

#16, Prayer, From the Westminster Larger Catechism, part 3

Q186: What rule has God given for our direction in the duty of prayer?

A186: The whole Word of God is of use to direct us in the duty of prayer; but the special rule of direction is that form of prayer which our Savior Christ taught his disciples, commonly called the Lord's Prayer.

Q187: How is the Lord's Prayer to be used?

A187: The Lord's Prayer is not only for direction, as a pattern, according to which we are to make other prayers; but may also be used as a prayer, so that it be done with understanding, faith, reverence, and other graces necessary to the right performance of the duty of prayer.

Q188: Of how many parts does the Lord's Prayer consist?

A188: The Lord's Prayer consists of three parts; a preface, petitions, and a conclusion.

Many Christians find it hard to pray consistently. Our flesh always wants what it wants, when it wants it...now! We have all received yea and nay answers to prayer, yet it is easy to exaggerate the negative prayer experience and downplay the positive experience. All too often, we stop praying because it doesn't "work", which usually means we didn't get what we wanted, when we wanted it!

Kingdom praying is all about praying for what God wants, and includes worship, adoration, thanksgiving, confession and repentance. We learn what God wants through His Word, and the Lord's Prayer provides an excellent model from which to learn. Over the next several weeks, we will go through the entire prayer and learn how to pray it specifically, and how to use its components in order to create our own kingdom prayers.

Lord God of all creation, it grieves me that I am so unfaithful to you in prayer. I know that I have done nothing good to deserve your attention or consideration, let alone that you would listen to my desires and grant them. Please help me overcome my reluctance to reverently lay my desires before you. Make me believe that because I'm yours, I need not fear tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword. Allow me to focus on your will instead of mine.

Burn into my heart that I was not redeemed in order to live an easy life. Teach me to pray for faith and perseverance, instead of vain, worldly pleasures. Give me the heart of my savior Jesus, who willingly accepted your wrath for the sin of the world, in order to accomplish your will, and not his own. Oh that you would make my desires your desires, and compel me to pray as you instructed the disciples in the Lord's Prayer!

I pray this in the name of the good shepherd, who laid down his life for his sheep. Amen.