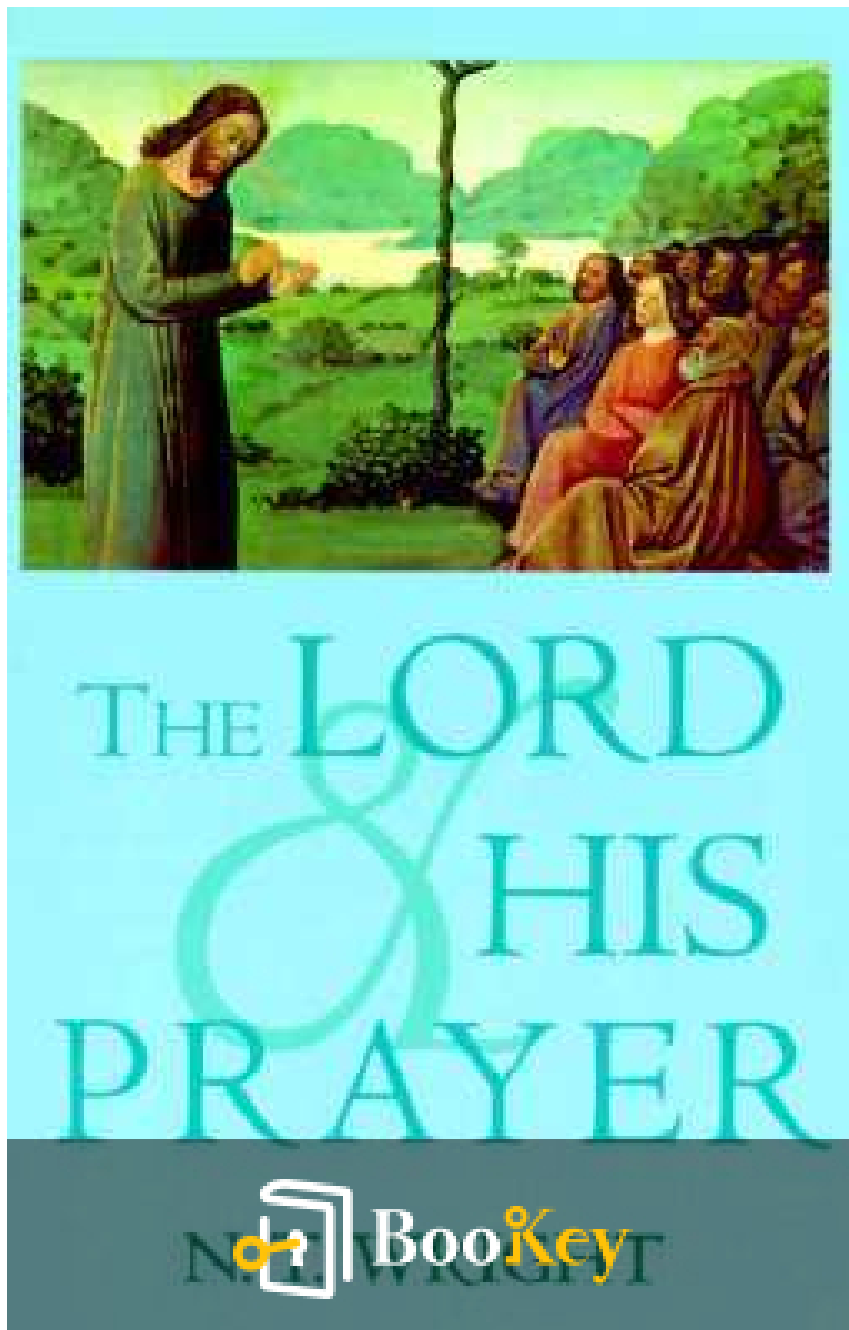


The Lord And His Prayer PDF (Limited Copy)

N.T. Wright



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The Lord And His Prayer Summary

Rediscovering Christian Spirituality Through the Lord's Prayer

Written by New York Central Park Page Turners Books Club

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About the book

In "The Lord and His Prayer," N.T. Wright embarks on a profound exploration of the Lord's Prayer, dissecting it clause by clause while firmly situating it within the historical context of Jesus' life and mission. At the heart of Wright's analysis is the recognition that this prayer is not merely a formulaic recitation but a rich tapestry of meaning that reflects Jesus' teachings and the socio-political realities of first-century Judea.

