

LET US PRAY!



Jesus: "In this way, therefore, you are to pray!" (Matthew 6:9f)

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1. THIS IS HOW ALL SHOULD PRAY!

"In this way therefore," said the Lord Jesus, "you (My disciples) should pray: 'Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be Your name! Your Kingdom come! Your will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven! Give us this day our daily bread! And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors! And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil! For Yours is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory! For ever! Amen!'" Matthew 6:9-13.

The Lord's Prayer (the prayer our Lord did not Himself pray but gave His disciples to pray), is a good general model. This does not mean it is always to be prayed -- word for word. This is how (*houtoos*), in this kind of way, but not exactly -- prayer is to be made.

This kind of prayer is very good. Yet note the differences in the Lord's Prayer according to Matthew 6 and Luke 11, perhaps prayed on two different occasions.

Matthew has: "May Your will be done of Earth, as it is in Heaven!" Luke has: "Your will be done, as in Heaven, so on Earth!" Matthew has: "Give us this day our daily bread!" Luke has: "Give us day by day our daily bread!" Matthew has: "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors!" Luke has: "And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us!" Matthew has: "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil!" Luke here has the same. Finally, Matthew alone has the ending: "For Yours is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen!"

The equivalent of this prayer, before the fall and on the New Earth yet to come, had no petitions for debts or sins or deliverance! Yet the Lord's Prayer is concerned totally with God's glory. Hallowed be Your name! Your Kingdom come! Your will be done! Your! Your! Your!

The Lord's Prayer has a threefold structure -- preface; petitions; and conclusion. All this reflects the Trinity -- the Father is appealed to; the Son gave the Prayer; and it is to be prayed in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Lord's Prayer's divisions are reminiscent of former prayers. Nehemiah 9:6-38 and Psalm 18:1-6 and Daniel 9:4-19. The Lord's Prayer's divisions are also reminiscent of later prayers. Ephesians 3:14-21 and First Timothy 1:17 & 6:14-16 and Revelation 4:8-11 & 5:6-14.

Now, after Calvary, we should pray in Jesus' name and for His sake. This is implied, in that Jesus Himself gave us the Lord's Prayer. John 14:25 to 16:16.

We are to pray to God the Father, for the sake of God the Son, in the power of the Spirit. Indeed, we and our children are so to pray as baptized Trinitarians. Number 6:24-26; Matthew 28:19; and Second Corinthians 13:14. Let us then all pray, in this way!

2. WHAT IS TRUE PRAYER?

"In the first year of Darius..., I, Daniel, understood by books the number of years of which the Word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the Prophet, so that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. And I set my face to the Lord God, to seek by prayers and supplications with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. And I prayed to the Lord my God, and made my confession and said:

"O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love Him and to them that keep His Commandments!... O Lord, to us belongs confusion of face...because we have sinned against You!... Yes, all Israel have transgressed Your Law, even by departing -- so that they might not obey Your Voice! Therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the Law of Moses!...

"O Lord, according to all Your righteousness, I beseech You, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain!... Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of Your servant and his supplications, and cause Your face to shine upon Your sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake! O my God, incline Your ear, and hear! Open Your eyes, and behold our desolations and the city which is called by Your name! For we do not present our supplications before You for our righteousness, but for Your great mercies! O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, hearken and do! Do not defer, for Your Own sake, O my God! For Your city and Your people are called by Your name!" (Daniel 9:1-19).

Daniel's prayer for the people of God, is probably the greatest prayer on the Older Testament -- and perhaps even the greatest prayer in the whole Bible. It was prayed during a time of great national crisis -- not unlike our own critical times today.

Daniel had been exiled from his land of Judah to Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon, where he had ultimately attained to a high political position. Subsequently, however, Babylon fell to the Medes -- at which time the aged Daniel lost his Babylonian power and prestige.

Ultimately, Daniel would again prosper under the Medes and the Persians. But before the Lord thus turned again Daniel's captivity, that holy man first prayed his above magnificent prayer. It is noteworthy that Daniel then prayed a true prayer -- a prayer not for the recovery of his own recently-lost power, but a prayer for the spiritual restoration of the people of God!

May we too learn to pray in our day, as Daniel did in his! An analogous situation would be if in 1980 the Soviet Union were to have conquered the United States (as Babylon conquered Judah). Or if in 2000 Red China were then to have conquered the S.U and the U.S. Or if by 2020 international Islam overwhelms the West, and the demoted Daniel were again under God to rise to the position of First President of that Caliphate (as Daniel did over the whole kingdom of the Medes)!"

It was in such a situation -- at the time at the time of his own personal setback -- that Daniel prayed. He then prayed not for his own repromotion, but for the spiritual restoration of God's people. Analogy would require in our above 1980 hypothesis that American Christians exiled in

the Soviet Union should subsequently pray not for their own repromotion under the subsequently conquering Red Chine regime, but rather for the spiritual and political restoration of the American people!

Is this how you and I would react under similar circumstances? God grant that we too, by divine grace, would pray something like that prayer of Daniel!

During the time of his own personal setback, the exiled Daniel had been reading the prophecy of Jeremiah that God would desolate Jerusalem for seventy years on account of her sins. The seventy years had now almost been accomplished, and Daniel faithfully began to pray that God would mercifully restore His people to their land.

As we consider this truly great prayer of Daniel, we shall see that it corresponds to the Bible's definition of a true prayer as summarized in the Church's standards. To the question "What is prayer?" -- the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* 98, faithful to the Word of God, gives us the following answer: "Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God for things agreeable to His will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins and thankful acknowledgement of His mercies." To which the *Larger Catechism* 178 adds "by the help of His Spirit."

What is true prayer? Let us answer this question, step by step, from the prayer of Daniel and other portions of Scripture as formulated in the above answers given by the *Catechisms*.

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First, then, prayer is an offering -- an offering up of our desires unto God. According to God's ancient law, drink offerings of precious oil and wine were to be poured out sacrificially before the Lord.

The barren Hannah poured out her soul like a drink offering before the Lord, in earnest prayer that she be enabled to conceive a child. The Psalmist encouraged his addressees to pour out the hearts like drink offerings before God in prayer, and to set forth their prayers before God like incense while prayerfully lifting up their hand at the evening sacrifice.

Jeremiah entreated those who survived the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem to pour out their hearts like water before the face of the Lord and to lift up their hands in prayer toward Him for the lives of their young children. And shortly thereafter, Daniel too offered himself up to God in true prayer and worshipful sacrifice.

For Daniel set his face unto the Lord God, to seek His help by prayers and by supplications with fastings and sackcloth and ashes. He made no demands of Jehovah, but only humble and sacrificial requests -- while acknowledging the confusion in his own mind and in that of his people.

"O Lord," he pleaded, "forgive! O Lord, hearken! O Lord, do! O Lord, do not defer!" Thus did Daniel sacrificially pour out his heart and offer himself up to the glory of Jehovah. Do you?

"Ah!" -- somebody retorts. That's Old Testament teaching! But now, after Calvary, there

are no longer any more sacrifices to be brought to God! Right?"

Wrong! Even after Calvary, the New Testament itself teaches us that we are still to bring (unbloody) sacrifices to God -- and especially the sacrifices of our (prayerful) lips, our entire bodies, and even our very lives!

Hebrews 13:12-16 tells New Testament Christians that "Jesus, in order that He might sanctify the people with His Own blood, suffered outside the city gate.... By Him, therefore, let US offer the sacrifice of praise continually -- that is, the fruit of our lips (or our prayers, our Psalms, and our prayerful songs), giving thanks. But to do good and to communicate (or to share), do not forget! For with such SACRIFICES (or 'offerings-up'), God is well pleased!"

Similarly, Paul wrote to Christians in Romans 12:1f: "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies (or your entire persons as) a living sacrifice, holy (and) acceptable to God - which is your reasonable service!" Later still, he assured the Philippians (2:17) that he himself would gladly pour himself out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice, and in the service of their own Christian Faith.

Right before the end of his earthly life, Paul wrote that he himself was then ready to be offered up -- now that he had fought a good fight, and finished his earthly course. Second Timothy 4:6-7.

Do you offer your lips to God in prayer and song? Is your entire body and even your very life, a living sacrifice to God in all you think and say and do? Are your prayers truly sacrificial? And are you offering them to God like burnt incense?

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Second, we should note that prayer is not only a sacrifice to God. For it is indeed also an offering up to Him of our desires too. *Westminster Shorter Catechism* 98 and *Westminster Larger Catechism* 178.

Prayer is and offering up not just of "my desires" -- but of "our desires." The desires of all the people of God! This is why Daniel 9:7 prayerfully offered of to God the desires of all Israel and of all her leaders, together with Daniel's own desires.

For Daniel 9:16 desired that God's anger and fury be turned away from the Lord's holy city of Jerusalem, because of the sins of Daniel's people and their fathers. The Prophet desired that God should bless His Own sanctuary -- not Daniel's! Do we?

Philippians 4:6 too encourages us to bring our desires to the Lord. "In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God!"

As already observed, we are to desire to offer God the sacrifice of praise continually. We are to desire to give God thanks with the fruit of our lips.... We are to desire to share what we have with others. Do you?

For "the Lord...will fulfil the desire of them that fear Him. He will also hear their cry, and

will save them!" Psalm 145:18*f*.

Do you fear God? If you do -- God will fulfil your desires too!

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3. PRAY TO OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN!

We need to see that true prayer is a sacrifice brought unto God -- the Triune God! Daniel 9:3 declared: "I set my face to the Lord God (to *Jehovah 'Elohiym*) to seek by prayer!"

Jehovah is the One Who always, was, always is, and always shall be (Exodus 3:14 & 6:3 and Revelation 4:8). *'Elohiym* is the exalted Triune God (Genesis 1:1-3) -- the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19 and First John 5:6-8). It was to this God -- *Jehovah 'Elohiym* -- that Daniel prayed.

Hear that great Prophet call upon the name of the Triune Deity! "O Lord (*Jehovah*)!" -- Daniel calls out vocatively, six times during his prayer (Daniel 9:4,7,8,16,19). "O my God (*'Elohiym*)," he pleads, at the end of his petition (Daniel 9:18,19).

