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¹ This small booklet was written and edited by Scott Moore. The headings for each day were taken from John Smed’s work on the Lord’s Prayer. The Westminster Shorter Catechism provided the basic outline for the booklet as a whole.

In his excellent book entitled *Dynamics of the Spiritual Life*, Richard Lovelace writes this observation regarding prayer:

If all regenerate church members in Western Christendom were to intercede daily simply for the most obvious spiritual concerns visible in their homes, their workplaces, their local churches and denominations, their nations, and the world and the total mission of the body of Christ within it, the transformation which would result would be incalculable. Not only would God certainly change those situations in response to prayer – we have Christ’s word that if we ask in his name he will do more than we ask or think – but the church’s comprehension of its task would attain an unprecedented sharpness of focus. Perhaps much of our prayer now should simply be for God to pour out such a spirit of prayer and supplication in the hearts of his people.

Join me this week in asking God to pour out a “spirit of prayer into our hearts”. Pray also that we would be like the early church in Acts 1:14 that “came together in one accord and devoted themselves to prayer”. I’m sure you would agree that prayer is one of our greatest blessings in the Christian life, yet it also can be one of our greatest struggles. May the focus of this week encourage us to experience more of prayer’s blessings than of its struggle.

Praying,
Jim Bryars
Pastor

Purpose and Strategy for the Week of Prayer

The Week of Prayer is a great opportunity for Christians to approach the Throne of Grace as a family of believers. Our Heavenly Father delights when we come to Him in a child-like way asking to receive His manifold blessings and benefits. Over this next week, let us come together and do just that. Let us pray *together, asking God to bless us with increased faith in Christ, a greater hope for the future, and a gospel-centered love for others.*

The schedule for this week is based on the Lord's Prayer. Each day, beginning this Sunday, we will focus on a particular aspect of the Lord's Prayer. Thursday being the only exception as we take time to fast, as a church, for spiritual renewal. As you will notice, each section provides a number of different resources. First, you will find a brief commentary to give further insight into the passage. Second, there will be a small prayer for you to use as a guide. Third, you will see some specific prayer requests for the church as well as spaces to add your personal requests.

The next page is for further reflection and study. Scripture references are given that will provide biblical support to your prayers. You will also find the questions and answers to the Westminster Shorter Catechism for the corresponding section of the Lord's Prayer. For parents, we have added the sections from the children's catechism to help our little ones better understand the way our Lord taught us to pray. Finally, there is space provided for notes.

As you can see, this little booklet is for those who are both young and old. It is for those who enjoy praying alone, and for parents who like to spend time praying in family worship. Most important, this booklet is an opportunity for us to lock arms and pray as a unified church. As you see God move in your life to answer prayer, we encourage you to write it down (see Appendix A) and share it with others. At the end of the week, we will come together to see how God was faithful in answering prayers!

Day 1 Prayer and Sonship

“Our Father in Heaven...”

Because God is the benevolent, covenant-keeping King over all creation, it is right to go to Him and Him alone in prayer. He alone is able to search our hearts. He alone can answer our requests, pardon our sins, and fulfill our deepest needs.

Our sin, however, makes approaching this holy God impossible; unless we have a Mediator. By faith, our Mediator is Jesus Christ. He died the death we deserved to die, and He lived the life we should have lived. On account of His death, we have rightful access to God. And on account of His life, we may approach God as *“Our Father in Heaven”*.

This preface to the Lord’s prayer encourages us to draw near to God as a child would a loving father – asking with reverence and humility; depending upon His strength, His willingness and His ability. He has adopted us into His wonderful family. We are therefore encouraged to pray with and for our brothers and sisters.

Example. “Father in heaven, I love you. You are so faithful and good. You alone satisfy the desire of every living thing. I confess that I have willfully sinned and have broken your commands. I am sorry. Will you please forgive me? O Lord, I thank you for your Word, which tells me about your promise to forgive and cleanse me from all of my unrighteousness. Thank you, heavenly Father, for sending your Son to die for me. Christ, thank you for all you have done for me. I also thank you, Holy Spirit, for empowering me to live and pray as I ought. And now Father, I bring my supplications to you, asking your blessings upon my life and those with me in your family. I trust you will do so as it is according to your will, and on account of the work of your Son Jesus Christ. It is in His Name I pray, amen.”

Things to Pray for:

Personal:

Corporate:

- That God would bring spiritual renewal to GRACE
- That He would make us a praying people
- That He would make us a grateful people

Day 2 Worship and Evangelism

“...hallowed be Your Name. Your kingdom come...”

