

FAMILY WORSHIP HELPS

WEEK 103

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

QUESTION 107: *What doth the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer teach us?*

ANSWER: The conclusion of the Lord's Prayer (which is, For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever, Amen) teacheth us to take our encouragement in prayer from God only, and in our prayers to praise him, ascribing kingdom, power, and glory to him. And, in testimony of our desire, and assurance to be heard, we say, Amen.



MONDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 96A

Scripture: Read 1 Chronicles 29:10-14; Luke 18:11-14

Key Thought: *We must pray with proper humility.*

Questions:

- ☞ Why should the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer humble us?
- ☞ How is David's prayer a model of godly humility?
- ☞ What lesson does the contrast between the Pharisee and the tax collector teach us about our attitude in prayer?

Prayer

Notes: The constant enemy of prayer is the deep rooted tendency toward self-sufficiency in the fallen sons of Adam. Prayer, by its very nature, is a crying out to God with a realization of our own inability and our desperate need for divine assistance. The prayerlessness of many professing Christians is the result of an inner persuasion, often hidden in the heart, that they do not really need God's help or guidance in their lives. If they had a proper sense of their helplessness and God's sufficiency, they would be urgent and constant in prayer. Many believers, even when they do pray, approach God with an improper boldness, not grounded in a conscious reliance upon Christ, but in a misguided self-confidence that God will hear them because of their righteousness or the strength of their faith. In contrast to these prideful attitudes stand the eminent examples of humble prayer recorded in the Bible. David's prayer in 1 Chronicles 29 begins with ascribing the kingdom, the power, and the glory to God alone. This acknowledgment leads him to confess the utter unworthiness of himself and his people to receive the least blessing from such a holy and righteous God, and to stand in wonder of the power that is able to turn a rebellious people into willing servants of the Lord. When we conclude our prayers according to the pattern taught us by Christ, we

are reminded that it is His kingdom, and not our own, that we seek; that it is through His power, and not our own worthiness, that our prayers are answered; and that it is for His glory, and not our own fulfillment, that we bring our petitions before His throne.



TUESDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 96A

Scripture: Read Daniel 9:4-19

Key Thought: *We must pray with right motives.*

Questions:

- ☞ What similarity is found in the first and last questions of the *Shorter Catechism*?
- ☞ Whose good are we to seek above all in our prayers?
- ☞ What motivates you to pray?

Prayer

Notes: It is fitting that the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer, explained in the final question of the *Shorter Catechism*, brings us full circle to where we began. Just as the first question taught us that man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever, the last question teaches us that all of our prayers should seek the exaltation of God's eternal glory. The mention of God's glory directs us to the proper motivation of prayer. James tells us that we often pray for the wrong reasons: "You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures" (Jas. 4:3). The reason for this misdirected motivation in prayer is that sinful creatures tend naturally to seek their own good above God's glory. Without the influence of God's grace, our prayers would become nothing more than a list of personal wants and desires motivated by pure self-interest. In fact, the conclusion to the Lord's Prayer, by directing us to recognize the preeminence of God's glory, exhorts us all to ask ourselves to what extent this has become the case with us. What motivates you in your prayer life? Ordained officers in our church are asked to affirm a solemn vow before God that asks, "So far as you can know your own heart, is it the call of Christ, the glory of God and the welfare of the church, and not any selfish object, that moves you to undertake this sacred office?" This is, in essence, what the conclusion to the Lord's Prayer urges us to ask ourselves with regard to the motives behind what we ask of the Lord.



WEDNESDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 96A

Scripture: Read Mark 9:14-24; Ephesians 3:20-21; James 1:6-8

Key Thought: *We must pray with godly confidence and faith.*

Questions:

- ☞ Why did the father of the boy with a mute spirit say "if" in Mark 9:22?
- ☞ How did Jesus respond? Did the father get the message?