Wright begins by examining the prayer's origins, reminding readers that it was delivered during a time of stark religious and political turbulence. The Jewish people were under Roman occupation, yearning for liberation and a deeper connection with God. This backdrop is essential for understanding the radical implications of Jesus' words. The prayer serves not only as a personal plea for divine guidance but also as a collective aspiration for God's kingdom to be realized on Earth.

As Wright breaks down each clause, he draws attention to the intimate relationship between the believer and God, highlighted in the opening address of the prayer, "Our Father." This familial term encapsulates the warmth and accessibility of God, promoting a sense of community among believers. Furthermore, phrases like "Thy kingdom come" emphasize the urgency of God's reign breaking into the present world—an invitation for believers to actively participate in the transformative work of justice and

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mercy.

Wright's exploration extends to the themes of forgiveness and daily sustenance articulated within the prayer. The plea for forgiveness reflects the communal nature of sin and redemption, urging a lifestyle of grace and reconciliation among individuals. Meanwhile, the request for daily bread underscores reliance on God for both spiritual and physical sustenance, reminding believers of their dependence on divine provision.

Throughout the book, Wright enriches the reader's understanding of Christian spirituality and prayer, urging a reevaluation of common perceptions. By grounding the prayer in Jesus' historical context, he invigorates the heart and mind, offering a transformative perspective on faith that encourages believers to embody the prayer's principles in their daily lives. Ultimately, "The Lord and His Prayer" is not just a theological treatise but an invitation to experience a deeper, more heartfelt engagement with God and a clarion call to live out the values of the kingdom that Jesus proclaimed.

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About the author

In this summary, we will encapsulate the key chapters of N. T. Wright's influential works, presenting them in a logical flow that respects the original content while enhancing comprehension through background information.

****Chapter 1: Setting the Stage for Understanding Jesus****

Wright begins by exploring the historical and cultural context of first-century Judea, outlining key elements of Jewish life, Roman occupation, and the prophetic expectations of a messiah. This framework is crucial for understanding Jesus' revolutionary role. He emphasizes that Jesus was not merely a religious figure but a pivotal character in an ongoing narrative of God's relationship with humanity. By familiarizing readers with the complexities of Jewish law, temple practices, and societal dynamics, Wright sets the stage for a richer comprehension of Jesus' mission and teachings.

****Chapter 2: The Kingdom of God****

In this chapter, Wright delves into Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom of God, which forms the heart of his message. He details how the Kingdom represents a radical reordering of society and a divine initiative to reconcile and restore creation. The concept of "kingdom" transcends mere spiritual

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symbolism; it encompasses social justice, healing, and community. Wright argues that Jesus' parables and actions illustrated the inbreaking of this Kingdom in tangible ways, emphasizing the urgency and transformative potential of his mission.

****Chapter 3: The Crucifixion and Its Meaning****

Wright starkly addresses the crucifixion of Jesus, interpreting it as a centerpiece of God's redemptive plan rather than a mere tragedy. He articulates how Jesus' death served as an act of love and sacrifice, fulfilling prophecies and confronting the systems of power that opposed God's purposes. This chapter underscores the significance of resurrection as a demonstration of God's victory over death and injustice, reshaping the dawn of a new creation.

****Chapter 4: Resurrection: The Birth of New Possibilities****

Transitioning to the theme of resurrection, Wright presents it not just as an event but as a transformative reality for believers and the world at large. He argues that the resurrection signifies the inauguration of God's Kingdom and the promise of resurrection for all. By examining early Christian beliefs and the implications of the resurrection for ethics and hope, Wright illustrates how this foundational event reshapes human understanding of life, mortality,



and divine justice.