Nor does he plead for his people -- "for our desires." For he repeatedly prays to "the Lord our God" (Daniel 9:9,10,3,14). "O our God!" -- he cries (Daniel 9:17). "O Lord our God!" (Daniel 9:15).

But Daniel not only calls on the name of the Deity in the vocative. For the Prophet also reveals that he is praying to God by his references to the divine attributes.

"O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy!" -- he declares (Daniel 9:4). "O Lord, righteousness belongs to You!" (Daniel 9:7). "To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness!" (Daniel 9:9,18,19). "Let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem!" (Daniel 9:16).

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Fourth, when expressing our desires to God, we are to pray for things agreeable to His will. *Westminster Shorter Catechism* 98 and *Westminster Larger Catechism* 178. Daniel so prayed thus

Hence he prayed that God would "spare Your city Jerusalem" -- because "Your people have become a reproach to all that are about us," Daniel 9:16. And God answers such prayers! For the Apostle John assures us that "if we as anything according to His will, He hears us!" First John 5:14. When we pray for things "for Christ's sake" -- we can be sure that we are approaching God according to His will.

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Fifth, we are to pray to God with confession of our sins. According to his contemporary Ezekiel (14:14f), Daniel himself was one of the three most righteous men who had ever lived.

Yet even Daniel confessed his own sins to God in prayer. "I prayed to the Lord my God," he declared, "and made my confession." Daniel 9:4.

And then Daniel identified himself with the sins of his own beloved people too! "We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts.... Neither have we hearkened to Your servants the Prophets!" Daniel 9:5f. God had punished the Israelites with exiles, admitted Daniel. "Because of their

trespasses that they have transgressed against You." (Daniel 9:7).

"Our kings, our princes and our fathers, confessed Daniel, "we have sinned against You!" (Daniel 9:8). "All Israel have transgressed Your Law..., so that they might not obey Your Voice! Therefor the curse is poured upon us..., because we have sinned against Him!" (Daniel 9:11). For "I was confessing my sin, : concluded Daniel (9:20), "and the sin of my people Israel!"

You and I are not as pious as was the righteous Daniel! Do we then not even more than did that Prophet need to confess our sins against God? Have you done so? And are you still doing so, continually, as did Daniel?

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Sixth, we are to pray to God with thankful acknowledgement of His mercies. Daniel did this.

"O Lord God, keep mercy to them that love Him and keep His Commandments!" -- exclaimed our Prophet (Daniel 9:4). "To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him!" (Daniel 9:9).

"The Lord our God is righteous in all His works which He does" (Daniel 9:14), so that we can only cast ourselves upon His mercy and not on our own righteousness. And therefore, "we do not present our supplications before You for (the sake of) our righteousnesses but for (the sake of) Your great mercies!" (Daniel 9:18).

Because of God's mercy, we too can encourage one another to pray with confidence. In the words of the Apostle Paul: "Be careful for nothing (or don't worry about anything); but with thanksgiving let your requests be made know to God!" (Philippians 4:6).

Are you grateful for all of God's many graces? Do you too pray to Him regularly, and thankfully acknowledge all His mercies toward you?

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Seventh and last, when praying to God, we are to address our petitions to our heavenly Father, only in the name of the Divine Son, and by the help of His Spirit (*Westminster Shorter Catechism* 98 and *Westminster Larger Catechism* 178).

The Father raised up His people. God begot and delivered them out of bondage. Daniel (9:17) acknowledged: "O Lord our God, Who brought Your people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and got renown for Yourself!... Your people are called by Your name!"

God the Son redeemed His people, and for His sake God the Father would hear their prayers. Hence Daniel 9:17 could pray: "Cause Your face to shine upon Your sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake!" "O Lord, hear...and do! Do not defer, for Your Own sake!" (Daniel 9:19).

For the sake of the One mentioned immediately thereafter -- viz. Jesus Christ or "Messiah

the Prince" would "be cut off but not for Himself" but in the place of and for the sins of His people, the true members of the Christian Church. This occurred when He as their Substitute would die on Calvary's cursed cross "to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness." Daniel 9:24-27.

And God the Spirit helps His people! The Holy Spirit is Who gave Daniel knowledge and learning and wisdom to understand and to interpret dreams (Daniel 1:17 & 2:19-30 & 4:8,9,18 & 5:11 *cf.* Genesis 41:12,38). The Holy Spirit it was Who helped Daniel to pray his great prayer (Daniel 9:3 *cf.* Romans 8:26). And it was He, the Holy Spirit, Who also helped Daniel to understand and to record God's answer to that prayer! (Daniel 9:21,24 *cf.* Luke 1:26-35 and First Corinthians 2:10-14 and Second Peter 1:21 and Second Timothy 3:16).

Do you always pray to God the Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, and by the help of His Spirit? Do you call upon the name of the heavenly Father, for Jesus' sake, in the power of the Holy Ghost? Imbued by the Spirit and in the name of Jesus our Saviour -- "by Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God the Father continually! That is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name!" Hebrews 13:15.

What, then, is true prayer? Prayer is an offering up of our desires to God, for things agreeable to His will, with confession of our sins and with thankful acknowledgment of His mercies, in the name of Christ, and by the help of His Spirit.

That is true prayer! Thus prayed the righteous Daniel! And you -- what are your prayers like?

As the Shorter Catechism 100 teaches us, we are "to draw near to God (as 'our Father') with all holy reverence and confidence, as children to a Father able and ready to help us." And as the Larger Catechism 189 teaches us, when we pray we are "to draw near to God with confidence of His fatherly goodness and our interest therein with reverence and all other childlike dispositions...and His gracious condescension."

4. PRAY THAT HIS NAME BE HALLOWED!

Hallowed be Your name -- not ours! Here, says the Shorter Catechism 101, we pray that God would enable us...to glorify Him in all that whereby He makes Himself known, and that He would dispose all things to His Own glory. Psalm 117:2-3 & 83.

"Hallowed be Thy name!' acknowledges the utter inability and indisposition...in ourselves and all men to honour God aright. We prayer that God would be His grace enable and incline us and others to...acknowledge and highly esteem Him, His title, attributes, ordinances, Word, works..., and to glorify Him in thought, word, and deed. That He would prevent and remove atheism, ignorance, idolatry, profaneness...and by His overruling providence direct and dispose of all things to His Own glory." Westminster Larger Catechism 190.

"Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to Your name give glory!... God is in the Heavens! He has done whatsoever He has pleased!... The Heaven, even the Heavens are the Lord's.... But we will bless the Lord from this time forth and for evermore!" Psalm 115:1-3,16-18.

What is the most important thing we can pray for? The conversion of the world? The coming of God's Kingdom? The planting and expansion of the Christian Church? Or the sanctification of the name of Jehovah?

It is the latter! For there was no Church prior to the fall of man, and there were no people to convert prior to the creation of Adam. And there was no Kingdom prior to creation. Yet God and His hallowable name was then there, from all eternity!

Hence we start off to pray: 'Hallowed be Your name (by us men)!' May God Himself, His authority, titles, attributes, ordinances and every revelation be upheld as holy!

We pray: "Trust Him at all times! Pour out your heart before Him!" (Psalm 62:8). Confession. "I acknowledge my sin, and my iniquity have I not hidden from You! I said: 'I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,' and You forgave the iniquity!"

"Don't worry about anything! But in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God!" (Philippians 4:6).

"You should go and pray to Me! And I will hearken unto you.... You shall find Me, when you search with all your heart!" (Jeremiah 29:12-13). Hallow My name! Do so, by God's Spirit!

Hallow My name! May God enable us, in spite of our total depravity and inability to hallow! May God enable us sinful creatures, because hallowed creatures!

May God so enable us, and others! We are to pray for all men, because all men are God's creatures!

For all men are to glorify God! In Leviticus 10:3, "then Moses said to Aaron..., 'This is that which the Lord spake, saying: "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me, and before all the people I will be glorified!'" As the Shorter Catechism 1 notes: "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever!" First Peter 1:16: "Be ye holy, for I (God) am holy!" Psalm 67:2-3 and First Corinthians 10:31.

Hallowed in all that whereby He makes Himself known! This means His name ("for My name's sake you have laboured, and have not fainted" -- Revelation 2:3). "Fear God, and keep His Commandments!" (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

It means His titles. "In that day, you shall say: 'Praise the Lord...., declare His doings among the people...; sing to the Lord, for He has done excellent things.... Cry and shout!... For great is the Holy One...in your midst!' (Isaiah 12:4f). "The Lord is King and Lawgiver! He will save us!" (Isaiah 33:22).

It means His attributes and His ordinances (Acts 2:1-4,38-39 and First Corinthians 11:24-25). And it means His Word and works and whatever He is pleased to make Himself known by. And it means to glorify Him in thought, word, and deed.

His name is hallowed, by the prevention and removal of atheism. "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you henceforth do not walk as other Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart." (Ephesians 4:1-8).

To hallow means of remove idolatry, profaneness, and whatever is dishonouring to Him. Do you? "The idols He shall utterly abolish. In that day, a man shall cast his idols of silver and of gold for himself to worship to the moles and the bats!" (Isaiah 2:2,18,20).

Hallowed means that He would direct all things to His Own glory. "Moab, Amnon and others both come to Jehoshaphat" (Second Chronicles 20:1-3). "Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude! For the battle is not yours, but God's!... You shall not need to fight in this battle! Set yourselves; stand still and see the salvation of the Lord go out against them! For the Lord shall be with you!... Amnon slew Moab; and behold, they were dead bodies fallen to the Earth, and none escaped!" (15:15,23,24).

Our Father! Hallowed be Your name ! Holy!, holy!, holy!

5. PRAY THAT HIS KINGDOM MAY COME!

"In...'Thy Kingdom come!' we pray that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed and that the

Kingdom of grace may be **advanced!**" Shorter Catechism 102.

