

PRAYER HOME GROUP • Karl Barth, *Prayer*, Ch. 2,

“Interpreting the Lord’s Prayer in the Tradition of the Reformers: The Invocation”

“We are exhorted to pray, ‘Our Father who art in heaven.’ It is Jesus Christ who invites us to address ourselves in prayer to God and to call him our Father; Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God, who has made himself our brother and makes us his brothers and sisters. He takes us with him in order to associate us with himself, to place us beside him so that we may live and act as his family and as the members of his body. He says to us, ‘Follow me’... Jesus Christ invites us, commands us, and allows us to speak with him to God, to pray with him his own prayer, to be united with him in the Lord’s Prayer.”

*What do you think of the fact that “The Lord’s Prayer” is really Jesus’ own prayer to his Father that he shares with us, and not a way that he tells us to pray that is substantially different from his own communion with God?*

“We pray ‘Our Father’ in the communion of this assembly, of this congregation which we call the church.”

*How does your engaging with the Lord’s Prayer change when you think of it as, ultimately, a corporate prayer rather than a private one?*

“He is in heaven, on his throne... He is ever the same and yet never the same, because he is always new every morning. He is present with us at every instant, and he is eternal only by being present with us... He is, in a few words, the one whom we address not by our own initiative, but because we are invited, called to do so. We have the freedom to come to him. This freedom is given to us; it is not of ourselves, it is not natural. It is the freedom of the children of God, the freedom of the Word and of the Spirit.”

*What does it mean that the freedom to address God in prayer is not natural? How do we become free to address God in prayer?*