****Chapter 5: The Early Church and Its Mission****

Wright shifts focus to the early Christian community, emphasizing their role in living out the implications of Jesus' teachings and resurrection. The chapter highlights diverse characters, such as Paul, whose missionary journeys exemplify the spread of the Gospel across cultures and geographies. Wright discusses the challenges faced by the early church, including persecution and theological disputes, emphasizing their commitment to social justice and community, which helped establish a counter-cultural movement rooted in Jesus' teachings.

****Chapter 6: The Ongoing Story of God and Humanity****

In the final chapter, Wright perspectives on the ongoing narrative of God's engagement with humanity, connecting the themes of Jesus' life, death, resurrection, and the mission of the church to contemporary faith experiences. He invites readers to envision their role within this grand story, encouraging an active participation in God's restorative work in the world. Wright's concluding thoughts emphasize that understanding one's faith involves recognizing the historical and theological tapestry that influences today's spiritual landscape, calling for a transformative engagement with

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both the past and the present.

Through a coherent blend of history, theology, and personal narrative, Wright's work becomes a vital exploration for those seeking to deepen their understanding of Christianity's roots and relevance in the modern world. Each chapter builds upon the last, crafting a comprehensive overview of Jesus' life and its implications for believers today.

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Chapter 1 Summary: Our Father in Heaven

Chapter 1: Our Father in Heaven

In the opening chapter, the concept of prayer is established as a foundational element of Christian faith. Prayer serves not just as a means of communication with God but also as an invitation to engage with the divine mystery, urging believers to listen, respond, and strive for a more profound comprehension of God's love.

At the heart of this exploration is the Lord's Prayer, which is framed not merely as a prayer to be recited but as a roadmap for spiritual growth and maturity. For many new Christians, uttering the phrase 'Our Father' represents a beginning, rather than a full realization of its profound implications, signaling a journey toward deeper faith and understanding.

The chapter places the Lord's Prayer within its historical and liturgical context, emphasizing that true prayer requires genuine conversion and a personal connection with God. Jesus, affectionately referring to God as 'Father,' highlights this bond, inviting followers to partake in an intimate relationship with the divine. This designation of God as 'Father' is deeply rooted in Jewish tradition, symbolizing liberation and messianic hope akin to the Exodus narrative.



Jesus viewed His mission as a continuation of this new Exodus, which emphasizes a transformative understanding of faith that encompasses both comfort and challenges. His revolutionary message distinguishes itself by proposing liberation through suffering, setting it apart from typical human revolutions.

Disciples are encouraged to embody this Messianic hope, focusing on integrating their prayers with meaningful actions that respond to the suffering of the world. The chapter emphasizes the tension present in Christian spirituality, as believers navigate between the first Advent—the birth of Jesus—and the anticipated second Advent of His return. This dynamic impels Christians to not only acknowledge the world's pain but also to seek the Creator's presence through prayer.

Calling God 'Father' is described as both an audacious act and a profound commitment, linking believers to Jesus' mission and integrating them into a wider community of faith. This call encourages personal growth in faith and understanding of one's relationship with God.

In conclusion, the Lord's Prayer becomes a collective spiritual journey, inviting Christians to embody principles of love, grace, and liberation. It encourages believers to boldly approach God as 'Our Father,' engaging in a transformative relationship that shapes their lives and their actions in the



world.

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Chapter 2 Summary: Thy Kingdom Come

Chapter 2: Thy Kingdom Come

In this chapter, we delve into the profound implications of the phrase "Thy Kingdom Come" from the Lord's Prayer. Rather than merely wishing for a distant heaven, this prayer embodies a deep desire for God's will to manifest on earth, fostering a harmonious connection between the divine realm and our earthly existence. This unity signifies a transformative vision where heaven and earth coexist in divine purpose.

The historical backdrop of Jesus' ministry is essential to understanding the urgency of His message. Living under Roman rule, the Jewish people were yearning for justice and liberation, longing for a leader who would deliver them from oppression. The Old Testament is rife with prophetic messages that herald God's return as King, promising liberation from tyranny and the restoration of a righteous kingdom.