Destroy Satan's kingdom; and **Advance**, God's Kingdom! And never sound retreat! Or in the ampler words of Westminster Larger Catechism 191, that "the Gospel (may be) propagated throughout the world, the fullness of the Gentiles; brought in; the Church furnished with all Gospel officers and ordinances, purged from corruption, countenanced and maintained by the civil magistrate; that the ordinances of Christ may be purely dispensed and made effectual to the converting to those that are yet in their sins...that Christ would rule in our hearts here...and that He would be pleased so to exercise the Kingdom of His power in all the world as may best conduce to these ends."

For Jesus shall reign where'er the sun, does its successive journeys run.! "Give...your righteousness unto the King's Son.... He shall judge the poor...; he shall save the children...and shall break in pieces the oppressor. They shall fear You as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations.... In His days shall the righteous flourish.... He shall have dominion also from sea to sea...unto the ends of the Earth.... Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him.... And He shall live, and to Him shall be given of the gold of Sheba..., and daily shall He be praised.... His name shall endure for ever.... All nations shall call Him blessed.... Blessed be His glorious name for ever.... Let the whole Earth be filled with His glory! Amen, and Amen!" (Psalm 72:1-19).

This is the second petition. The first was: 'Hallowed be your name!' Because before creation, God had a name but not yet a Kingdom. But now He has a Kingdom, are you in it?

It is important to recognize it is **not** 'my Kingdom come!' but 'Your Kingdom come!' Not our family come, but His! Nor our denomination, but His!

Your Kingdom, come! The Kingdom, is everywhere Jehovah reigns. From creation onwards, yet constantly advancing! Whether individually, or whether internationally.

We pray that with the advance of God's Kingdom, Satan's kingdom be destroyed! The prince of this world comes, but has nothing on Me! (John 14:30). Psalm 68:1f and Daniel 2:17. Satan's kingdom is one of lies. Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Papacy, Protestant Modernism, *etc.*

The truth implies that the Son is resident in believers. "Let us lay aside...the sin which so easily besets us..., looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith.... You have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin!" (Hebrews 12:1-4). For the accuser of the brethren gets hurled down (Revelation 12:10).

We pray that the Kingdom of God gets advanced! Here we must distinguish God's general Kingdom over all (Psalm 103:19), from His special Kingdom. Psalm 59:13: "Consume them (God's enemies) in wrath, consume them! And let them know that God rules in Jacob unto the ends of the Earth!" And we must also distinguish the Kingdom of grace from glory!

Advanced! Nebuchadnezzar was punished "to the intent that the living may know that the Most High rules in the Kingdom of men." (Daniel 4:17). Later, in Daniel 4:34f, Nebuchadnezzar "blessed the Most High, and...praised and honoured Him that lives for ever, Whose dominion is

everlasting, and His Kingdom is from generation to generation. And all the inhabitants of the Earth are reputed as nothing!"

We should pray "that men may know that You, Whose name is Jehovah, are the Most High over all the Earth!" (Psalm 83:18).

We pray here the Gospel be preached throughout the world! The Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 15:19-24, that "from Jerusalem, and round about Illyricum, I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ.... But now, having no more place in these parts (from Italy to Spain!)." Even after the man of sin be destroyed, "pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified, even as it is with you." (Second Thessalonians 3:1).

We pray that the Jews may be called. "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved!" Romans 10:1.

"Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles -- how much more their fullness?! For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall be the receiving of them but life?" (Romans 11:12-15).

"Even unto this day, when Moses is read -- the veil is upon Israel's heart. Nevertheless, when Israel shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away!" (Second Corinthians 3:15-16).

We pray that the fullness of the Gentiles be brought in! The fullness, not the emptiness! "The fullness of the Gentiles shall be brought in!" (Romans 11:25). For "God has concluded the all (both Jews and Gentiles) in unbelief, so that He might have mercy upon all!" (Romans 11:32).

"Neither do I pray for these (disciples) alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word..., so that the world may believe!" (John 17:20). "For God so loved the world, that whosoever believes in Him!" (John 3:16). Also Matthew 28:19.

We pray that the Church may be strengthened with officers. With Preachers, Elders, and Deacons. "Let the Elders that rule well, be worthy of double hire! Especially those (Preaching) Elders that labour in Word and doctrine!" (First Timothy 5:17f). "Paul and Timothy (Preachers and) Servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints...in Philippi, with the Bishops (or Ruling Elders) and Deacons!" (Philippians 1:1).

We pray that the Church may be strengthened with ordinances. Sacraments to confirm the beginnings of faith already there (First Corinthians 7:14), and professed (Acts 2:42).

We pray that the Church may be purged from corruption. The Formed Church (first five centuries); the Deformed Church (centuries six through fifteen); and the Reformed Church (from then onward). Yet many "Protestant" too have become deformed, and need to be reformed again as reformingly reformed.

We pray that the Church be countenanced and maintained by the civil magistrate. The U.S.'s separation between Church and State, needs to be replaced by separation by Church under God and by State under God. "I exhort...that...prayers be made for all men; for kings and for all that are in

authority, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life" (First Timothy 2:1-2).

"For unto us...a Son is given, and the government shall be on His shoulder.... His name shall be the Prince of peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end...upon the Kingdom to order it...with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever! The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this!" (Isaiah 9:6-7).

We pray that ourselves and others be brought into that Kingdom! Now! (John 3:38 and Colossians 1:13).

And be kept in it! "Those elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ through sanctification of the Spirit, are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation" (First Peter 1:2f).

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly! And I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ!" (First Thessalonians 5:23).

We pray that Christ may rule in our hearts! All this leads to Habakkuk 2 and Isaiah 11, which hasten the day of the second coming.

Thus we pray that the Kingdom of glory may be hastened! Of glory (John 14:2), which our human eye has not yet seen (First Corinthians 2:9). Paradise regained! (Revelation 21 & 22). Or even hastened! (Isaiah 64:1; Second Peter 3:12; Revelation 22:20).

Let us then pray to God the Father, for the sake of the earthly work of God the Son, in the power of God the Spirit! Our Father! Your Kingdom, come! For Jesus sake! Amen!

6. PRAY THAT HIS WILL BE DONE!

May Your will get done! Not ours! Here, we pray for the execution of God's will!

"We beseech you, brethren..., that as you have received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, so you would abound more and more. For you know what **Commandments** we gave you!... For this is the will of God, even your sanctification.... He therefore that despises, despises not man but God Who has also given us His Holy Spirit!" (First Thessalonians 4:1-3,8).

"In the third petition...'Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven' we pray that God by His grace would make us able and willing to know, **obey**, and submit to His **will** in all things, as the angels do in Heaven." Westminster Shorter Catechism 103. Here we must distinguish God's decretive will concerning secret things, from His revealed will (especially imperative) that we do in all the words of God's revealed Law.

We here acknowledge we are utterly unable and unwilling to know and to do the will of God.. "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the Earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually..from his youth!" (Genesis 6:8 & 8:21).

Man became prone to rebel and to murmur. We pray that God's Spirit take away from ourselves and others perverseness.

We pray that His grace make us able to know and do and submit to His will in all things. "Love not the world!... The world passes away, but he that does the will of God abides forever. This is the will of God, your sanctification! For you know what **Commandments** we gave you by the Lord Jesus!" (First John 2:15-17). "If you love Me, keep My **Commandments**!" (John 15:10).

What Commandments? To worship God alone; to worship without images; to worship Him reverently; to worship Him sabbathly. To honour our parents. To do no murder. To do no adultery; not to steal; not to lie; and not to covet! Exodus 20. To fully respect God, and His image man in his life and marriage and possessions and integrity.

What is then to be the manner of our submission? Humbly! Cheerfully! Faithfully! Diligently! Zealously! Sincerely! And constantly!

Even as the angels do in Heaven! These angels shout for joy (Job38:7). "Bless the Lord, You angels of His..., that do His **Commandments**, hearkening to the Voice of His Word.... Bless...the Lord, all of His hosts..., that do His pleasure" (Psalm 103: 20-21).

Some of these angels are on Earth. These "angels do always behold the face of My Father...in Heaven" (Matthew 18:10). Humbly (Isaiah 6:2)! Cheerfully (Psalm 103:20)!

Your will be done on Earth, by man, in **all spheres** (Genesis 1:28 and Matthew 28:19) – "baptizing them..., and...teaching them to observe all things **whatsoever** I have commanded you!"

The Spirit-written Ten Commandments are the chief Spirit-filled instruments favouring God and His sabbath. We should never lie! Least of all, in science! Keep God's Commandments on Earth as in Heaven!

"So that Your way may be known upon Earth, and Your saving health among all nations!" (Psalm 67:2). "Till the Earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea!" (Habakkuk 2).

"For the Lord is in His holy temple! Let all the Earth keep silent before Him!" (Habakkuk 2:14-20). Pray, our Father, may Your will get done!

"In...Thy will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven', acknowledging...acknowledges that..we pray that God would by His Spirit take away from ourselves and other all blindness, weakness...and perverseness of heart. And by His grace make us able and willing to know, do and submit to His will in all things with the like humility, cheerfulness, faithfulness, diligence, zeal, sincerity, and constancy -- as the angels do in Heaven!" Westminster Larger Catechism 192.

7. FOR WHOM ARE WE TO PRAY?

"Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to Your name give glory -- for Your mercy, and for Your

truth's sake! Why should the Heathen say, 'Where is their God now?!' But our God is in the Heavens. He has done whatsoever He has pleased!

:Their idols (the gods of the Heathen) are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. The have ears, but they do not hear! They have noses, but they do not smell! They have hands, but they do not handle! They have feet, but they do not walk! Neither do they speak through their throat. They that make them, are like them! So is everyone that trusts in them!...

"You who fear the Lord, trust in the Lord! He is their Help and their Shield! The Lord has been mindful of us! He will bless us! He will bless...them that fear the Lord, both small and great.... We will bless the Lord from this time forth, and for evermore! Praise the Lord!" Psalm 115.

All sincere persons will get to Heaven, no matter what they believe! Not so? For Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity are all valid ways to God! No, not so!