To *hallow* God’s Name means to *set God Himself apart as holy, that He alone may be revered and acknowledged as God*. In praying this way, we admit our utter inability and indisposition to honor God rightly. Because of sin, we are prone to look to *created* things for the joy and satisfaction that the Creator can give.

Because of Christ, however, we can ask God to enable and incline us to know, acknowledge, and highly esteem Him more. By trusting His fatherly care, we ask Him to prevent and remove whatever is dishonorable to Him in our lives. It is also right to ask Him to glorify Himself in our thoughts, words, and deeds.

In the second petition, *Your kingdom come*, we openly acknowledge that the world needs redemption. All mankind is, by nature, under the dominion of sin and Satan. We pray, therefore, that Satan’s kingdom be destroyed; and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced.

This empowers and encourages our evangelistic petitions as we pray for God to grant us, as well as others, repentance, that we all might rest in the kingdom of grace. Further, this short petition adds fuel to our hopeful flames as we pray for God to hasten the time of Christ’s second coming, after which we will reign with Him forever!

Example. “Heavenly Father, you are God alone, unlike any other, incomparable, and unparalleled in all the universe. Please forgive me Lord for hallowing other things; and for worshipping idols. I trust and am thankful for Christ who has paid the penalty for these sins in my life. Thank you Jesus. And thank you Holy Spirit for empowering and enabling me to esteem you rightly. Please help me to remember how glorious you are, that I may show those around me the same. I pray this in the Name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Things to Pray for:

Personal:

Corporate:

- That God would give us a greater understanding of His holiness
- That He would continue to bless our worship services
- That Holy Spirit would cause us to grow in our evangelistic efforts

Day 3 Mercy and Generosity

“...Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread...”

This third petition helps us to know and understand that God desires His creation to be a certain way. He created all things to reflect His power, splendor, majesty, knowledge, justice, kindness, and holiness. We acknowledge however, that, in our sin, we are unable to know and do the will of God. We need help. And when we need help, Christ taught us to pray.

We pray that God, by His Spirit, will liberate us to know and do His will; that, as His representatives, we might exemplify a life that does justice, loves mercy and walks humbly before God.

In asking for our *daily bread* we admit that we do not deserve such a blessing. His provision is free in that it costs us nothing. It is sufficient, for God knows just how much we need in this life. Praying this way encourages gratitude, for while the provision is free, it cost Christ His life. It also promotes generous simplicity, for we know that God’s blessings are new every day. We are therefore, free to give according to His riches in glory!

Example. “Heavenly Father, in the beginning You created the heavens and the earth and said it was good. I see your creation and stand in awe of you. I love You. I am sorry, Father, that I have done things that are not glorifying to You. As Your glorious representative, I have fallen short. Please forgive me. Jesus I love you for securing my pardon before the Father. I give you thanks that, being now clothed in your righteousness and filled by Your Spirit, I can walk in a way that is fully pleasing to You. By Your grace, Your will is being done in my life. God, thank you for supplying every good thing in this life. I am so thankful that I do not have to worry about what I will eat or what I will wear. You have promised to care for me. I trust You Lord, because of Christ. In His Name I pray, Amen.

Things to Pray for:

Personal:

Corporate:

- That our ministries would exemplify God’s heart for mercy and justice
- That the people of Grace would be a giving people
- That God would use the people of GRACE to bless others

Day 4 Unity

“...and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.”

There is hardly anything more glorious in life than peace in relationships. When we are at peace with others, we can enjoy their fellowship freely and without reserve. This fourth petition reminds us that true fellowship with others is built upon the foundation of our peace with God.

What is stunning about this petition is that it tells us our debts can be forgiven with just a simple, child-like, prayer. Our Father in heaven longs to hear us say in faith, *“Forgive us our debts”*. And because of Christ, He is both faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness! How precious is that flow that makes us white as snow!

This gracious forgiveness provides us with the freedom and ability to forgive others. It is our heavenly Father’s will that we should exemplify His gracious plan for providing forgiveness to the world, in the Name of His Son Jesus Christ. Forgiveness is supernatural work. We should therefore ask for the supernatural ability to forgive others.

