

PRAYER & JOURNALING

A METHOD FOR PRAYER

By Matthew Henry
(Modern Edition by David Stiles)



A Method for Prayer

by

**Matthew
Henry**

Modern Edition
edited by
David Stiles

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About the Editor

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Editor's Introduction

When I was in college, two resources on prayer were incredibly helpful to me.

The first was the book called "*Daring to Draw Near*" by Dr. John White. In exploring the prayers of the Bible's central figures, Dr. White explained that prayer is not something that we work up on our own strength, but rather is a *response* to who God is and what He has already done. It is God, Dr. White wrote, who takes the initiative. Our job is to respond to Him.

His encouragement to his readers was to explore the prayers of Scripture, to see how the Bible's central figures (and some non-central figures) communicated and responded to God in prayer.

While noting that modern Christians have rightly brought their troubles and concerns to the Lord, Dr. White warned that modern Christians have, for the most part, lost a sense of *reverence* for God, writing:

“Evangelical Christians are far too ready to treat God as a heavenly buddy. We are blind to his glory and deaf to the voice that is the sound of many waters. If I knew how to make you tremble and quake in his presence I would. Indeed I pray that the Holy Spirit may do just that for you.” (1)

He added encouragingly, “to tremble (in reverence) and to be struck dumb need not go together. Great as He is, (God) is also tender and gentle. And since he is aware of the subtlest nuance of pain in our hearts we need not hide it from Him.” (2)

Dr. White encouraged his readers not to hide their thoughts from God, no matter how painful or horrendous they seemed, but rather to confess them to Him. He added,

“Also tell him of your hurts. Time is of no consequence. You may talk for hours since he dwells in eternity where time is of no meaning. And know when you pour out your heart to God like Hannah did, he will be listening intently, understanding profoundly.” (3)

A second resource that I found helpful in college was an audio series by Rev. Bill Hybels. In the audio lectures on prayer, Rev. Hybels explained that prayer was more than simply “asking God for help” (which tended to be and unfortunately still tends to be my typical mode of prayer).

Instead, he explained that there are *other important elements to prayer* that are found in Scripture. These important components can include:

- Adoration
- Confession
- Thanksgiving
- Supplication

He encouraged his listeners to use the acronym “ACTS” to help remember these important elements of prayer (A for Adoration, C for Confession, and so on). He explained this pattern further in his 1989 book, *Too Busy Not to Pray*.”

Adoration, he noted, “reminds us whom we are addressing, whose presence we have entered, and whose attention we have gained.” (4)

He explained, “We can praise God for being faithful, righteous, just, merciful, gracious, willing to provide, attentive, and unchanging. When in a spirit of adoration

we begin going through God's attributes, we soon say from the heart, 'I am praying to a tremendous God!'" (5)

Confession, Rev. Hybels noted, "is probably the most neglected area of personal prayer today." (6) We need to "say it like it is" he explained and admit that we are sinners in desperate need of a Savior.

As a Christian, I have learned over the years that confession is a gift given by God. As I have already been forgiven of all of my sins by Christ when I came to a trusting faith in Him, confession helps remind me that I have a loving and forgiving Heavenly Father who seeks to give me His peace and make me into a new creation.

Including *Thanksgiving* as an element of prayer, Rev. Hybels noted, allows us to "give thanks in all circumstances" (as Paul wrote in II Thessalonians 5:18). God, we are reminded in Scripture, is our Heavenly Father who desires that we give our thanks to Him.

Supplication is the act of bringing our requests to God. Rev. Hybels reminded his readers, "Nothing is too big for God to handle or too small for him to be interested in." (7)

Those four elements of prayer have been helpful to me as I've sought to grow in my devotional life.

In the ensuing years since college, several other resources have been helpful in my prayer life as well, most notably the "Book of Common Prayer" that prescribes prayers in the Anglican tradition.

Several years ago I was introduced to Matthew Henry's "A Method for Prayer." After reading only a few pages, I immediately found an approach to prayer that "made sense" to me.