Such views as above, are frequently heard today. With the relativizing of all religious values in our modern shrinking world, one more and more hears the opinion it doesn't really matter much whether one prays to Jehovah, to Allah, to Jahbulon, to Brahma -- as long as one is sincere! And it is further claimed that it doesn't really matter whether we terminate our petitions for Jesus' sake, for Muhammad's sake, or for Moses' sake -- as all are equally acceptable to God!

These views, however, are nor reconcilable with the teachings of Holy Scripture! For as the *Larger Catechism* Q. 179 reminds us: "God only (is)...able to search the hearts, hear the requests, pardon the sins, and fulfil the desire of all; and (God) only (is) to be believed in, and worshipped with religious worship. Prayer which is a special part thereof, is to be made by all to Him alone, and to none other!"

And as the *Westminster Confession* 21:1-3 adds:"There is a God Who has lordship and sovereignty over all; and is therefore be feared, loved, praised, called upon, trusted in, and served.... Prayer...is by God required of all men."

Accordingly, only those petitions are truly prayers, which are directed toward the Triune God. For true "prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God (the Father), in the name of Christ, by the help of His Spirit." *Larger Catechism* 178.

Or, in the words of the *Larger Catechism* 189: "'Our Father'...teaches us when we pray to draw near to God with confidence of His fatherly goodness and our interest therein – with reverence and all other childlike dispositions...and due apprehension of His sovereign power, majesty and gracious condescension"

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First, then, we should note that prayer is to be made to God alone. Through the Prophet Isaiah 43:10-11. God told His ancient people: "Believe (or trust) Me, an understand that I am He! Before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside Me, there is no Saviour!"

When Satan showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, he promised Him: "all these things will I give You, if You will fall down and worship me!" But the prayerful Christ repelled the arrogant invitation, and told the devil that he should be worshipping Him!

"Get hence, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve!'" Matthew 4:9-10.

Jesus clearly told His disciples: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life! No man comes to the Father, but by Me!" (John 14:6-9). And, while Himself praying to His Own Father in Heaven, He declared that life eternal is that His Own disciples "might know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom You have sent." (John 17:1-3).

This is why Paul wrote to Christians that they know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one. For though there be (idols) that are called 'gods,' ...to us there is but one God, the Father, of Whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ by Whom are all things, and we by Him" (First Corinthians 8:4-6).

Do you pray to God, and to God alone? Do you so pray regularly, lovingly, believingly? When do you last bring Him your petitions, and call upon His name?

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Second. Because we are to pray to God alone, it follows we should pray to none other. *Westminster Confession*, 21:1-3 and *Larger Catechism* 179.

The first two of the Ten Commandments, make this very clear. "You shall have no other gods before Me" in My omnipresence, declares Jehovah. Exodus 20:3.

"You shall not make to yourself any graven image or any likeness of anything that is in Heaven above, or that is in the Earth beneath, or that is in the water under the Earth! You shall not bow yourself down to them, nor serve them!" Exodus 20:4f.

This prohibits praying to anyone or anything other than the Triune Jehovah. It prohibits praying to Jehovah through any other mediator (such as through angels or Mary the mother of Jesus according to His human nature), or through the saints. And it prohibits praying to Jehovah Himself in any unauthorized manner.

Holy Scripture this prohibits prayer to Al-Lah, to Brahma, to Buddha -- and to all other false gods. Psalm 94:4-5 & 115 and Isaiah 44:6-24. For gods like Jupiter and Mercury are vain nothings from which men must turn to the living Triune God Who made Heaven and Earth and the Sea and all things that are therein Acts 14:12-15 cf. 17;16,22f.

The deaf and dumb and blind and dead idols or images made to represent these false gods, did not created man -- for they themselves were 'created' by sinful human hands! "The Lord is great, and....He is to be feared above all gods! For all the gods of the (heathen) nations are idols; but the Lord made the Heavens! Psalm 96:4-7 & 115 and Isaiah 44:6-24.

Holy Scripture prohibits praying to Jehovah through any other mediator. Were Jesus not Himself Jehovah, prayer to God in the name of Christ would be blasphemous (Matthew 19:17 *cf.* John 10:30-39).

Prayers to Jehovah's angels -- other than to The Angel of the Lord alias the preincarnate and postincarnate Son Who is Himself Jehovah (Genesis 16:9-13 & 18:2,13*f* & 19:1,24,27 *cf.* John 8:56) -- are specifically forbidden (Colossians 2:18-23 *cf.* Revelation 22:8-9). So too are prayers to holy men or saints, whether dead or living (Isaiah 63:16 *cf.* Acts 10:25-26 & 14:11-15), and to our fellow-sinner Mary the mother of Jesus (Luke 1:46-48 and John 2:4). "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus Who gave Himself a ransom for all!" (First Timothy 2:5-6).

Holy Scripture prohibits praying even to Jehovah Himself in any unauthorized manner. For "God is Spirit(ual); and they that worship Him, must worship Him in Spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). Accordingly, it was wicked for the Israelites to try to worship the Lord Jehovah through the medium of a golden calf (Exodus 32:1,4,5,8,19,31). And it was wicked for the Athenians to seek to worship the true "unknown God" through the medium of man-made images (Acts 17:19,24,29 and Romans 1:19-23).

Hopefully you do not pray to Brahma, Allah – no even to Jehovah through the agency of the angels or the saints or of Mary! But do you try to pray to God in Jesus' name by using pictures or statues or stained-glass windows or sketches of what is falsely claimed to be a likeness of Jesus?

Or do you do this, while trying to visualize Jesus in some such similar way -- in your own mind's eye? If so, remember that even the Apostles who had known Christ in the flesh before His crucifixion, no longer sought to picture Him in that way after His ascension and heavenly session (Second Corinthians 5:16 *cf.* Revelation 1: 13-1 & 19:10-16 *cf.* John 4:24)!

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Third, to pray to the Lord Jehovah is to pray to the Triune God 'Elohim. Real prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God (the Father), in the name of Christ, by the help of His Spirit. *Westminster Larger Catechism, 179.*

Jehovah is the One Who was and Who is and Who is to come -- from Whom and through Whom and to Who are all things. Jehovah is Elohim -- the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit in Whose triune name His people are baptized. And Jehovah Elohim's Fatherly love and Filial grace and Spirit-ual communion is given to all Christians in apostolic benediction (Exodus 3:14 & 6:3 and Romans 11:36 and Matthew 28:19 and Second Corinthians 13:14).

To pray to the Triune Lord God Jehovah Elohim, means to offer up our desires to God the Father. It is true there a few references to 'telegramme prayers' being quickly addressed to God the Son or to God the Spirit (Ezekiel 37:1,9 *cf.* Matthew 8:2 and Acts 7:59*f* and First Corinthians 1:2 and Revelation 22:30), but the normal pattern of Biblical prayers is that they are pre-eminently addressed to God the Father.

"After this manner," Jesus commands us, "you are to pray -- 'Our Father!'" (Matthew 6:9,24).

"You shall ask of the Father," He later declares, as recorded by His Apostle John (John 15:16).

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Indeed, "I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" -- prays the Apostle Paul (Ephesians 1:3 & 3:14).

With our tongues, "we bless God, even the Father" -- remarks the Apostle James (3:9). "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" -- exclaims the Apostle Peter (First Peter 1:3).

To pray to the Triune Lord God Jehovah Elohiym also means to offer up our desires in the name of Christ. This will be dealt with fully later (in our chapter 15 below). Here, however, we would only note that Jesus Himself promised His disciples that "whatsoever you shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it to you" (John 16:33).

To pray to the Triune Lord God Jehovah Elohim further means to offer up our desires by the help of His Spirit. This too will be dealt with fully subsequently (chapter 5 below). But for the moment, we would point out that the Spirit helps our infirmities when we pray. For we do not know what we should pray for, as we ought. But the Spirit Himself then intercedes for us. And God the Father Who searches our praying hearts, know what the Spirit's intention is -- because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God (Romans 8:26-27).

Do you pray to the Triune God? Do you pray to the Father, in the name of the Son, in the power of the Spirit?

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Fourth, prayer to the Triune Jehovah should be made by all persons everywhere. Whether they are believers or unbelievers (which former every man should be)!

There are those who refuse to teach others to pray the "Our Father" -- until those others have professed Christ as their Saviour. That would hardly achieve the laudable end in view, however. For Judas Iscariot apparently prayed the "Our Father" many times after his "profession" -- and yet remained a child of the devil throughout! (Matthew 6:1-9 & 26:25 *cf.* John 6:70-71). And even the reprobate Cain was still required to worship the true God -- and did indeed receive some (non-saving!) relief from Him! (Genesis 4:3-16, especially verses 3,13-15).

The Bible teaches that all men should right now pray to the true God alone -- whether they have a saving knowledge of Him or not! Genesis 4:3-5 and Psalms 47:1-7 & 50:14-23 & 64:2,8 & 67:3 & 96:1,9 & 97:1 & 98:4 & 100:1,4 & 107:9 & 11&:1 & 148:1,11 & 150:6 and Jeremiah 10:7,25 and Zechariah 8:20-23 and Luke 18:1,13-17 and Acts 8:20-24 and Romans 15:9-11 and First Timothy 2:8 and James 1:5.

God never grants prayers directed false gods. Idolaters know none of these are the "unknown God" Who created them (Isaiah 40 & 44 and Romans 1-2 and Acts 14 & 17). But God does sometimes grant the sincere prayers even of unbelievers, when they call on Him in their day of trouble (Genesis 4:13-16 & 16:7-12 & 17:18-20 *cf.* 9:7-13 and Galatians 4:22-31 and Genesis 27:24,28,38-40 & 33:4-16 with Romans 9:10-13 and Hebrews 11:16-17 and Numbers 22 to 24 & 31:8-16 *cf.* Second Peter 2:15-22 and Jude 11 and Revelation 2:14 and Psalm 78:31-40 & 107:10-

15,23-31 and First Kings 21:25-29 and Second Chronicles 13:12-19 and Jonah 1:6-16 & 3:5-10 & 4:2,11 and Daniel 2:35,44 & 7:14-27 and Romans 11:25-32). And one day, all nations will worship God for Christ's sake in Spirit and truth (Psalm 2 & 22 & 72 & 110 & 138:4 and Daniel 2:35,44 & 7:14-27 and Romans 11:25-32).