☞ How is our faith encouraged in the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer?
Prayer

Notes: Mark 9:14-24 records an interesting exchange between Jesus and the father of a boy who was possessed by a violent evil spirit. The boy's father petitioned Jesus for help, but his very choice of words betrayed a lack of true belief that the Lord had the power to do what he asked. He said, "if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us." That little word, "if," cast a dark shadow over the whole request, and revealed a serious lack of faith on the part of this man. Jesus instantly recognized the fact that His power was being doubted. He replied with the same pattern of words, shining the light of truth upon the real point at issue: "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." The true question was not whether or not Jesus had the power to heal this man's son, but whether or not the man believed in Jesus with all of his heart. There is no shortage of power in Christ, but there is a great shortage of faith in man. That the message of Jesus was rightly perceived by the boy's father is evident in his reply: "Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, 'Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!'" The Bible makes it abundantly clear that we are to pray to the Lord in faith, believing in the power of God to accomplish what we ask of Him. Many have sadly distorted this truth by making faith, or "positive confession," a means by which God is bound to do what we ask. The call to believing prayer, however, is not meant to teach us that God, like Aladdin's genie, can be magically compelled to grant our every wish. By acknowledging "Thine is the power," we are called to place our whole trust and confidence in the ability of God to glorify Himself through our circumstances, without fearing that those circumstances are too difficult for Him to conquer.



THURSDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 96A

Scripture: Read Matthew 8:1-3; 1 Peter 4:12-19

Key Thought: *We must pray with resignation to the will of God.*

Questions:

- ☞ Can God be glorified through the suffering of a Christian?
- ☞ How does the phrase "Thine is the glory" show that we are resigned to the will of God?

Prayer

Notes: To pray in faith is to pray without doubting God's power and ability to fulfill our request. Faith, however, does not mean that God is compelled to do what we ask. Faith means that we believe with our whole heart that He can grant our petition. Whether or not He will is a matter entirely in His control. Matthew records another brief conversation between Jesus and a leper who came to Him for healing. This leper, rather than questioning Jesus' ability, said, "Lord, if you are willing,

you can make me clean.” Notice that he had complete confidence in the power of Jesus. But his words indicated a resignation to the will of Christ, who graciously responded to him in no uncertain terms, “I am willing; be cleansed.” Likewise, the words “Thine is the glory” remind us that all of our petitions must be submitted with a wholehearted resignation to the will of God. The prevailing notion that real faith equals immediate deliverance from every adverse circumstance is a gross perversion of the truth. Biblical faith never questions the power of God to do all things, but neither does it undermine that power by making God’s will subject to the expressed will of men. Biblical faith acknowledges that God’s glory is sometimes better served by the suffering of His people—that it may not be His will to immediately deliver us from trials, though it is certainly within His ability. Biblical faith says above all, “Thine is the glory.”



FRIDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 96A

Scripture: Read 1 Kings 1:32-36; 2 Corinthians 1:19-20

Key Thought: *We must pray with hopeful expectancy.*

Questions:

☪ Why does Jesus teach us to say “amen” at the end of our prayers?

☪ How does the word “amen” point us to Jesus?

Prayer

Notes: The *Catechism* says that “in testimony of our desire, and assurance to be heard, we say, Amen.” The word “amen” is not a mere punctuation mark that indicates that we are finished praying. In biblical usage, this word is rich with meaning. Its literal meaning is “truly” or “surely,” and so it expresses a solemn confidence. Jesus used this word to emphasize the reliability of His words, often beginning solemn pronouncements with the formula, “Amen, amen,” or “Truly, truly.” In one of the seven letters to the Asian churches in Revelation, Jesus uses the word to refer to Himself: “These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness” (Rev. 3:14). Likewise, the Apostle Paul testifies of Christ that “all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us” (2 Cor. 1:20). When we close our prayers by saying “amen,” we are testifying to our confidence and hopeful expectancy that as we have sought the glory of Jesus in the substance of our petitions, He will demonstrate His glory through us.



Note: Only five lessons per week are included. You are encouraged to lead your family in worship seven days a week. On weekends, you may want to review or build upon the lessons from the previous week, discuss the sermon from Sunday morning, or work on questions from the Catechism or memory verses. These lesson suggestions are intended to provide a simple framework for parents to build upon. You are not limited to this content. The habit of morning and evening family worship is the biblical ideal. We hope you can use these lessons as a starting point for the development of a blessed practice of family worship in your home.