The use of Scripture to commune with God seemed so obvious, and reading Matthew Henry's prayers (even though they were written in the early seventeen hundreds and used old English phrases) were fresh and enlightening.

As I read "*A Method for Prayer*," I found myself recalling the resources that I had found so helpful in college. I was reminded by Matthew Henry's prayers that prayer is, as Dr. White explained, a response to God...a response to who God is and what He has done.

I also saw in "*A Method for Prayer*" many similarities to the "ACTS" model of prayer that I had found so helpful so many years ago: including adoration, confession, thanksgiving and supplication in prayer (although in a slightly different order).

In Matthew Henry's "*A Method for Prayer*":

- Chapter One begins with adoration
- Chapter Two includes confession
- Chapter Three covers prayers of petition and supplication
- Chapter Four includes prayers of thanksgiving
- Chapter Five includes intercession and prayers for others

My prayer for you, as a reader, is that you will find this modern edition of "*A Method for Prayer*" a helpful resource for communicating and communing with our Heavenly Father, who graciously sent His Son for us.

Introduction Notes:

1. John White, "*Daring to Draw Near*" (Downer's Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1977), p. 92-93.
2. *ibid*, p. 93.
3. *ibid*
4. Bill Hybels, "*Too Busy Not to Pray*", (Downer's Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1989), p.63
5. *ibid*, p. 64
6. *ibid*, p. 65
7. *ibid*, p. 70

About this Edition

Matthew Henry completed “*A Method for Prayer*” in 1712. His manuscript, like all manuscripts of its time, contains many words and phrases which are not used today.

This modern English edition attempts to remain true to Rev. Henry’s intent of using Scripture in prayer to God. Therefore, I have retained his overall outline and have retained the same Scriptural references that he used in his prayers.

For this modern version, I have updated some words and phrases in the section headings and have used modern Scripture translations for his many prayers based on Scripture. I have also modified the formatting with the inclusion of bullet points and bold text to differentiate the section headings from the actual prayers.

I am indebted to Rev. Ligon Duncan’s republication of “*A Method for Prayer*” in 1993 which brought the book to a wide audience.

About the Author

Matthew Henry (1662 - 1714) was a non-conformist pastor in England.

In 1687 he became minister of a Presbyterian congregation in Chester, where he served for 25 years. In 1712 he published "A Method for Prayer" and left Chester to pastor a church in London. He died suddenly two years later.

A prolific writer, Henry's most notable work is the *Commentary on the Whole Bible*, which was originally published in a partial form in 1706. After his death, a final version of his *Commentary* was finished by colleagues.

Chapter One

Of the first part of PRAYER
which is:

- *Address to God*
- *Adoration of Him*
- *Suitable Acknowledgments*
- *Professions and*
- *Preparatory Requests*

Chapter 1: The First Part of Prayer

Our spirits being composed in a very reverent serious frame, our thoughts focused, and all that is within us, charged in the Name of the great God, careful to attend the solemn service that lies before us, and to keep close to it, we must with a fixed attention and application of our mind, and an active lively faith:

- set the Lord before us, seeing His eye upon us
- and set ourselves in His special presence

And presenting ourselves to Him as living sacrifices, which we desire may be holy and acceptable and a spiritual act of worship (Rom. 12:1); and bind these sacrifices with cords to the horn of the altar (Ps. 118:27), with such thoughts as these:

- Let us now lift up our hearts with our eyes and hands to God in heaven. (Lam. 3:41, John 17:1)
- Let us stir up ourselves to take hold on God, to seek His face and ascribe to Him the glory due unto His name and worship Him in the splendor of his holiness. (Is. 64:7, 6, Ps. 27:8; 29:2)
- To You, O Lord, do we lift up our souls. (Ps. 25:1)
- Let us now with humble boldness, enter into the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way, opened for us through the veil. (Heb. 10:19-20)

- Let us now attend upon the Lord without distraction in undivided devotion to Him (I Cor. 7:35), and let not our hearts be far from Him when we draw close to Him with our mouths, and honor Him with our lips. (Matt. 15:8)
- Let us now worship God, who is Spirit, in spirit and in truth; For such the Father seeks to worship Him. (John 4:23-24)

Having thus engaged our hearts to approach unto God (Jer. 30:21)...

