

# **PRAYING THROUGH SOCIAL UNREST:**

## ***Reflecting on the Lord's Prayer in view of Racial Reconciliation***

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King's Park family,

Now more than ever, we need to be clear on our calling. God has called us to be a city on a hill and a light to the nations. In this hour this means when the enemy is seeking to bring division, we remember the urging of the apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:1-6,

"I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all."

This also means we should take our burdens to the Father in prayer. The Lord Jesus taught us how to do this In Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4:

*Our Father  
Who is in heaven,  
Holy is Your name.  
Your kingdom come.  
Your will be done  
On earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation.  
Deliver us from evil.  
For Yours is the kingdom  
And the power and the glory  
Forever and ever.  
Amen*

With this in mind, several members of our King's Park family have reflected on these words and compiled this prayer guide to address social unrest. This diverse group of contributors includes Dana Williams (Caucasian), Kevin Rowsey (African American), Bomi Roberson (Nigerian), Dave Stalsbrotten (Caucasian), Samuel Buxton (Ghanaian), Pat Evans (African American), Jason Williams (Caucasian). May you be enriched, encouraged, and comforted as you read and pray these prayers.

*-Pastor Reggie Roberson*

***"Our Father, who is in heaven, holy is Your name."***

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Dana Williams

**REFLECT:**

God is the Creator of every race, nationality, and ethnic group. Because He values every single one, we are compelled to seek justice and be reconciled to God and to one another. As the Heavenly Father, He is holy, righteous and just. He is a Father who sacrificed His only son, Jesus, and is deserving of all praise. Jesus' sacrifice means we are saved from eternal death and destruction and we have love, hope, and eternal life. Jesus is worthy of praise in good times and bad times. Praise is one way we can receive strength, hope, peace, and clarity. ***What things can you praise God for?***

**PRAY:**

Mighty God of heaven, we come before You with confidence that You hear our prayers and receive our praise. Oh God, before we petition You for justice, reconciliation, and peace, we come with prayers of praise. You are the Almighty God, maker of heaven and earth. You are three in one: Father, Son and Holy Ghost. You are the God of Abraham, Issac and Jacob.

Father, You sent Your Son to suffer on our behalf. Jesus, You came and took on our suffering and rose to overcome it. Holy Spirit, You have come to live within us—the very life of God living within us that connects us to the communion of the Holy Trinity.

We lift up our eyes to You, our Redeemer. You bring worth to the worthlessness of our sin. You are perfect, and there is no blemish in You. We know from John's revelation that even now, in our present distress, that You are being praised around Your throne. We come and join in that praise, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come."<sup>1</sup> Our great hope is in Your coming to make all things new. "Our Father, who is in heaven, holy is Your name."

***"Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."***

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Kevin Rowsey

**REFLECT:**

When we pray "Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven," we are asking God to bring His kingdom and His will into fullness on this side of eternity. In heaven, every person regardless of their greatness, nationality, or cultural sensibilities is accepted and received by the Father. To see this on earth requires the Holy Spirit to bring conviction and godly change into our lives. This also means we work to "bring good news to the poor, comfort the brokenhearted, proclaim that captives will be released and prisoners will be freed, tell those who mourn that the time of the Lord's favor has come, and with it, the day of God's anger against his

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<sup>1</sup> Revelation 4:8

enemies.”<sup>2</sup> ***How can you partner with God to see His kingdom come and His will done here on earth as it is in heaven in the face of social unrest?***

**PRAY:**

Father God, I pray that Your justice will prevail in my life and in my community. I pray that You would bring reconciliation in my life and in my community. Jesus, I thank You for revealing who You are in my life. Thank You for helping me to look within and not condemn others as You work in my own life. I thank You for removing obstacles that would keep me from being reconciled to my brothers and sisters. Amen.