In the prophetic tradition, a new Exodus was foretold—a movement that would see the downfall of oppressive regimes and the establishment of God's reign. For Jesus, these prophecies were integral to His mission. He interpreted the coming of the Kingdom as a holistic truth that encompassed both spiritual awakening and socio-political justice, signaling a

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transformative presence in the world.

Through compelling narratives like the Parable of the Prodigal Son, Jesus illustrated the radical nature of His mission, equating Israel's liberation with love and mercy rather than armed resistance. His life, death, and resurrection were understood by His early followers as the dawn of the Kingdom, recontextualizing their expectations of divine intervention as a cosmic shift towards justice and hope.

However, the existence of rampant injustice and suffering raised legitimate concerns about the Kingdom's full realization. Early Christians grappled with these challenges without losing faith, praying earnestly and striving to align their lives with the values of the Kingdom, as epitomized in the heartfelt supplication of the Lord's Prayer.

Engaging in such prayer requires an active commitment; it is a call to embody God's will in our actions and communities. The phrase "Thy will be done" invites believers not to passively await divine fulfillment but to actively participate in the work of justice and compassion.

Physical expressions of prayer—through gestures, postures, and community involvement—serve as tangible signs of this commitment. They ground our spiritual practice in the reality of our everyday lives, helping to nurture a sense of connection both within ourselves and with others.

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To truly live out the prayer for God's Kingdom, individuals and communities must strive to be agents of healing and hope. The way in which we pray and live can significantly influence how others perceive and engage with God's mission in the world.

Ultimately, our responsibility aligns with that of Jesus: to teach others the transformative power of prayer. By following His example, we can share the importance of living in accordance with divine will, fostering a more just and loving world for everyone.

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Chapter 3 Summary: Give Us This Day

Chapter 3 Summary: Give Us This Day

In this chapter, N.T. Wright emphasizes the profound significance of the prayer for daily bread within the context of honoring God first. He cautions against allowing greed to overshadow our requests, advocating that prayers should begin with adoration and a focus on the broader vision of the Kingdom of God.

Wright delves into the perception of Jesus, who faced accusations of gluttony and excessive drinking—labeling him as a "glutton and a winebibber." This criticism, rather than suggesting rebellion, pointed to Jesus's deep loyalty to God. Through his inclusive gatherings with marginalized individuals, Jesus beautifully illustrated the principles of the Kingdom of God, showcasing God's welcoming nature and the essential act of sharing daily sustenance.

The chapter further explores the nuances in the Gospel accounts of the prayer for daily bread, specifically contrasting Matthew's and Luke's versions. Matthew invites believers to pray for "bread for tomorrow," reflecting anticipation of future blessings as part of the Kingdom, whereas Luke emphasizes the immediacy of daily needs. Both reflections highlight



the Kingdom's encompassing nature and the connection between earthly desires and divine promises.

Wright identifies four critical themes to consider when praying for daily bread:

1. **Sorting Desires:** Bringing all our desires, including essential needs, to God leads to greater clarity and fulfillment.
2. **Specific Requests:** It's essential to articulate specific needs in our prayers, showcasing a personal and loving relationship with God.
3. **Solidarity with the Needy:** An awareness of those who suffer from hunger must guide our prayers, inspiring us to take action and advocate for justice.
4. **The Eucharist as a Response:** The practice of the Eucharist serves as a poignant embodiment of prayer, allowing individuals to connect their personal needs with God and remember Jesus's sacrifice and mission.

In concluding the chapter, Wright urges readers to think beyond their own needs during the Eucharist and to actively engage in serving those around them as a tangible response to their prayers. He calls for emulating Jesus's example of inclusive celebration, inviting everyone to experience the abundant goodness of God's Kingdom.