I. We must solemnly address ourselves to that infinitely great and glorious Being, as those that are filled with a full belief of His presence, and a holy awe and reverence of His Majesty; which we may do in such expressions as these:

- Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come. (Rev. 4:8)
- You, whose name is the LORD—you alone are the Most High over all the earth! (Ps. 83:18)
- O God, You are my God, earnestly I seek You (Ps. 63:1); You are my God, and I will praise You, my father's God, and I will exalt You. (Ex. 15:2)
- You who are the true God; the living God, the only living and true God, and the eternal King (Jer. 10:10), The Lord our God, who is one Lord. (Deut. 6:4)

And we may thus distinguish ourselves from the worshippers of false gods.

- The idols of the nations are silver and gold, they are vanity and a lie, the work of men's hands; they that make them will be like them, and so is every one that trust in them (Ps. 115:4,8). But He who is the Portion of Jacob is not like these, for He is the Maker of all things, including Israel, the tribe of his inheritance - the LORD Almighty is his name (Jer. 10:16); who is God over all, forever praised! (Rom. 9:5)
- Their rock is not like our Rock, as even our enemies concede; for He is the Rock of ages (Deut. 32:31), for the LORD, the LORD, is the Rock eternal (Isa. 26:4), Whose name endures forever, and His renown, through all generations (Ps. 135:13), after the gods who did not make the heavens and the earth, perish from off the earth, and from under these heavens. (Jer. 10:11)

2. We must reverently adore God, as a Being transcendently bright and blessed, self-existent, and self-sufficient, and infinite and eternal Spirit that has all perfections in Himself, and give Him the glory of his title and attributes.

- O Lord our God, You are very great; You are clothed with splendor and majesty; You wrap Yourself in light as with a garment (Ps. 104:1-2) and yet as to us made darkness Your covering (Ps. 18:11); for we cannot think correctly because of our darkness. (Job 37:19)

- This is the message which we have heard of You and we declare that it is true, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all (I John 1:5). And that God is love, and whoever lives in love lives in God and God in them. (I John 4:16)
- You are the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows, there is no variableness or shadow of turning with You, and from You comes every good and perfect gift. (James 1:17)
- You are the blessed and only Ruler; the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To You be honor and glory forever. (I Tim. 6:15-16)

We must acknowledge his Being to be unquestionable and past dispute.

- The heavens declare Your glory, O God, and the skies proclaim the work of Your hands (Ps. 19:1), because You have made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen (Rom. 1:19). So that they are fools without excuse, who say there is no God (Ps. 14:1); for surely there is a reward for the righteous, surely there is a God who judges the earth, and heaven too. (Ps. 58:11)
- We therefore come to You believing, that You exist, and that You are the powerful and bountiful rewarder of those who earnestly seek You. (Heb. 11:6)

Yet we must acknowledge his nature to be incomprehensible...

- We cannot fathom the mysteries of God, we cannot probe the limits of the Almighty. (Job 11:7)
- Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise, his greatness no one can fathom. (Ps. 145:3)
- Who can proclaim the mighty acts of the Lord? Who can fully declare His praise? (Ps. 106:2)

-And his perfections to be matchless, and without compare.

- Who among the gods is like You, O Lord, majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, doing wonders? (Ex. 15:11)
- Who in the skies above can be compared with the Lord? Who is like the Lord among the heavenly beings? O Lord God Almighty, who is like You? You are mighty and Your faithfulness surrounds You. (Ps. 89:6,8)
- Among the gods there is none like You, O Lord; no deed can compare with yours; for You are great, and do marvelous deeds; You alone are God. (Ps. 86:8, 10)
- There is not any creature that has an arm like God's, or can thunder with a voice like You. (Job 40:9)

-And that he is infinitely above us and all other beings.