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***“Give us this day our daily bread.”***

Bomi Roberson

**REFLECT:**

“And He humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.” Deuteronomy 8:3 ESV

Jesus referred to Himself as the bread of life in John 6:35 and in Deuteronomy 8:3, and God’s Word is the manna that sustains us. Without Jesus and God’s Word working in our lives, we can neither be satisfied nor sanctified. All people need the bread of life, food from Heaven, to live out reconciliation with diverse peoples. ***What area of your life is starving for God’s manna? How can you help others to see that God can satisfy their hunger even in troubling times?***

**PRAY:**

Heavenly Father we thank You for Your manna. We thank You for Your provision both physically and spiritually through Your Word. God, we need a fresh word from You. We ask for a word that not only fuels us with hope but increases our faith and helps us to know how to move forward in a time of social and political unrest. God, give us a word that we might be a light in this time of what feels like darkness. God, give us a word that we might know that You are God. Heavenly Father, please give us a word that helps us to break down the wall of division, lifting up Your inherent value for all humanity. And give us what we need to do what is right: to love mercy, walk humbly before You. Give us our daily bread. Help us, oh Lord, in Jesus’ name.

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***“Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.”***

Dave Stalsbroten

**REFLECT:**

Repentance means to “turn from” sin and what is evil in God’s eyes. To *turn from* means to renounce sinful ways of thinking and acting and to start thinking right and doing good for God’s glory. To receive God’s forgiveness, we must first repent. As the Scripture says, “Repent

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<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 61:1-2

therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord..."<sup>3</sup> Also, to receive God's forgiveness, we must extend forgiveness to others who sin against us as Christ forgave us. "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you."<sup>4</sup> ***What ways of thinking are not godly and dismiss or demean your brothers and sisters in Christ of all backgrounds? What ways of acting do you need to turn away from and what ways of acting should you initiate that will bring God glory?***

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal those areas of repentance and allow Him to show you how to turn toward ways that will bring glory to God. Ask Him to show you anyone you need to forgive, then take a moment to forgive.

**PRAY:**

James 5:16 says, "Make this your common practice: Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you can live together whole and healed." So Jesus, we confess and we ask forgiveness. Forgive us for trying to save our own skin when our brothers and sisters are being mistreated and killed because of their skin. Forgive us for telling one-sided stories in our hearts and minds that divide and dehumanize. Forgive us for being silent out of fear of rocking the boat. Forgive us for speaking in ways that save face and protect our egos, instead of promoting truth and justice. Forgive us for trying to stand alone on our individual merit, distancing ourselves from our culture and history, saying "I'm not part of all this. These aren't my people. It's not my fault. It wasn't me." Because that's not true. Jesus, You said, "Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."<sup>5</sup> Don't let us remain alone.

Father, You created men and women in Your image, with infinite variety and beauty, and in sin we created distinctions and definitions and divided Your body. Jesus, have mercy; we knew what we were doing and did it anyway. We're born into sin—structural, systemic, self-inflicted—and the pattern continues. Jesus, please break the cycle. Lay our hearts bare. Help us to have courageous conversations, grace-filled conversations seasoned with salt, maybe even salty conversations seasoned with grace.

Help us to see as You see. Unmask the powers and principalities at work in this place, in our own hearts, and in our communities. Forgive us for letting fear overwhelm us. We are afraid of being crushed if we admit that we are linked to the heavy, horrible reality of racism. Jesus, give us courage. Let us feel the crushing weight of racism, admit it and confess it. And then, Lord, please pick us up and help us to rebuild our lives with You as the foundation.

Forgive us for pledging more allegiance to manmade groups and agendas than to Your Kingdom and Your Family. Remind us that we are Yours. In a world obsessed with consumption and getting more, let us be shaped by Your self-sacrificing love.

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<sup>3</sup> Acts 3:19-20 ESV

<sup>4</sup> Ephesians 4:32 ESV

<sup>5</sup> John 12:24 ESV

Finally, Jesus, forgive us for trying to move on too quickly, for putting bandaids and religious words on wounds that run far deeper than we could ever know. Jesus, please be with us as we sit together in the pain and listen. As bridge builder Latasha Morrison has prayed:

“We cry out to You, our God and redeemer, as the only One who can save us from ourselves. Show us our blind spots. Don’t let us hide from You in our shame and guilt. Restore us to Your perfect union that can be found in Jesus Christ. Lord show us how to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with You.”<sup>6</sup> Amen.

