

Book Recommendation:
IN THE SANCTUARY, by Herman Hoeksema.
Published by RFP, 116 (BV230 HOE)

Dear beloved brethren,

In this pastor's voice, I would like to recommend you a book for your reading. In order to grow spiritually it is important for us to be reading good Christian books on a regular basis.

This book contains eleven expository sermons on the Lord's Prayer, preached by Herman Hoeksema, the founding father of the Protestant Reformed Churches of America. These sermons were first preached as a series over the radio in the early 1940s and because of their popularity these sermons were published in a book form. Let me quote a few portions from the various petitions in order to whet your spiritual appetite to want to read these sermons for yourselves. In all the petitions, he also includes the spiritual disposition necessary in the heart of the believer in order to make these petitions, which makes these sermons also very devotional.

In the first petition, "hallowed be thy name", it concerns the glory of God. The preacher says, "We must not overlook this position: for it teaches us at once that the chief and only purpose of all things is the glory of God, and that the desire for the realisation of this purpose should be uppermost in our hearts and minds and should occupy, therefore, the first place in all our prayers", (page 37).

In the second petition, what is the kingdom of God? He defines in this way, "It is well to remind ourselves that the kingdom of God is emphatically a kingdom of GOD, not of man; that is based on the righteousness of God in Christ, not of man; that is principally realized not by a man-made change in human relationships, but by a divinely wrought redemption an regeneration of the individual sinner; and here in the world its sphere and scope is not the universal brotherhood of man, but the fellowship of the saints in Christ the church of God; and finally, that its perfect manifestations and realization must not be expected in this world, nor by way of gradual development, but by the final wonder of the appearance of our Lord from heaven", page 48. Thus, by making this petition, "thy kingdom comes", it means that "we ask and long for the coming of the day of Christ, when all the elect shall have been gathered, when Christ shall appear in glory, the dead shall be raised in corruption, the present world shall pass away, all the forces of darkness shall be destroyed forever, new heavens and a new earth, shall be created, and the kingdom of heaven shall be established in eternal perfection", page 55.

And as a conclusion to the entire prayer, praying the doxology means that, "we do a very serious thing. For then we declare, first of all, before the face of God that in our prayer we were true, that we did not lie when we prayed, that we did not play the hypocrite, but that we are sure that the things we prayed for are the objects of the desire of inmost heart". "Secondly, this 'amen' expressed that it is established and certain that God will hear my prayer and give me exactly that which I ask for", page 115

One benefit arising from the reading of these sermons we will that we will have a better understanding of the perfect model of prayer the next time we recite it in worship or in our private devotions.
May this understanding be yours and your prayer life improved.

Pastor Paul Goh