Example. “I love You God. You have created me to both glorify and enjoy you forever. But I have not given you glory as I ought. I have found enjoyment in other things. Father, please forgive me. Wash me in that precious flow and make me white like snow! Thank you for sending Christ to pay for my sins. Thank you Jesus for securing and purchasing my forgiveness. I especially give you praise for my relationships with others. Holy Spirit, I thank you for giving me the ability to forgive. I also ask that you would continue to strengthen me to confess when I have sinned; and to love others who sin against me. Please help me to love and forgive others the way you have loved and forgiven me. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit I pray, Amen.

Things to Pray for:

Personal:

Corporate:

- That GRACE would be a forgiving people
- That we would live in harmony with one another
- That this gospel-centered unity would show others about Christ

Day 5 Fasting for Renewal

“But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face...and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”
– Matthew 6:18

Here in the words of Christ, we have a biblical foundation for fasting. Throughout redemptive history great people of faith like Moses, David and Jesus all fasted. More recently, even some of the Reformers like Calvin, Luther and Knox made regular use of the practice and testified to its value. Any time we abstain from eating we are reminded just how dependent we are. This grumbling of our stomachs is but a natural reminder to direct our attention heavenward. Here are a few reflections on the nature of fasting.

Faith. Fasting reminds us that God alone satisfies us. Many times, as God moves mightily to save His people, His people find themselves in a wilderness with no food or water (cf. Ex 15-17; Num 11). As they grow hungry, they begin to grumble. On the heels of this fast, God supernaturally feeds them with bread from heaven (manna); and He quenches their thirst with water from the Rock. Simply put, our physical hunger for food is a shadow of our spiritual hunger for God. In fasting, we look to Christ, the bread of life and the living water. Fasting encourages us to return to our first love.

Hope. Fasting reminds us that this world is not our home. After God delivers, His people become very uncomfortable in this life. The wilderness is no place to settle. Many people abuse food by attempting to sooth the wilderness experience. Fasting helps us to understand that our hope is not in this world, but in Christ – our hope of glory. As you look forward to breaking the fast, also look forward to when Christ will come again.

Love. Fasting should heighten our awareness of the struggles of others. As we fast from food, we are reminded of the physical poverty in our world. Many people go without the essentials of daily life and are thus living in constant suffering. As we fast, we pray for ways to help others with acts of mercy and justice. Similarly, we are also reminded of the spiritual poverty in our world. There are many who have never tasted the Bread of Life; nor have they been quenched by Living Water. As we set our minds on Christ by faith and in hope, we have a growing love for the physical and spiritual needs of the world around us.

It is important to note that God’s people became hungry *after* He delivered them, and that Jesus spoke to His *disciples* about fasting. In other words, we do not fast to be delivered, or to be a disciple. Rather, we fast because we have been delivered and because we are a disciple. *Renewal* comes to those who have first been made new.

Scriptures for Reflection While Fasting

Daniel 9

Joel 2

Matthew 6:16-18

Acts 13:2

Fasting as a Church For:

- Spiritual Renewal
- An outward face as a community of believers
- God to bless our efforts to Present Christ faithfully, provide community continually, and to practice charity selflessly.

Fasting as an Individual or Family For:

Wesley on Fasting:

“First, let it be done unto the Lord, with our eye singly fixed on Him. Let our intention herein be this, and this alone, to glorify our Father which is in heaven; to express our sorrow and shame for our manifold transgressions of His holy law; to wait for an increase of purifying grace, drawing our affections to things above; to add seriousness and to obtain all the great and precious promises which He hath made to us in Jesus Christ...Let us beware of fancying we merit anything of God by our fasting. We cannot be too often warned of this; inasmuch as a desire to “establish our own righteousness”, to procure salvation of debt and not of grace, is so deeply rooted in all our hearts. Fasting is only a way which God hath ordained, wherein we wait for His unmerited mercy; and wherein, without any desert of ours, He hath promised freely to give us His blessing” (Sermon on Matthew 6:16-18).

A Few Instructions for fasting

Fasting is a practice that is done by the believer to God. Because of this, there are different ways to fast. Some may fast for one meal, while others may fast for the entire day. How many meals you decide to fast is up to you.

If you are prohibited, for whatever reason, from fasting meals, we suggest fasting from certain types of things such as sweets, meats, or soft drinks.

Try to break your fast with others. Eating after a fast is cause for great celebration as provides us with a shadow of what it will be like when we feast with our Lord and His saints in glory!

Day 6 Warfare

“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”

On this side of glory, the people of God will always be fighting against Satan, the world, and the flesh. Simply put, we are at war until we die. This fact helps us to understand that we need help from our Heavenly Father. In this sixth petition we are calling out to God to keep us from temptation; and, should we be tempted, that He would support and deliver us.