Do you encourage all men you to pray to Jehovah as best they can? Do you direct unbelievers to cease praying to their idols and to bring their petitions instead to the true God they know exists? Do you realize that all nations are yet destined to come and worship the true God? Do you yourself call upon His name from a regenerate heart, for Jesus' sake? And do you warn and witness to all men everywhere, to do the same?

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Fifth, all men should worship God alone. For only God can search hearts, hear requests, pardon sins, and fulfil the desires of all.

"You alone," O Lord, "know the hearts of all the children of men" -- confessed King Solomon (First Kings 8:39 *cf.* Acts 1:24). It is only "You Who hear prayer" -- sang David (Psalm 65:2). So that the Prophet Elijah could convincingly pray in his showdown against the priests of Baal. "Hear me, O Lord, hear me, so that this people may know that You are the Lord God, and so that You have turned their heart back again!" (First Kings 18:37).

"Who is a God like You, Who pardons iniquity and passes by transgression? -- asked the Prophet Micah. "The Lord is nigh to all them that call on Him, to all that call on Him in truth.... For "He will fulfil the desire of them that fear Him. He will also hear their cry, and will save them!" (Psalm 145:18-19 and First Kings 6:26).

Do you acknowledge that God searches your heart? Do you believe that God hears your requests? Have you yet asked God to pardon your sins? Have you requested Him to fulfil your desires? If not, don't delay -- do so immediately!

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Sixth, we are to pray only to God -- for only God is to be trusted and believed in. In the Lord, I put my trust!" -- declared David. "Why do you say to my soul, 'Flee like a bird to your mountain?'" (Psalm 11:1). And again, "In You, Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed!" (Psalm 31:1).

And once again, "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man in whom there is no help! Happy is he who that has the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God Who made heaven and Earth the sea and all that is in them; Who keeps truth forever!" (Psalm 146:3-6).

As Solomon advised in his Proverbs (3:5-6): "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding! In all your ways, acknowledge Him! And He shall direct your paths!"

Do you trust in the Lord with all your heart? Or do you sometimes at least in part also trust in princes or kings or presidents or beauty queens -- or even yourself?

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Seventh. We are to pray only to God. Because He alone is to be worshipped with religious worship -- prayer being a special part thereof.

Only God is to be worshipped. This is obvious from the words of Jesus: "You get hence, Satan! For it is written, 'You should worship the Lord your God, and Him only should you serve!' (Matthew 4:10).

Jesus Christ, is God (John 1:1,14-18 and Colossians 2:9). As such, He is to be called upon and worshipped (First Corinthians 1:2 *cf.* John 5:23). And prayer, the most important part of worship, is to be brought in the Name of Jesus Christ -- and only for His sake (Daniel 7:17,25*f* and John 14:13-14).

"Offer to God thanksgiving; and pay your vows to the Most High One; and call upon Me in the day of trouble. I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.... Whosoever offers praise, glorifies Me!" (Psalm 5:14,15,23).

"Be careful of nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God!" (Philippians 4:6). "Jesus too, so that He might sanctify the people with His Own blood, suffered outside the city gate.... By Him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually -- that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name!" Hebrews 13:12,15).

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To Whom, then, should we pray? We should pray to none other than to the Triune God Jehovah Elohim alone. To God the Father, in the name of Christ, by the help of His Spirit. All men should pray thus: 'Our Father Who is in Heaven!' For only God can search hearts, hear requests, pardon sins, and fulfil the desires of all. Only God is to be believed and worshipped -- and prayer is a very special part of our service to the Lord!

Do you pray only to the Lord God, Jehovah Elohim? Is prayer to Him a very special part of your life?

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Eighth and last. Jesus commands His disciples to pray: "Our Father in Heaven!" (Luke 11:1-2). According to Jesus, we are not to pray to Jesus or to His Holy Spirit, but only to 'Our Father!' Nor does Jesus pray the Lord's Prayer, for He Himself is here not praying to His Father, but teaching His disciples to pray: "Our Father!" For Jesus had no debts or sins to be forgiven (Matthews 6:12 and Luke 11:4). He here clearly says to His disciples: "In this way, therefore, you are to pray!" (Matthew 6:9*f*).

Here Jesus directs His disciples to pray to God the Father in Heaven, as the Father of the universe and also as the Father of the rain from Heaven (Job 38:26-28). The Father of the whole family in Heaven and Earth (Ephesians 3:14-15). The Father of all spirits (Hebrews 12: all the time on Earth too!). The Father of all men (Numbers 16:22 and Acts 17:28). The Father, in Jesus Christ, only of Christians -- and not of hypocrites (John 1:11-12 & 8:44 and Matthew 6:1-2). But nevertheless the Father of all tribes of people in reverence, respect and trust (Malachi 2:10 and Romans 8:26 and Galatians 4:4-6 and Ephesians 2:15-18 and Psalm 103 and Hebrews 12:28).

Here Jesus Christ directs His disciples not to pray to "my Father" but to "our Father." Not here to pray to the Father singly in a closet, but to pray "our Father" as in a Christian prayer meeting. Too, the Lord's Prayer for Christians does not later say: "give me my daily bread!" and "forgive me my sins!" and "lead me not into temptation!" and "deliver me from evil!" -- but "give us our daily bread!" and "forgive us our sins!" and "lead us not into temptation!" and "deliver us from evil!" For there is covenantal solidarity throughout this Prayer! Jeremiah 4,19 and Psalm 89:26.

Praying to God the Father in Heaven does not mean He is confined only to Heaven -- nor to Earth. For the Father was always there, even before He created Heaven and Earth (Genesis 1:1 and First Kings 8:27 and Psalm 24 and First Corinthians 11:30). It certainly means Christians are to serve God also here on Earth before they reach Heaven (Psalm 103:17-19). Indeed, the Father is to be served here on Earth -- just as He is now served in Heaven (Matthew 6:10-11).

Heaven was created first. It is the source whence God's glory comes down to us here on Earth (Matthew 6:10-11 and Revelation 21:1f). There is also a vast distance between the Heavenly Father and His earthly children (Ecclesiastes 5:2 and Psalm 123:1 and Lamentations 3:41). When we pray the "Our Father" God condescends to us (Isaiah 63:15-16 and Nehemiah 1:4-5). Then we are in prayer lifted up to our heavenly Father Himself (Ephesians 2:6).

Thus we are to draw near to our heavenly Father in great reverence (Psalm 95:4-6 and 100). We are to draw near to God the Father in confidence (Psalm 121 & 122). To a Father Who is ready to help us (Luke 11:13 and Psalm 84:11 and Philippians 4:19).

Our Father is not only in Heaven. From Heaven He also rules the Earth. Hallowed be His name -- may His name always be kept holy, by us! May His Kingdom keep on expanding through us all the time here on Earth too! May His will be done by us here on Earth, just as it is done in Heaven -- by our keeping all ten of His Commandments! And all that, before we ask Him to give us our daily bread!

As the *Shorter Catechism* (100-103): "The preface of the Lord's Prayer (which is 'Our Father which art in Heaven') teacheth us to draw near to God with all holy reverence and confidence, as children to a father able and ready to help us, and that we should pray with...others.... In the...petition...'Hallowed by Thy name!' we pray that God would enable us and others to glorify Him in all that whereby He maketh Himself known; and that He would dispose all things to His Own glory.... In the...petition...'Thy Kingdom come!' we pray that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed and that the Kingdom of grace may be advanced, ourselves and other brought into it and kept in it; and that the Kingdom of Glory may be hastened.... In the...petition...'Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven!' we pray that God by His grace would make us able and willing to

know, obey, and submit to His will in all things as do the angels in Heaven!"

The *Larger Catechism* (189-192) more fully teaches us that 'our Father' teaches us "to draw near to God with confidence of His fatherly goodness and our interest therein. With reverence and all other childlike dispositions, heavenly affections, and due apprehensions of His sovereign power, majesty, and gracious condescension; as also, to pray with and for others."

7. PRAY FOR DAILY BREAD!

"Give us...our daily bread! Forgive us our debts! Lead us not into temptation! Deliver us

from evil!" Who here is this "us"?

"I exhort therefore that, first of all -- supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men. For kings and for all that are in authority. So that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour Who will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men -- the man Christ Jesus, Who gave Himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time. Whereunto I have been ordained a Preacher and an Apostle..., a Teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity. I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." (First Timothy 2).

Should we pray for Satan's conversion? Should we petition God to save those whom He has reprobated? Should we ever ask the Lord to bless those currently His and our enemies, such as the Red Chinese and especially their communist regime, and Christ-resisting Judaists, and fundamentalistic Muslims? And should we say prayers for dead folk at their funerals?

These questions are in principle already answered by the Larger Catechism 18, which says that the Bible requires :we are to pray for the whole Church of Christ upon Earth; for Magistrates and Ministers; of ourselves, our brethren...; 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."

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First, we are to pray with and for others. At family worship, at prayer meetings, during sabbath worship, and at national days of prayer (Acts 12:5 and Psalm 35:13). For the whole Church (Ephesians 4:13). For the State (First Peter 2). For Ministers (Romans 15:30). For our brethren (First John 4:21). For congregations (Jeremiah 29:7). For our family (Job 1:5). For the nations (Daniel 9). And for future generations (Psalm 102:15 and John 17:20).

Second, we are to pray for the whole Church of Christ here on Earth. Although the Christian Church started in the garden of Eden right after the fall; and continued in the national Israel and later in the Apostolic Church and the congregations of the Protestant Reformation (Genesis 3:15 *cf.* Romans 11:13-23 & 16:20 and Acts 7:38 and Hebrews 9:10 *cf.* Revelation 13:11 *f* & 17:14-16 with Daniel 7:8-27). We are not to pray for this now-triumphant Church but only for the Church militant now on Earth and the Church latent that will yet be revealed between the present time and Christ's second coming.

