

Sunday, March 15th, 2026
Sermon Series: "From Ashes to Light."
"Daily Prayer" (Solitude and Silence)
(Lent)

The *Gift* of Prayer

*Matthew 6.5 And when you **pray**, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward...*

προσεύχομαι (*prōseuchōmai*): "To Pray"

What Prayer is NOT...

... a magic wand
... a fire extinguisher
... a tug of war
... an empty ritual or duty

What Prayer IS...

God's _____!

Matthew 6.6 But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Romans 8.26-27 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Conversation!

*Matthew 6.7-8 "And when you pray, do not heap up **empty phrases** as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their **many words**. ⁸Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.*

βατταλογέω (*battalogeō*): "To speak much" (Babbling) πολυλογία (*polylogia*): "To speak a long time"

Psalm 142.1-3a With my voice I cry out to the LORD; with my voice I plead for mercy to the LORD. ²I pour out my complaint before him; I tell my trouble before him. ³When my spirit faints within me, you know my way!

(Answers: Desire. Confident.)

Daily Prayer Suggestions

(Adapted from Luther's *Small Catechism* and Timothy Keller, *Prayer*)
(Morning and Evening Prayers. Suggested time: 30 minutes)

Invocation (Call upon and acknowledge God's presence)

"In the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." (Or, you can pray other Biblical invocations: *Psalms 16.8; 27.4; 103.1-2; Matthew 11.28-30; John 4.23*).

Bible Reading and Meditation (Listen to God speak and reveal His character, glory, plan, and purpose)

Choose a passage/chapter of scripture or use a Bible reading plan (see below). When studying or meditating on a Biblical text, remember to "Theologize before you moralize." Ask first, "What does the text tell me about God? (Theologize) Second, "What does the text tell me about myself and my relationship with God? (Moralize) Luther suggested asking these questions of the Biblical text:

- Is there any example for me to follow?
- Is there any command for me to obey?
- Is there any error for me to avoid?
- Is there any sin for me to forsake?
- Is there any promise for me to claim?
- Is there any new thought about God Himself?

Mediate on a verse or word in the text if it *speaks* to or *moves* you in a particular way. You can write thoughts and insights in a journal and come back to your insights at various times in your life.

Prayer

(Morning): "I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen."

(Evening): "I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands, I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen."

Closing Blessing: Close with the **Lord's Prayer**. "The Lord Almighty bless our day/night with His peace. Amen."

(Morning): "Then go joyfully to your work, singing a hymn, or whatever your devotion may suggest."

(Evening): "Then go to sleep at once and be in good cheer."