- You are God, and not man; having not eyes of flesh, nor seeing as a mortal sees (Job 10:4-5); Your days are not as the days of a mortal, nor your years like those of a man's. (Job 10:4-5)
- As heaven is high above the earth, so are Your thoughts above our thoughts, and Your ways above our ways. (Isa. 55:9)
- The nations are like a drop in a bucket, they are regarded as dust on the scales; and You weigh the islands as though they were fine dust; they are nothing, and are regarded by You as worthless and less than nothing. (Isa. 40:15, 17)

Particularly in our adorations we must acknowledge

2.1 That he is an eternal God, immutable (unchanging), without beginning of days or end of life, or change of time.

- You are the King eternal, immortal, and invisible (I Tim. 1:17). Before the mountains were born, or You had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting You are God (Ps. 90:2); the same yesterday, today and forever. (Heb. 13:8)
- In the beginning You laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Your hands; they will perish, but You remain; they will wear out like a garment, like clothing you will change them and they will be discarded; but You remain the same, and your years will never end. (Ps. 102:25-27)

- You are the Lord and do not change; therefore we are not destroyed (Mal. 3:6). Are You not from everlasting, O Lord our God, our holy one? (Hab. 1:12) The everlasting God, the Lord the Creator of the ends of the earth, You will not grow tired or weary; and Your understanding no one can fathom. (Isa. 40:28)

2.2 That He is present in all places, and there is no place in which he is included, or out of which he is excluded.

- You are a God nearby, and not a God far away; none can hide in secret places that You cannot see him, for You fill the heaven and earth. (Jer. 23:23-24)
- You are not far from each one of us. (Acts 17:27)
- We cannot go anywhere from Your Spirit, or flee from Your presence. If we go up to the heavens, You are there; if we make our bed in the depths, You are there; if we rise on the wings of the dawn, and settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide us, and Your right hand will hold us fast. (Ps. 139:7-10)

2.3 That He has a perfect knowledge of all persons and things, and sees them all, even that which is most secret, at one clear, certain, and unerring view.

- Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him with whom we must give an account; even the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. (Heb. 4:12-13)

- Your eyes are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good (Prov. 15:3): they range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to You. (2 Chron. 16:9)
- You search the heart, and examine the mind, to reward a man according to his conduct, according to what his deeds deserve. (Jer. 17:10)
- O Lord, you have searched us, and know us, You know when we sit and when we rise; you perceive our thoughts from afar: You discern our going out and our lying down, You are familiar with all our ways: Before a word is on my tongue, You know it completely, O Lord. Such knowledge is too wonderful for us, too lofty for us to attain. For even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day. (Ps. 139:1-4,6,12)

2.4 That His wisdom is unsearchable, and the counsels and designs of it cannot be fathomed.

- Your understanding, O Lord, has no limit, for You determine the number of the stars, and call them each by name. (Ps. 147:4-5)
- You are wonderful in counsel, and magnificent in wisdom (Isa. 28:29). Your wisdom is profound, Your power is vast. (Job 9:4)
- How many are your works, O Lord! In wisdom You made them all; (Ps. 104:24) all in conformity with the purpose of Your will. (Eph. 1:11)
- Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his

judgments, and his ways beyond finding out.
(Rom. 11:33)

2.5 That His sovereignty is incontestable, and he is the owner and absolute Lord of all.

- The highest heavens belong to the Lord, and all the hosts of them. The earth is Yours, and everything in it; the world, and all who live in it (Ps. 115:16, 24:1). In Your hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to You also: The sea is Yours, for You made it, and Your hands formed the dry land (Ps. 95:4-5); For every animal of the forest are Yours, and the cattle on a thousand hills (Ps. 50:10); You therefore are a great God, and a great King above all gods. (Ps. 95:4)
- In Your hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind. (Job 12:10)
- Your dominion is an eternal, everlasting dominion; Your kingdom endures from generation to generation: You do as You please with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back Your hand or say to you: ‘What have you done?’ (Dan. 4:34-35)

2.6 That His power is irresistible, and the operations of it cannot be controlled.

- We know, O God, that You can do every thing, and that no thought can be withheld from You (Job 13:2); Power belongs to You (Ps. 62:11); and with You nothing is impossible. (Luke 1:37)