In praying for the Church militant, we are to pray for the whole Church of Christ now on Earth, and not just (though certainly pre-eminently!) for our own denomination. "He who is not against us, said Jesus to His disciples, "is for us!" (Luke 9:48-50 *cf.* Matthew 10:42 and Mark 9:38-41).

This is why Paul prayed: "Grace be to you and peace from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ" to "the Church of God which is at Corinth" together "with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord -- both theirs and ours!" (First Corinthians 1:2-3). And this is why we today -- like Paul of old -- need to be "praying always with all prayer and supplication...for all saints" or for all of God's elect currently alive (Ephesians 6:18).

While further praying specifically for those Christians worldwide who (regardless of their denominational affiliation) share our own views as to the Scriptural teachings about sovereign grace and baptism and church government, we also need to pray especially for our own denomination's worth throughout the Earth. And this man's praying not only for the various officers and other members of our local congregations, but also for our regional presbyteries, our national or international general assemblies, and our various foreign missions posts unto the very ends of the Earth.

Do you pray for the whole Church of Christ on Earth, regardless of denomination? Do you particularly pray for the advance of the work of all those Christian groups you consider to be more orthodox? And do you pray for the local, regional national and international outreach of your own denomination -- and that it may ever becomes as orthodox as is humanly possible?

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Third, we are to pray for Magistrates and Ministers. The order mentioned here by the Larger Catechism 18, is rather important. Not Ministers and Magistrates, but "Magistrates and Ministers."

Today, many Christian leaders heretically teach that only Preachers and/or Church-employed persons are in what they so unscripturally call "full-time Christian service." But this is not the language of the Preacher John Calvin, who had the very highest regard of the work of the Christian Magistrate. Nor is the language of our Calvinistic Larger Catechism 18, which first enjoin us to pray "for Magistrates" and only then for Ministers.

The fact of the matter is that not only Preachers and Missionaries but all Christians are "Ministers" of Christ and are (or ought to be!) involved in Christian "ministry" in their daily professional occupations. Actually, there is no such thing as "the ministry" in the sense that only some Church-employed persons are involved therein. And if Paul could call even the heathen Roman state "the minister of God" (Romans 13:4). How much more is this not the case in respect of godly Magistrates?

Godly Magistrates represent God Himself, as they seek to mete out His perfect justice. This is why the Lord Jesus gave the name of "gods" to those who occupy the office of godly magistrate as God's agents (John 10:34 *cf.* Psalm 82).

And this is also why the Apostle Paul felt that he had to "exhort therefore that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men. For kings and for all that are in authority, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour Who will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth" (First Timothy 2:1-4 *cf.* Titus 3:1 *f* and First Peter 2:17 *etc.*).

Do you realize that God uses Magistrates and Lawyers to promote the peace and tranquillity necessary for the preaching of the Gospel so that men can be saved? Do you pray that young Christians should go out into the full-time Christian work of law and politics to the glory of our Saviour? And when did you last pray for your Lawyer, your Judge, your Congressman and the President of the United States?

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Fourth, we are also of course to pray for those Ministers involved in Church-employed vocations. Those active in such Ministry or *Diaconia* would include the Deacons, the Preachers, and the Elders of our Congregations (as well as Ministers of music, Youth Ministers, and Ministers of Church Education, *etc.*). First Peter 4:10-11 *cf.* Romans 12:7,13.

These offices -- and particularly the special offices of Preacher, Elder and Deacon -- are in no sense subordinate to one another, but only to Jesus Christ the only King of His Church. And because subordinate only to Him, they are (though functionally distinct) essentially co-equal to and co-ordinate with one another in the blessed service of Christ (Philippians 1:1). To call only the Preacher "the Minister and not to call also the Elder (and especially the Deacon) "Co-Ministers" is utterly unscriptural and unprotestant!

Peter's mother-in-law ministered to Jesus and His disciples (Mark 1:31). Phebe of Cenchrea ministered in her Congregation and to many Christians, including Paul himself (Romans 16:1-2). And Peter too tells to practise "hospitality one to another without grudging. (For) as every man has received the gift -- even so minister the same (gift) to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. (Hence,) if any man speaks -- let him speak as the oracles of God! If anyone ministers, let him (or her) do it as of the ability which God gives. (So) that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ!" (First Peter 4:9-11).

Do you pray for your "Ministers" -- for all of them, whether they be Deacons, Preachers or Elders; or whether they be Youth Ministers or ministering widows (First Timothy 5:3,5,9,10 *cf.* vv. 1,17,20,22 & 6:1f)? Do you encourage all ministering Christians to fulfil their own particular ministry?

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Fifth, we should not neglect to pray for ourselves! Some Christians think that such prayers are selfish and inappropriate, and spend all their time praying only for others. But the Bible makes it clear that if we don't pray for ourselves too, we won't be of much use praying for others!

Consider how Jacob prayed for himself to Jehovah! "Deliver me, please, from the hand of...Esau! For I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children!" (Genesis 32:11).

We are to love our neighbour as ourself -- neither more, or less (Matthew 22 and Ephesians 5). We are required to pray for our neighbour. We need to pray for ourself too. For if we do not pray for ourself that we should conform to the will of God, our prayers for our neighbour will not be of much avail! (First Timothy 5:8 *cf.* Galatians 6:10 *cf.* First John 4:20). Do you then pray? **9.**

PRAY FOR MAN'S DAILY BREAD & OTHER NEEDS!

Pray for his daily bread! Pray for his daily drink! Pray for his daily shelter! As the Shorter Catechism 104 states, we are here to pray "that of God's free gift we may receive a competent portion of the good things of this life, and enjoy His blessing with them."

As Psalm 104:10-23 says: "He sends the springs into the valleys.... They give drink to every beast.... The wild asses quench their thirst. By them, shall the fowls of the sky have their habitation which sing among the branches. He waters the hills.... The Earth is satisfied with the fruit of Your works. He causes the grass to grow...and herb for the service of man, so that he may bring forth fruit out of the Earth... The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God..... Man goes forth unto his...labour until evening."

Lord, give bread! We pray that we may receive from God all the outward blessings of this life -- not of right, but all from His grace alone. Bread, the simplest and least fanciful of human foods! Just enough, for each day!

As the Larger Catechism 193 states, "acknowledging that in Adam and by our own sin we have forfeited our right to all the outward blessing of this life and deserve to be wholly deprived of the by God and to have them cursed to us in the use of them; and that neither they of themselves are able to sustain us nor we to merit or by our own industry to procure them but prone to desire..and use them unlawfully - we pray for ourselves and others that both they and we, waiting upon the providence of God from day to day in the use of lawful means, may of His free gift and as to His fatherly wisdom shall seem best enjoy a competent portion of them and have the same continued and blessed unto us in our holy and comfortable use of them and contentment in them; and be kept from all things that are contrary to our temporal support and comfort."

Give us! "But my God shall supply all your need according to His glory by Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:19).

Give us! Jacob vowed that "God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on." Genesis 28:10. "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which you have shown to Your servant. For with my staff I passed over the Jordan. And now, I have become two band (or armies)!" Genesis 32:10.

Our bread is the product of free enterprize. It has not been stolen. Nevertheless, "if any (man) would not work, neither should he eat!" (Second Thessalonians 3:10-12).

Give us bread, so that we may receive a competent portion every day! "Give us day by day our daily bread!" (Luke 11:3). "Feed me with food convenient for me!" (Proverbs 30:8-9). Thrice daily? (Psalm 55:17).

Paul said: "Do not worry about anything! But in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.... I rejoiced in the Lord greatly.... Your care of me has flourished again!... I am instructed both to be full, and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need..... (Here in jail,) I have all I need, and abound I am full!.... And my God shall supply according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus!" (Philippians 4:6,10-19).

Give us of the things of this life we need! Give us food! "Behold the fowls of the air! They sow not, neither do they reap! Are you not much better than they?" (Matthew 6:26). Eat everything set out for you!

Give us shelter, Father! "The sparrow has found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself where she may lay her young." (Psalm 84:3). "The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats, and

the rocks for the conies.... The young lions lay them down in their dens." (Psalm 104:18-20). "If God so shelters the birds of the air and the beasts of the field - shall He not much more shelter you, O you of little faith?" (Matthew 6:26f).

Give us clothing, Father! "Having food and raiment, let us therewith be content!" (First Timothy 6:6). "And why do you take thought of raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow!... Even Solomon in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of those!... If God so clothe the grass of the field..., shall He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?" (Matthew 6:28f).

Give us wealth, Father! "For it is He Who gives you power to get wealth, so that He may establish His covenant." (Deuteronomy 8:18 and Proverbs 1:22).

Give us health, Father! "God, be real to us -- and cause His faith to shine upon us, so that Your way may be made known upon Earth, Your saving health among all nations." For "bodily exercise does profit, for a little while" (First Corinthians 9).

"Give us the enjoyment of marriage and the single condition, Father! Under the Mosaic economy bigamy was tolerated but never encouraged or duly approved (Exodus 21:10). "Rejoice with the wife of your youth. Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe! Let her breasts satisfy you at all times, and you be ravished always with her love! Why do you wish, my son, to be ravished with a strange woman -- and embrace the bosom of a stranger?" (Proverbs 5:18f). If an already-married man take him another wife -- he might not diminish the food, raiment and other duties of marriage which he still owed to his first wife (*cf.* Leah).

Paul condemns those who went round "forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats which God had created. For every creature of God (or even enjoyment of God's ordinances) is good, and nothing (is) to be refused" (First Timothy 4:3). Man and wife are not withdraw from one another sexually, but to give unto one another the sexual intercourse they owe one another. First Corinthians 7:1-5. Do you?

"Give us this day our daily bread!" (Matthew 6:11). Is that also a large part of your daily prayer?

Give us our daily bread! Enjoy all of God's daily blessings! Food, shelter, health, wealth, clothing, and the many blessings of marriage! Enjoy! Not grudgingly endure! Nor, without God's blessing, give way to gluttony, greed, luxury, excesses, immodesty or immorality!

