

Prayer, From the Westminster Larger Catechism, part 2

Q183: For whom are we to pray?

A183: We are to pray for the whole church of Christ upon earth; for magistrates, and ministers; for ourselves, our brethren, yea, our enemies; and for all sorts of men living, or that shall live hereafter; but not for the dead, nor for those that are known to have sinned the sin unto death.

Q184: For what things are we to pray?

A184: We are to pray for all things tending to the glory of God, the welfare of the church, our own or others good; but not for anything that is unlawful.

Q185: How are we to pray?

A185: We are to pray with an awful apprehension of the majesty of God, and deep sense of our own unworthiness, necessities, and sins; with penitent, thankful, and enlarged hearts; with understanding, faith, sincerity, fervency, love, and perseverance, waiting upon him, with humble submission to his will.

The Westminster Catechism offers the Christian much confidence and comfort by presenting the entire Christian faith in a few pages. When Satan taunts and doubts arise, send him on his way by reading it. If one reading doesn't do the trick, read it again, read it aloud. The devil cannot stand against the truth of God.

Last week, in questions 178–182, we learned that prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, in the name of Christ, by the help of his Spirit; with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies. Now we will build upon that foundation, from the questions above.

Lord God of all creation, the one true god, who holds the hearts of kings in his hands, and ordains all events. When I ponder your power and perfections, I realize my insignificance and I wonder why you have any regard for me. I am small and petty. I feed on vain, earthly things, while I refuse spiritual food that will satisfy my soul. Lord, please forgive my wicked ways and make me as you would have me be.

I pray that your church will be magnified in heart, my family, my town and state, my country and around the world. I pray that your name will be exalted in the nations and that many people will be brought to faith in Jesus Christ. I pray that you will provide preachers and missionaries to faithfully proclaim the gospel of Jesus as the one way to salvation and eternal life, and that governments will protect your disciples as they work.

I pray that you will be glorified by your church and all the people who work in your name, so that you will receive honor and praise and acclaim and glory forever and ever. I pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, my savior. Amen.