In this prayer, we admit our helplessness and inability to keep ourselves from falling under the influence of evil. We need His power and His grace to watchfully stand and successfully resist our adversary who prowls around like a roaring lion.

This prayer hallows God as the supreme ruler of the universe - the One who is able to overrule the world, subdue the flesh, and restrain Satan. He is able to order all things, bless us with all means of grace, and quicken us to watchfulness in the hour of temptation. When we fall, He helps us to rise again and recover out of it; and this for our sanctification and salvation. We pray trusting that our warfare will soon be over, Satan trodden under our feet, and we shall be fully freed from sin, temptation, and all evil, forever.

Example. “God our Father, Maker of heaven and earth, I love you. I adore you for you have saved me and rescued me from the enslavement of the Devil. You are truly mighty to save. Lord, I confess my sins to you. I have fallen into sin. I have not come to you when tempted. Thank you Jesus for dying for me. Thank you Christ for giving me your righteousness and teaching me how to pray. Thank you for giving me your Spirit who empowers me to call out to you and to resist the wiles of the enemy. God, I ask that you would keep me from temptation; and, should I enter into it, I ask that you would support me and deliver me in such an hour. I pray these things, trusting in your faithfulness, which you have shown me in Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

Things to Pray for:

Personal:

Corporate:

- That we would be a people who fight sin and temptation
- That GRACE would be used to fight injustice in our community
- That abortion would be abolished and Christ embraced in our nation

Day 7 The Amen

“For Yours is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.”

Based on what Jesus Christ has accomplished in His death, burial and resurrection, we can be confident that God hears our prayers. It is only in Christ, that the promises of God, and our subsequent prayers, are answered with an Almighty “Yes!” Therefore, our *Amen* is to be confident and sure, founded upon the perfect and sufficient merits of Christ.

This should bring strong encouragement to those who are in Christ Jesus. This should empower our prayers with heavenly zeal and passion; knowing that these utterances are part of the heavenly chorus. Martin Luther said it this way: “Never think that you are kneeling or standing alone, rather think that the whole of Christendom, all devout Christians, are standing there beside you and you are standing among them in a common, united petition which God cannot disdain.”

When we end our humble, child-like prayers to God in this way, we confirm our desire to see God’s Kingdom come, by His Almighty power, and for the glory of His Name. When God’s children make much of Him, He is so pleased to answer all of their requests. Simply put, we serve a God who loves to say “Yes.”

Example: “Heavenly Father, how great is your Name in all the earth! I love to sing your praises. I love to bring honor to you. You are amazing! I confess that I have fallen short of your glory – I have broken your commandments. I have worshiped and served idols. Please forgive me. I trust that you will, for you have promised to do so, on account of the merits of your Son, Jesus Christ. Thank you my Savior for all that you have done for me. Thank you Holy Spirit for causing me to walk in your ways! It is so wonderful to come to you and know that you answer me! Please help and empower me to do all things for your kingdom, by your power and for your glory. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.”

Things to Pray for:

Personal:

Corporate:

- That GRACE would be united in its prayerful efforts
- That the people of GRACE would continue to pray for these things
- That God would increase our faith, hope and love

Appendix B

Praying “ACTS” with Your Children

Many people have trouble knowing what to pray. Others have a hard time just getting started. In this section you will find a common and simple outline to prayer in the word ACTS.

Adore: “I love you God.” It is right to begin prayer by telling God that we love Him. In praying this way, we are speaking to God as if He had just asked us, “Why do you love me?” Many take this opportunity to tell God how much they love certain attributes about Him, such as His faithfulness, grace, mercy, justice and power.

Confess: “I’m sorry God.” When we reflect upon the greatness of God, we become aware of our sin and fallenness. This is an occasion to confess our sin and ask for forgiveness.

Thanksgiving: “Thank you God.” When we understand that our forgiveness was purchased for us by Christ, we become overwhelmed with gratitude. Someone else paid our debt for us. That “someone” is Jesus Christ. This is also a great time to pray in a Trinitarian way saying, “Thank you Father for sending your Son. Thank you Jesus for paying the debt I couldn’t pay. And, thank you Spirit for awakening me to new life!”

Supplication: “Please God.” After we come to God telling Him we love Him, in humility and repentance, we can then, on account of the righteousness of Christ, ask Him to bless us. We understand that our Heavenly Father loves to give us the desires of our hearts!