Give us our daily bread -- eschatologically! On the pilgrim's progress toward the heavenly city (Hebrews 11). As indicated in and by the Lord's Supper (Isaiah 25:1-7 and First Corinthians 11)!

6. PRAY FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS

"Forgive us our debts!" (Matthew 6:11). "And forgive us our sins" (Luke 11:4). For sins are debts!

Sin is a debt. For we owe God obedience. In Luke's version of the Lord's Prayer, we are

enjoined to pray: "Forgive us our sins! For we also forgive every one that is indebted to us." (Luke 11:4).

This does not of course mean that all debts are sins. But it does mean that all sins are debts. For we owe it to God to pay for our sins. But, like the bankrupt debtors who owe God obedience, we cannot repay Him for robbing Him. All we can do is to appropriate His Own cancellation of our debt to Him on the basis of Christ Himself paying off our debt to God for us with His Own precious blood.

And having done that, we need to give evidence of our recognition of the seriousness of that appropriation. By ourselves forgiving those in debt to us.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism 105 clarifies this. It says "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" means "we pray that God, for Christ's sake, would freely pardon all our sins which we are the rather encouraged to ask because by His grace we are enabled from the heart to forgive others!"

The Westminster Larger Catechism 194 more amply explains that "acknowledging that we and others are guilty both of original and actual sin, and thereby become debtors to the justice of God; and that neither we nor any other creature can make the least satisfaction for that debt, we pray for ourselves and others that God of His free grace would through the obedience and satisfaction of Christ apprehended and applied by faith acquit us both from the guilt and punishment of sin, accept us in His Beloved, continue His favour and grace to us, pardon our daily failings and fill us with peace and joy in giving us daily more and more assurance of forgiveness which we are the rather emboldened to ask and encouraged to expect when we have this testimony in ourselves that we from the heart forgive other their offences."

Forgive us our debts, like our sins. Here we pray that God would pardon all our sins. First, our original sin. Namely Adam's first sin and its guilt and stain imputed to us as his descendants. Imputed, because of Genesis 1:26-28 & 3:6,15 and Job 14 & 15 and Psalm 51 and Romans 5:12f.

Then there is also actual sin. James 3:2 says all of us offend in many things. Romans 3:9-23 says "Jews and Gentiles...are all under sin. As it is written, 'There is none righteous. No, not one! There is none who understands; there is none that seeks after God. They have all gone out of the way. They are all together become unprofitable. There is none that does good; no, not one! Their throat is an open sepulchre. With their tongues they have caused deceit. The poison of asps is under their lips. Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and misery are in their ways.... The way of peace they have not known. There...is no fear of God before their eyes.... For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God!"

We cannot erase our sins! Hebrews 10:1-6 teaches we cannot perfect ourselves with all the Old Testament sacrifices brought year by year. Micah 6:7 asks will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or even with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

So, Father, forgive us our debts and sins! If You, Lord, should remember iniquities -- O

Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with You, so that You should be feared! Psalm 130:3-4.

We pray that He, for Christ's sake, would freely pardon our sins! Daniel 9:19 and Hebrews 9 & 10 and Romans 3:24-26 and Ephesians 1:7. Believers are "justified freely by the grace of God through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood..., to deliver His righteousness for the remission of sins..., so that He might be just and the Justifier of him who believes in Jesus.

We pray that He might pardon our sins! "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, unto whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, and in whose spirit is no guile!... I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord, and You forgave the iniquity of my sin!'" Psalm 32:2-5.

And the Father forgives our sin quite freely! "Ho, every one that thirsts, comes to the waters!" (Isaiah 55:1). "And you He has quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.... By grace you are saved, through faith.... It is the gift of God..., lest any man should boast.... For we are His workmanship!" Ephesians 2:1,8,10. It is the water of the river of life, which reaches the believer -- freely! Revelation 22:1.

We pray that God will continue His favour to us and will pardon us daily! Give us bread each day, and forgive us our daily sins! "For in many things, we all offend!" James 3:2. "O Lord, though our iniquities testify against us, do it (forgive us our sins) for Your name's sake. For our backslidings are many! We have sinned against You!" Jeremiah 14:7.

We pray that God will give us the joy of our knowing we are forgiven! We are encouraged to ask for this! "Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us. And we have forgiven others who have asked for our forgiveness!" Luke 11:4. "And if your brother seven times a day turn again to you, saying 'I repent!' -- you shall forgive him!" (Luke 17:1-4). Till seventy times seven! For God forgives us 70 x 7 each day! "I forgave you all your debt, because you desired Me!" (Luke 18:32).

We are expect to forgiveness from God, when we have forgiven others! "Love your enemies! Bless them that curse you! Do good to them that hate you! And pray for them that spitefully use you, and persecute you! So that you may be children of your Father Who is in Heaven! For if you love those that love you, what reward shall you have? Be perfect, even as you Father in Heaven is perfect!" Matthew 5:44-48. "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another -- if any man have a quarrel against any! Even as Christ forgave you, so also you are to do!" Colossians 3:13.

We need to ask God for forgiveness! "I forgave you all your debt, because you desired Me!" (Luke 18:32). Have you asked forgiveness of God -- or of others?

Because God does not forgive you -- until you so ask Him! And because you will not nor cannot be forgiven by others, until you ask them for forgiveness! Though we should long for others to come and ask us to forgive them. Then we should freely give it. And *vice versa*!

And there should be no grudges. Matthew 5 & 17 and Luke 17. Pray to our Father, to

forgive us our debts! As we forgive our debtors! Jesus does! Do you?

10. PRAY FOR DELIVERANCE FROM EVIL!

"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil!" Matthew 6:13a. Here the Shorter Catechism 106 teaches us that "God would either keep us from being tempted to sin, or support and deliver us when we are tempted."

Or, as the Larger Catechism 195 more amply states, we are to keep on "acknowledging that the most wise (and) righteous and gracious God, for diverse (and) holy and just end, may so order things that we may be assaulted (and) foiled and for a time led captive by temptations (so) that Satan (and) the world and the flesh are ready powerfully to draw us aside and ensnare us; and that we even after the pardon of our sins...are...also of ourselves unable...to resist them..., we pray that God would so overrule the world and all in it...and restrain Satan...and bless all means of grace..., that we and all His people may by His providence be kept from being tempted to sin, or...by His Spirit we may be powerfully supported...to stand..., or when fallen raised again...(so) that our sanctification...may be perfected, Satan trodden our feet, and we...freed from...all evil, for ever!"

"My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various temptations!... The trying of your faith works patience! But let patience have her perfect work, so that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing!... Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted!... Blessed is the man that endures temptation! For when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life!... Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights.... Of His Own will He begot us...(so) that we should be a kind of firstfruits.... But be doers of the Word.... Whosoever looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it..., he being..a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.... Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this..., to keep himself unspotted from the world.... If you fulfil the royal law according to the Scripture 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself!' -- you do well. But if you...commit sin..., (you) are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For He Who said 'Do not commit adultery, said also' 'Do not kill!' Now if you commit no adultery, yet if you kill, you have become a transgressor the law! So should you speak, and so should you do -- as those who shall be judged by the law of liberty!" James 1:2-27 & 2:8-12.

"You greatly rejoice, though now for a season...you are in heaviness through manifold temptations, (so) that the trial of your faith..., though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise...at the appearance of Jesus Christ." First Peter 1:6-7.

"There no temptation has taken you, but such as is common to man. But God is faithful, Who will not permit you to be tempted above you are able, but will with the temptation (or testimony which God sends) also make a way to escape (so) that you may be able to bear it." First Corinthians 10:13.

We pray 'Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil' so that when we are tempted this is through the instrumentality of Satan. In Job 1:12f & 2:5f, Satan requests God to put forth His hand to strip Job of all his family and all his possessions and later even of his own health. And the Lord said to Satan: 'Behold all that he has, is in your power!... Behold he is in your hand; but save his life!'

Still , temptation is not yet sin! The sinless Jesus was tempted by the old tempter the devil (Matthew 4:3-5). For Jesus then said to Satan: 'Get hence, Satan!' And in Matthew 16, Jesus said to the Satan-tempted Peter: 'Get behind Me, Satan!'

"Let no man say when he is tempted: 'I am tempted by God!' For God cannot be tempted with evil, neither does He tempt any man! Every fallen man is tempted when he is drawn away

by his own lust and enticed. Then, when lust has conceived it brings forth sin. And sin, when it is finished, brings forth death!" James 1:10f.

We are to pray that we be kept and delivered from temptation! Lord, lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Because the all-powerful God is sovereign over all our temptation. In Job 1 & 2, God sends Satan, and He limits him. And in Isaiah 45:7, He says: 'I form the light, and create darkness. I make peace, and create evil. I, the Lord, do all these things!'

In Isaiah 54:16, God says: 'I have created the smith who blows the coals in the fire.... And I have created the waster to destroy!' And in Proverbs 16:4 one reads about God: "The Lord has made all things for Himself; yes, even the wicked for the day of evil!"

God would subdue the flesh, and restrain Satan! In Genesis 1:28 and again 4:6, God would have the unfallen Adam reduce the creeping thing both before the fall and the serpent thereafter. And as regards restraint, Psalm 76:10 teaches us: "Surely the wrath of man shall praise You; the remainder of wrath, you shall restrain!"

For God shall keep us, and never abandon us! He keeps His people from temptation! As Jude 24 teaches, God keeps us from falling!

This points to continuous conversion -- each day! Alias to recover us from temptation. Here, the Larger Catechism speaks of "Satan trodden under our feet." Cf. our daily subduing all creepy-crawlies and serpents! Genesis 3:15; Matthew 17:18; Luke 22:31; and Revelation 12:14. And that God would perfect our sanctification in our salvation forever. Genesis 1:26 and Matthew 5:5 & 5:48 and Revelation 21:24-25 & 22:1-5.

For indeed, "Satan (is) trodden under our feet!" Larger Catechism 195. "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly!" Romans 16:20.