**“Lead us not into temptation.”**

Samuel Buxton

### **REFLECT:**

“After these things I looked, and this is what I saw: a vast multitude which no one could count, from every nation and from all the tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, dressed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands; and in a loud voice they cried out, saying, salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb.” Revelation 7:9-10

The work of the enemy is to steal, kill and destroy any form of unity that will further God’s kingdom here on earth. So the enemy instigates discord, division, and unrest. He does that for nations, people groups, families and between individuals. We must address the mindsets that create division as well as inequalities that create division. **What are the areas of temptation that prevent you from walking in a diverse community and fulfilling God’s will for your life?** Ask the Holy Spirit to show you. Remember, Jesus defeated Satan’s temptations in Matthew chapter 4 by using the Word of God. **What does God’s Word say about the issues that tempt you during this time?**

### **PRAY:**

Father, when we pray “Lead us not into temptation,” we are acknowledging that You alone are able to deliver us from the deceitful wiles of our adversary and our flesh. Lord, You are not the author of temptation, as Your Word declares to us in James 1:13.

2 Corinthians 10:4-5 declares, “The weapons of our warfare are not physical. Our weapons are divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying sophisticated arguments and every exalted and proud thing that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought and purpose captive to the obedience of Christ.” So now, oh Lord, we come against the spirit of racism and division and we take captive the arguments and thoughts that stoke the fires of racial tensions and divisions, in Jesus’ name!

John 13:35 says, “By this everyone will know that You are my disciples, if You have love and unselfish concern for one another.” Now, more than ever, let us, Your church, display love and

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<sup>6</sup> Latasha Morrison, *Be the Bridge*, (Colorado Springs: Waterbrook, 2019), 55.

unselfish concern toward one another. We pray in Jesus' name that our lights will shine before all people, that they will see and give glory to You, God. And we pray that the works of the devil and our human systems in causing racial tensions and divisions will be destroyed.

We pray that as the salt of the earth, we will bring flavor to our land, into our homes and into every life. When the world around us is just talking and doing nothing, lead us not into that trap, but make us agents of the change that only comes from You, Father!

When we are tempted to pay evil for evil, to see the speck in our neighbors' eyes and not the log in our own, or to look with apathy in the face of injustice anywhere, Lord deliver us from these temptations and into Your will. When we are tempted to vilify our neighbors, to be prejudiced toward one another, or to hate the police men and women who protect us, Lord, lead us not into these temptations. The world is Yours, O God, and we bring it completely into Your hands.

***"Deliver us from evil."***

Pat Evans

**REFLECT:**

Evil is the absence of good or more pointedly God and His Kingdom. The enemy seeks to entrap us in sin; a way of thinking and a way of life that doesn't reflect the unity of the diverse members of His family and Kingdom. Sin corrodes our commitment, corrupts our communication and breaks our camaraderie in God's family. The thought that we are either inherently superior or inferior to anyone is not the gospel of the Kingdom and is missing the mark which is sin. We all have sinned and we all are bought with the same precious blood of Jesus & given a place in the Father's family and Kingdom when we put our trust in Jesus. Any mindset that opposes the very core of the gospel is evil. For God to deliver us from evil, He must reveal the schemes of the enemy and do a work in our hearts to purge evil from us. ***Ask for ears that are open to hear God's voice and truth in all situations. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you a heart that loves others like Christ loves them, eyes that are open to the schemes of the enemy, and the mind of Christ to defeat and overcome Satan's schemes.***

**PRAY:**

Our Father, give us ears to hear what You say! Give us eyes to see what You have put before us! Give us hearts to love the way You love! Deliver us from evil. Deliver us from the evil Satan brings. Deliver us from the evil of the world. Our Father, deliver us from the evil in us.

Our Father, open the eyes of our hearts. We know that it is through believing You that we can truly see. We know that You do not owe us an explanation when You direct us to do something. Let us have faith to follow Your instructions, not because of what we hope to achieve for ourselves, but because we trust You and believe You are perfect.

In Daniel 2:19-23, Daniel prayed this prayer when he sought You so that he and his friends would not be executed along with the other wise men in Babylon.