Chapter 4: Forgive Us Our Trespasses

Chapter 4: Forgive Us Our Trespasses

In this chapter, the theme of forgiveness emerges as a profound aspect of Jesus' teachings, illustrated through His parable of the Running Father. This parable tells the story of a dignified father who shockingly runs to greet his wayward son upon his return, symbolizing the radical nature of unconditional forgiveness. This image stands in stark contrast to modern interpretations of forgiveness that often trivialize its depth, leading to a superficial understanding that discounts genuine moral reckoning.

The chapter discusses a cultural shift in how society perceives forgiveness. Today, many people view forgiveness merely as a form of private tolerance rather than a powerful act that restores relationships and communities. The father's actions in the parable challenge readers to deepen their reflection on the moral implications of forgiveness, inviting them to consider the transformative potential that true reconciliation holds.

Furthermore, the text connects the concept of forgiveness to Jesus' mission of announcing God's Kingdom, which offered liberation and a path back from spiritual exile. In this context, the forgiveness of sins plays a crucial role, aligning with the expectations of Jesus' contemporaries who longed for



spiritual renewal.

The chapter then highlights the church's role in embodying and announcing this divine forgiveness. Through its practices of reconciliation and community building, the church reinforces the principles of personal and communal ethics. The Lord's Prayer serves as a focal point, demonstrating the interconnectedness between personal forgiveness and the broader moral fabric of society, emphasizing the importance of fostering a harmonious relationship with God and among individuals.

Living out forgiveness emerges as an essential practice for those who seek to be part of God's Kingdom. Jesus' message emphasizes the need for communities to extend the grace they have received to one another, creating an environment where forgiveness thrives and relationships flourish.

The chapter also places the Lord's Prayer within a broader social context, encouraging individuals to advocate for peace and justice. By seeking forgiveness, there is an acknowledgment of both personal and communal wrongs, spurring a commitment to transformation on both individual and societal levels.

On a personal note, the chapter encourages a spiritual approach where individuals recognize their identity as beloved children of God. The practice of confession should not lead to a cycle of guilt but rather facilitate a

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meaningful interaction with divine forgiveness, integral to a vibrant life of faith.

Finally, the chapter concludes by linking the act of Communion to the themes of the parable and the concept of radical forgiveness. By participating in the Eucharist, individuals are reminded of the grace embodied in Jesus' table fellowship, reaffirming their invitation to partake in a community marked by healing and transformation through forgiveness. This sacrament encapsulates the essence of the chapter: that through acknowledging grace, individuals can engage in and extend the life-altering power of forgiveness into the world.

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Chapter 5 Summary: Deliver Us from Evil

Chapter 5: Deliver Us from Evil

This chapter shifts the focus from the previous one, immersing readers in the intertwined themes of hope and fear through the metaphor of the Waiting Mother. This imagery, reminiscent of Mary, the mother of Jesus, symbolizes the anticipation of new beginnings that often emerge from pain, particularly in the context of childbirth and spiritual journeys.

The narrative acknowledges how Jesus understood the complexities of evil and the need for deliverance. His prayer, notably the plea to avoid testing and the request for protection from evil, reflects his deep awareness of Israel's historical adversities. Jesus recognized that genuine deliverance is often preceded by suffering, paralleling the labor pains of childbirth, where profound struggles lead to the dawn of a transformed existence in God's realm.

Throughout his life, Jesus encountered numerous temptations and opposition, culminating in his agony at Gethsemane. This pivotal moment highlights his understanding that testing is integral to his mission. By ultimately embracing the cross, Jesus bore the weight of evil, exemplifying the profound duality of suffering and salvation. This experience deeply

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shapes the meaning of the Lord's Prayer, connecting personal trials with a broader hope.

Wright addresses common misconceptions about evil, categorizing flawed responses into three types: denial, paranoia, and self-righteousness. Jesus, however, confronts evil with truth, acknowledging its reality while simultaneously offering the promise of hope through God's kingdom. The proper approach is neither to ignore nor overreact to evil but to recognize it honestly, drawing strength from the assurance of Jesus' victory.