Beloved! You have not yet resisted unto blood! (Hebrews 12:4). But may the God of peace, Who brought back again from the dead our Lord Jesus...through the blood of the everlasting covenant make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ to Whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen!" Hebrews 13:20-21.

11. PRAY CONFIDENTLY FOR CONCLUDING REASONS!

The Lord's Prayer is a triune prayer. It is a prayer to the Triune God. It is addressed to the Father as the Fountainhead of God Triune; it is prayed for the sake of the Son Who taught it; and it is to be prayed in the power of the Spirit as the outbreathed Breath of the life-giving Holy Ghost.

This triune prayer is one prayer with three parts: a Prologue; Petitions; and a Conclusion.

The Prologue reminds us of God the Father -- of our Father Who is in Heaven. The Petitions remind us of the Son Who always prays for us and Who taught us to pray thus. And the Conclusion reminds us of the Spirit Who empowers and glorifies our praying with the reflective power and glory of Jehovah Himself. For all things (including our prayers) are for the Father; all things are through the Son; and all things are for the Spirit. For from God and through God and to God are all things -- to Whom be the glory for ever. Amen! Romans 11:36.

Not only the Prologue and the Conclusion but even the Petitions themselves reveal the Trinity in Whose name we and our children have been anointed and baptized as the people of the Triune God, and for Whose sake we are thus to pray and to do.

Hallowed be the name of God the Father! And may God the Father, the Creator and Sustainer of all, give us this day our daily bread! May Your Kingdom come, O Son -- and forgive us our debts and all sins, O Son Divine! May Your will be done, O Holy Spirit, Who carved Your will for us onto the two tablets of stone at Mt. Sinai, and later into the God-breathed Scriptures, and Who leads us on into temptation as our good works follow us into glory (Revelation 14:13).

For Yours is the Kingdom, Father God! Yours is the power, Son of God! (First Corinthians 1:34). And Yours is the glory, Spirit sublime, Who causes us to behold Your glory and Who changes us from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord (Second Corinthians 3:16).

As the Shorter Catechism 107 remarks, this teaches 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!'"

As the Larger Catechism 196 more amply provides, "the conclusion" of the Lord's Prayer teaches us "to enforce our petitions with arguments...taken not from any worthiness in ourselves or in any other creatures, but from God -- and with our prayers, to join praises ascribing to God alone eternal sovereignty, omnipotency and glorious excellency. In regard whereof, as He is able and willing to help us, so we by faith are emboldened to plead with Him that He would and quietly to rely upon Him that He will fulfil our requests. And, to testify this our desire and assurance, we say: 'Amen!'"

We pray to praise Him. As Father of creation; as Son in mediation; and as Spirit in consummation. Psalm 138:1-5 & 145:1-3 & 146:1-2 & 147:1,5,7 & 148:1-5a,14 & 149:1-3 & 150:1-6. Do you do so?

We pray, ascribing Kingdom, power and glory to the Triune God alone. Psalm 103:19 says His Kingdom rules over all. Obadiah 21 says the Kingdom shall be the Lord's! And Revelation 11:15 looking back, argues the kingdoms of the world have become the kingdoms for God and His Christ.

We pray, ascribing power to God. Ephesians 3:19-21. "You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power! For You have created all things, and for Your pleasure they are and were created!" Revelation 4:11.

We pray, ascribing glory to God. "For My Own sake, even for My Own sake, will I do it!

For why should My name be polluted? And I will not give My glory unto another!" Isaiah 48:11. "But we all, with open face beholding as in a looking-glass (the law engraved for the Lord incarnate) the image form glory unto glory, even by the Spirit of the Lord!" (Second Corinthians 3:18).

"Every creature which is in Heaven and on Earth and under the Earth and such as are in the Sea and all that are in them I heard saying: 'Blessing and honour and glory and power be unto Him Who sits on the throne!'" (Revelation 5:13). The voice of many angels and beasts and the Elders (cry out): 'Worthy is the Lamb Who was slain to receive power and riches...and glory.'" (Revelation 11-12).

The Lamb had "seven horns and seven eyes, where the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the Earth" (Revelation 4:5). And there were "seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which were the seven Spirits of God" (cf. Isaiah 11:1-2).

Everything boils down to the Triune God. "Holy, holy, holy; Lord God Almighty; Who was, and is, and is to come!" (Revelation 4:8).

As the triunely-baptized people of God, we all pray the Lord's Prayer. For then, we pray desiring to be heard. First Samuel 1 & 2 and Daniel 9.

We pray, knowing the omnipotent God is very well able to grant our prayers. We pray, being assured that God would grant us what we ask. Confidence! "Don't worry about anything! But in everything by prayer..., let your requests be made known unto God! And the peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus!" Phillipians 4:6-7. Hebrews 10:1,11,21-23,35 & 11:6.

"Having boldness" and Jesus Christ as a great "High Priest over the House of God (or the Christian Church), let us draw near (to God the Father) with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience!... Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering!... Therefore cast not your confidence away. For he that comes to God must believe that He is AND that He is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him!"

This is also eschatological confidence! "Therefore my beloved brethren, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord!" (First Corinthians 15:58). "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord..., so that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them!" (Revelation 14:13).

Thus we pray, saying in confident testimony of our desire and assurance: 'Amen!' "All the promises of God are 'Yes' and 'Amen' in Jesus" (Second Corinthians 1:20). "Christ is the Amen of God, the Faithful Witness, the start of creation!" (Revelation 3:14). "Amen!" (Revelation 22:21).

"Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us...to give thanks unto Your holy name and to triumph in Your praise! Blessed be the Lord God...from everlasting till everlasting!... Let all the people say: 'Amen!'" (Psalm 106:47-48).

13. PRAY THUS -- FOR CHRIST'S SAKE!

Christ, apparently on two separate occasions (as reported in Matthew 6 and Luke 11), teaches His Church how to pray. In Matthew 6:5-13, said the Lord Jesus: "When you pray, you shall not be as the hypocrites are!... In this way therefore, you (My disciples) should pray: 'Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be Your name! Your Kingdom come! Your will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven! Give us this day our daily bread! And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors! And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil! For Yours is the Kingdom, and the

power, and the glory! For ever! Amen!"



Luke has..."it came to pass that, as He was praying...(and) ceased, one of His disciples said to Him: 'Lord, teach us to pray!'.... And He said to them: "When you pray, say: 'Our Father...in Heaven, hallowed be Your name! Your Kingdom come! Your will be done, as in Heaven, so on Earth!"

Matthew has: "Give us this day our daily bread!" Luke has: "Give us day by day our daily bread!" Matthew has: "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors!" Luke has: "And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us!" Matthew has: "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil!" Luke here has the same. Finally, Matthew alone has the ending: "For Yours is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen!"

14. ABOUT THE AUTHOR --->

Dr. Francis Nigel Lee was born in 1934 in the Westmorland County of Cumbria (in Great Britain). He is the great-grandson of a fiery preacher whose family disintegrated when he backslid. Dr. Lee's father was an Atheist, yet he married a Roman Catholic who raised her son Nigel in that faith.

During World War II, the Royal Navy appointed Nigel's father W.S. Lee Chief Radar Officer (South Atlantic). So the family then moved to South Africa. There, Nigel became a Calvinist; had the great privilege of leading both of his parents to Christ; and then became a Minister of God's Word and Sacraments in the Dutch Reformed Church of Natal, External Examiner in Ethics for the Stellenbosch Theological Seminary, and an Advocate (or Trial Lawyer) of the Supreme Court of South Africa.

Emigrating to the U.S.A., Dr. Lee attended the very first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America; transferred his ministerial credentials to that denomination; and pastored Congregations in Mississippi and Florida. He was also: Professor of Philosophy at Shelton College in N.J.; Visiting Lecturer in Apologetics at Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson Miss.; Staley Distinguished Visiting Lecturer at Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis Mo.; Research Scholar-in-Residence at the Christian Studies Center in Memphis Tenn.; Academic Dean of Graham Bible College in Bristol Tenn.; and incidental Lecturer at several other Colleges, Seminaries, and Universities. He was at that time the only person in the World serving on the Executives of both the British Lord's Day Observance Society and the Lord's Day Alliance of the U.S.

Preacher, Theologian, Lawyer, Educationist, Historian, Philosopher and Author, Lee has produced more than 330 publications (including many books) -- and also a multitude of long unpublished manuscripts. Apart from an honorary LL.D., he has 21 earned degrees -- including eleven earned doctorates for dissertations* in Education, Law, Literature, Philosophy and Theology.

After the murder of his father, Lee had the joy of leading his father's murderer in jail (and later also the latter's parents) to Christ. Though loving to study, Lee prefers to preach and lead folk to Christ. Lee rises early; reads God's Word in eleven languages; then walks a couple of miles before breakfast. He has been round the World seven times; has visited 110 countries (several repeatedly); and also every Continent (except Antarctica). He is in demand as a Promoter of Doctoral Students in Australia, England, Germany, South Africa and the United States. He has also lectured and/or preached in all of those countries, as well as in Brazil, Scotland, Korea, Japan, Namibia, New Zealand, and Zambia.

A diehard predestinarian, Lee now lives in the Commonwealth of Australia - where he was for twenty years the Professor of Systematic Theology and Caldwell-Morrow Lecturer in Church History at the Queensland Presbyterian Theological College. He and his wife Nellie retired in 2000. They have two children, Johanna Paulina who teaches at Parkridge High School and Anna Marie who teaches at Earnshaw State College.

*Th.D.: *The Covenantal Sabbath*

S.T.D.: *Rebaptism Impossible!*

D.Ed.: *Catechizing Before Communion not prior to Puberty*

D.R.E.: *Baby Belief Before Baptism!*

D.Jur.: *Women Ministers and Australian Litigation*

D.C.L.: *The Roots and Fruits of the Common Law*

Ph.D.: *Communist Eschatology*

D.Min.: *Daily Family Worship*

D.Phil.: *Miracles - What and When and Why?*

D.Litt.: *Holinshed on the Ancient British Isles*

D.Hum.: *Tiny Human Life - Abortion and IVF*