- All power and authority is Yours, both in heaven and on earth. (Matt. 28:18)
- You put to death and You bring to life, You wound and You heal, no one can deliver out of Your hand. (Deut. 32:39)
- What You have promised You are able to do. (Rom. 4:21)

2.7 That He is a God of unspotted purity and perfect righteousness.

- You are the Holy One, You are the praise of Israel (Ps. 22:3), Holy and awesome is Your name; (Ps. 111:9) and we give thanks as we remember Your holy name. (Ps. 30:4)
- Your eyes are too pure to look on evil (Hab. 1:13), neither will evil dwell with You. (Ps. 5:4)
- You are the Rock, Your works are perfect, and all Your ways are just; a faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just are You (Deut. 32:4). You are our Rock, and there is no wickedness in You. (Ps. 92:15)
- You are righteous in all Your ways (Ps. 145:17), and holiness adorns your house, O Lord, for endless days. (Ps. 93:5)

2.8 That he is just in the administration of his government; and never did, nor ever will do wrong to any of his creatures.

- You are always righteous, O Lord, when we bring anything before You (Jer. 12:1): and will be proved right when You speak and justified when You judge. (Ps. 51:4)
- Far be it from God to do evil, and from the Almighty to do wrong; for He repays a man for what he has done, he brings upon him what his conduct deserves. (Job 34:10-11)
- Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your justice like the great deep! (Ps. 36:6) And though clouds and darkness surround You, righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne. (Ps. 97:2)

2.9 That his truth is invariable, and the treasures of his goodness inexhaustible.

- You are good, and Your love endures forever (Ps. 136:1). Your love is great toward us (Ps. 117:2), and Your faithfulness continues through all generations. (Ps. 100:5)
- You have proclaimed Your name, The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness: maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin (Ex. 34:6-7). And this name of Yours is our strong tower. (Prov. 18:10)

- You are good, and what You do is good (Ps. 119:68); good to all, and Your tender mercies are over all Your works. But surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart. (Ps. 73:1)
- O that You would cause Your goodness to pass before us (Ex. 33:19), that we may taste and see that the Lord is good; and Your love is ever before us. (Ps. 34:8, 26:3)

Lastly, that when we have said all we can of the glorious perfections of the Divine nature, we fall infinitely short of the merit of the subject.

- And these are but outer fringe of his works; how faint the whisper we hear of Him! Who can understand the thunder of his power? (Job 26:14)
- The Almighty is beyond our reach and exalted in power; in his justice and great righteousness, he does not oppress (Job 37:23), He is exalted above all blessing and praise. (Neh. 9:5)

3. We must give to God the praise of that splendor and glory wherein he is pleased to manifest himself, in the upper world.

- You have established Your throne in heaven (Ps. 103:19); and it is a throne, high and exalted; and before You the seraphs cover their faces (Is. 6:1-2). And it is in compassion to us that You hold back the face of that throne, and spread Your clouds over it. (Job 26:9)

- You make winds Your messengers, and flames of fire Your servants (Ps. 104:4). And thousands of thousands of angels minister unto You, and ten thousand times ten thousand stand before You, encircling Your throne, to do Your will (Rev. 5:11). They are mighty ones who do Your bidding and Your servants who do Your will (Ps. 103:20-21). And we come by faith, hope, and holy love into a spiritual communion with that innumerable company of angels, and the spirit of the righteous made perfect - the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in the heavenly Jerusalem. (Heb. 12:22-23)

4. We must give glory to him as the Creator of the world, and the great Protector, Benefactor, and Ruler of the whole creation.