In his teachings about responding to evil through prayer, Jesus invites believers to confront their personal and communal struggles, embracing a shared path of resistance against malevolence. This call to prayer is an affirmation of Jesus' triumph, underscoring that believers are not isolated in their battles against evil but are joined in a collective effort.

Living out the implications of this prayer requires believers to accept the shared experiences of pain and joy within their communities. It encourages them to become instruments of hope, interceding for the suffering and injustices in the world while steadfastly maintaining faith amidst adversity. The prayer calls for a holistic concern for humanity's struggles and a proactive commitment to justice.

In conclusion, the Lord's Prayer emerges as a vital compass for navigating

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the complexities of faith amid the presence of evil. It impels believers to embrace their roles as conduits of hope, following Jesus' exemplary path toward light and deliverance in a world often enshrouded in darkness. Through this chapter, the journey of faith is portrayed not just as an individual experience but as a communal undertaking, reinforcing the belief that from the depths of suffering, new life can emerge.

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Chapter 6 Summary: The Power and the Glory

Chapter 6: The Power and the Glory

In this chapter, N.T. Wright explores the profound implications of Jesus' birth within the politically charged landscape of the Roman Empire, particularly during the reign of Caesar Augustus. Augustus, known for consolidating power and promoting a narrative of peace through military might and dominance, serves as a foil for the humble beginnings of Jesus, suggesting a deeper understanding of authority and divinity.

The Paradox of Kingship

Wright begins by discussing Augustus's decree, which exemplifies the emperor's far-reaching control over the Mediterranean world. Despite his portrayal as a bringer of peace, Augustus maintained his rule through oppression and self-aggrandizement. In sharp contrast, Jesus's birth underpins a radically different vision of kingship—one that is characterized by humility and divine intervention, symbolized by the angels' proclamation of peace.

The Prophetic Voice of Micah

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Linking the narrative to Jewish prophecies, particularly those found in the book of Micah, Wright highlights the expectation of a true king who brings genuine peace, distinct from the superficial tranquility enforced by Roman power. Through this lens, the emergence of Jesus invites a critical examination of what constitutes real power and glory, encouraging a re-evaluation of worldly standards.

The Redefinition of Glory

Wright further elaborates on this theme by asserting that Jesus redefines the concept of glory. According to the Gospel of John, true glory is rooted in grace and truth, contrasting sharply with the glory pursued by earthly rulers. Jesus exemplifies an authority that strives for peace and disrupts the status quo, embodying the fulfillment of God's promises to Israel.

Jesus and the Kingdom

Wright emphasizes that Jesus's life and teachings signify not only adherence to prophetic expectations but also the active realization of God's kingdom. Through his parables and actions, particularly concerning Jerusalem, Jesus



calls for recognition of God's sovereign authority and announces the imminent arrival of divine rule.

The Lord's Prayer: A Call to Action

In closing, Wright delves into the Lord's Prayer, interpreting its concluding petitions as an appeal for God's kingdom to be fully realized on earth. He identifies three pivotal themes within this prayer:

- 1. Prayer of Mission and Commission:** This theme emphasizes the proactive establishment of God's kingdom, challenging prevailing earthly powers.
- 2. Prayer of Incarnation and Empowerment:** It highlights the church's royal identity and divine empowerment, inviting believers to partner with Jesus in enacting change.
- 3. Prayer of Confidence and Commitment:** Rooted in the belief of Jesus as the rightful king, this prayer encourages believers to approach God boldly, expecting transformation.

Wright concludes by urging believers to engage in a dynamic relationship with God through prayer, which can facilitate significant shifts in their lives



and perspectives. Ultimately, he invites them to actively participate in the unfolding of God's kingdom as they await the fulfillment of Jesus' promises.

Final Reflection

Through this chapter, Wright presents a dual message of challenge and encouragement: to pray with intention and to act with courage, affirming Jesus' sovereignty over all earthly powers. This call to engage deeply with God's agenda invites believers to embody and promote the realities of the kingdom in their daily lives.

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