"That night the secret was revealed to Daniel in a vision. Then Daniel praised the God of heaven saying, 'Praise the name of God forever and ever, for He alone has all wisdom

and power. He determines the course of world events; He removes kings and sets others on the throne. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the scholars. He reveals deep and mysterious things and knows what lies hidden in darkness, though He himself is surrounded by light. I thank and praise You, God of my ancestors, for You have given me wisdom and strength. You have told me what we asked of You and revealed to us what the King demanded.”

In 2 Corinthians 1:3-11, Paul wrote how and why You comfort us:

“All praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the source of every mercy and the God who comforts. He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When others are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us. You can be sure that the more we suffer for Christ, the more God will shower us with His comfort through Christ. So when we are weighed down with troubles, it is for your benefit and salvation! For when God comforts us, it is so that we, in turn, can be an encouragement to you. Then you can patiently endure the same things we suffer. We are confident that as you share in suffering, you will also share in God's comfort. I think you ought to know, dear brothers and sisters, about the trouble we went through in the province of Asia. We were crushed and completely overwhelmed, and we thought we would never live through it. In fact, we expected to die. But as a result, we learned not to rely on ourselves, but on God Who can raise the dead. And He did deliver us from mortal danger. And we are confident that He will continue to deliver us. He will rescue us because you are helping by praying for us. As a result, many will give thanks to God because so many people's prayers for our safety have been answered.”

Our Father, deliver us from evil. Amen.

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***“For Yours is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever and ever.”***

Jason Williams

**REFLECT:**

In Psalm 139:1-18, we see that God is all knowing, He is everywhere and He is all powerful. What we face here on earth does not surprise Him, and is not too big for Him to handle. Through Jesus Christ, He has experienced rejection, abandonment, abuse and prejudice, along with so many other experiences that we face in our fallen earth and temporary home. But, there is hope! Jesus came to earth, lived the life we should have lived and died the death that we deserve so that all can receive salvation. Through the salvation He gives, all who put their hope in Jesus, regardless of background, are made to live a life worthy of Him. We experience true freedom and are welcomed into His kingdom as sons and daughters. ***What areas have you forgotten that God can handle or can relate to?*** Invite the Holy Spirit to help you to surrender those areas to God's will. Ask God to heal our land because the earth and everything in it belongs to Him.

“The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein, for He has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers.”  
Psalm 24:1-2 ESV

**PRAY:**

Father, we hope in Your kingdom, we hope in Your power and we give You the glory. Your kingdom is not of this world. It does not belong to the powerful, but to the poor in spirit. It does not belong to the oppressors, but to the oppressed. We hope in Your kingdom knowing that there is hope for justice, hope for peace and hope for the end of suffering.

There is nothing too great for His power; a nation can be changed in a moment. No scheme of the enemy is hidden from Your sight. We hope in Your power. We have hope that Your power can change a soul. We have hope that Your power can change a people. We have hope that Your power can change a nation.

“But God chose what the world thinks foolish to shame the wise, and God chose what the world thinks weak to shame the strong. God chose what is low and despised in the world, what is regarded as nothing, to set aside what is regarded as something, so that no one can boast in his presence. He is the reason you have a relationship with Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, ‘Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.’”<sup>7</sup>

As it is written in Revelation 4, we join with the four living creatures and twenty-four elders around Your throne saying, “Holy holy holy is the Lord God, the All-Powerful, who was and who is, and who is still to come!...You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, since You created all things, and because of Your will they existed and were created!” You are our hope and strength, our strong tower! Amen.

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In closing, let us continue to pray and address the unrest in our country in a way that glorifies God. King’s Park Family, always remember who God has called us to be: *a city on the hill and a light to nations*. As we approach elections, as we deal with this pandemic, as we witness social unrest, let us always remember to receive our guidance from God’s Word and His Spirit. Let’s also do what God has called us to do: carry the cross, walk in a diverse community, pursue justice, seek reconciliation, and find refuge in Jesus daily through prayer, praise, and His Word. We love you and stand with you and support you during this time. If you have a moment, please check out our sermons on [racial reconciliation](#) and [diversity](#). Also, if you would like for us to pray for you please contact us for prayer through our [pastoral care page](#) at [kingspark.org/care](http://kingspark.org/care).

*“The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.”*

Numbers 6:24-26 ESV

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<sup>7</sup> 1 Corinthians 1:27-31