- You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power; for you created all things, and for your pleasure, and for your praise, they were created. (Rev. 4:11)
- We worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea and the fountains of waters; (Rev. 14:7); who spoke, and it came to be; who commanded, and it stood firm (Ps. 33:9); who said, let there be light, and there was light, let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water, and he made the expanse; and he made it all very good (Gen. 1:3, 6-7); and your laws endure to this day, for all things serve you. (Ps. 119:91)

- The day is Yours, and yours also the night; You established the sun and moon. It was you who set all the boundaries of the earth, you made both the summer and winter. (Ps. 74:16-17)
- You sustain all things by Your powerful word (Heb. 1:3), and by You all things are held together. (Col. 1:17)
- The earth is full of Your creatures, so is the vast and spacious sea (Ps. 104:24-25). The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time: You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing (Ps. 145:15-16). Man and beast You save O Lord, (Ps. 36:6), and give food to all creatures. (Ps. 136:25)
- You alone are the Lord. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, with all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and multitudes of heaven worship You (Neh. 9:6), Your kingdom rules over all. (Ps. 103:19)
- Not one sparrow falls to the ground apart from Your will. (Matt. 10:29)
- You formed man at first from the dust of the ground, and breathed into him the breath of life, and so he became a living being. (Gen. 2:7)
- And You made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and have determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. (Acts 17:26)

- You are the Most High who is sovereign over the kingdoms of men, and gives them to anyone You wish (Dan. 4:25); for it is from You that man gets justice. (Prov. 29:26)
- Hallelujah, the Lord God Almighty reigns (Rev. 19:6), and works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, for the praise of his glory. (Eph. 1:11-12)

5. We must give honor to the three persons in the Trinity distinctly, to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, that great and sacred Name, into which we were baptized, and in which we assemble for religious worship, in communion with the universal church.

- We pay our homage to three that testify in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, for these three are one. (1 John 5:7-8)
- We adore and praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth (Matt. 11:25); and the eternal Word, who was in the beginning with God, and was God, by whom all things were made; without whom nothing was made that has been made, and who in the fullness of time became flesh, and made his dwelling among us, and showed his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:1-3, 8, 14)

- And since it is the will of God, that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father (John 5:23), we adore him as the radiance of his Father's glory, and the exact representation of his being; joining with the angels of God, who worship Him. (Heb. 1:3,6)
- We pay homage to the exalted Redeemer, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth (Rev. 1:5) confessing that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil. 2:11)
- We also worship the Holy Spirit, the Counselor and Comforter, whom the Son has sent from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who goes out from the Father (John 15:26), and who was sent to teach us all things, and to remind us of everything the Son has said (John 14:26); who composed the scriptures, holy men of God writing them, as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. (2 Peter 1:21)

6. We must acknowledge our dependence upon God, and our obligations to him, as our Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor.

- You, O God, made us, and therefore we are not our own but Yours; we are Your people, and the sheep of Your pasture (Ps. 100:3); Let us therefore bow down in worship, and kneel before the Lord our Maker. (Ps. 95:6)

- Lord You formed our bodies, and I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from You when I was made in the secret place. Your eyes saw my unformed body, and all the days ordained for me were written in Your book, before one of them came to be. (Ps. 139:14-16)
- You have clothed us with skin and flesh, you have knitted us together with flesh and bones: you have given us life and showed us kindness, and Your providence preserves our spirit. (Job 10:11-12)
- You are the Father of our spirits (Heb. 12:9), for you formed the spirit of man within him (Zech. 12:1), and gave us breath (Jer. 38:16). The Spirit of God has made us, and the breath of the Almighty has given us life (Job 33:4). You endowed the heart with wisdom and gave understanding to the mind. (Job 38:36)
- You are God our Maker, who teaches more to us than the beasts of the earth, and makes us wiser than the birds of the air. (Job 35:10-11)
- We are the clay, and You are our potter; we are the work of Your hands. (Isa. 64:8)

- You brought us out of the womb, and made us trust in You even when we were at our mother's breasts; from birth we were cast upon You, from our mother's womb You have been our God (Ps. 22:9-10), from birth we have relied on You; You brought us forth from our mother's womb, and therefore we will ever praise You. (Ps. 71:6)
- In You, O God, we live and move, and have our being; for we are Your offspring. (Acts 17:28)
- In Your hand You hold our life and all our ways (Dan. 5:23); for a man's life is not his own, it is not for man to direct his steps (Jer. 10:23); but our life is not our own. (Ps. 31:15-16)
- You are the God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day, and redeemed us from all evil. (Gen. 48:15)
- It is because of Your great love that we are not consumed, because Your compassions never fail; they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness. (Lam. 3:22-23)
- If You take away our breath we die and return to the dust, out of which we were taken. (Ps. 104:29)
- Who is He that can speak and have it happen, if the Lord has not decreed it? Is it not from Your mouth, O Most High, that both calamities and good things come? (Lam. 3:37-38)

7. We must acknowledge this God to be our God, and affirm our relation to him, his dominion over us, and propriety in us.

- We have said to You, O God, You are our Lord, we have no good thing apart from You (Ps. 16:2). Even if we are righteous, what can we give You? (Job 35:7)
- You are my King and my God (Ps. 44:4); Other lords besides You have ruled over us, but Your name alone do we honor. (Isa. 26:13)
- We declare this day that the Lord is our God, and we will walk in his ways, and to keep his decrees, commands and laws, and obey his voice, and give ourselves to him, to be his treasured possession as he promised, that we may be a people holy to the Lord our God (Deut. 26:17-19): and may be unto him for His renown, and for His praise, and for His honor. (Jer. 13:11)
- O Lord, truly we are Your servants, we are Your servants, born in Your house, and You have freed me from our chains (Ps. 116:16): we were bought with a price, and therefore we are not our own (1 Cor. 6:20); but yield ourselves unto the Lord (2 Chron. 30:8), and bind ourselves unto You in an everlasting covenant, that will not be forgotten. (Jer. 50:5)
- We are Yours, save us, for we seek Your precepts (Ps. 119:94); All of it belongs to You, O Lord, it comes from Your hand. (1 Chron. 29:16)

8. We must acknowledge it an unspeakable favor, and an inestimable privilege, that we are not only admitted, but invited and encouraged to draw nigh to God in prayer.

- You have commanded us not to be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, to keep on praying for all the saints (Phil. 4:6). To continue in prayer; on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests to present our requests to God. (Eph. 6:18)
- You have directed us to ask, and seek, and knock and have promised that we shall receive, we shall find, and it shall be opened to us. (Matt. 7:7)
- You have appointed us a great high-priest, in whose name we may come boldly to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. (Heb. 4:16)
- You have assured us, that while the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, the prayer of the upright is His delight (Prov. 15:8); And that he that offers praise glorifies You (Ps. 50:23), and the sacrifice of thanksgiving pleases the Lord more than that of an ox or bull with its horns and hoofs. (Ps. 69:31)
- You art He that answers prayer, and therefore to You all people will come. (Ps. 65:2)
- You say, “Seek my face”, and our hearts answer, ‘Your face, Lord, we will seek’ (Ps. 65:2, 27:8). For should not a people seek their God? (Isa. 8:19) To whom shall we go but to You? You have the words of eternal life. (John 6:68)

9. We must express the sense we have of our own meanness and unworthiness to draw near to God, and speak to him.

- But God will really dwell on earth with men. The heavens, even the highest heavens cannot contain God (2 Chron. 6:18), and how much less is man, who is but a maggot, who is only a worm! (Job 25:6)
- Who are we, O Lord God, and what is our Father's house, that You have brought us here, to present ourselves before the Lord, that we have through Christ access to the Father by one Spirit? (Eph. 2:18) And as if this were not enough in your sight, O Sovereign Lord, you have also spoken about the future of the house of your servant. Is this your usual way of dealing with man, O Sovereign Lord? (2 Sam. 7:18-19)
- What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him (Ps. 8:4), and thus magnify him?
- May the Lord not be angry, though we are nothing but dust and ashes, as we speak unto the Lord of glory. (Gen. 18:27, 30)
- We are not worthy of all the kindness and faithfulness you have shown your servants (Gen. 32:10); for it is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs; but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table (Matt. 15:26-27); and You richly bless all who call to You. (Rom. 10:12)

10. We must humbly profess the desire of our hearts towards God, as our felicity (great happiness) and portion, and fountain of life and all good to us.

- Whom have we in heaven but You; and earth has nothing I desire besides You: When our flesh and our heart fail, You are the strength of our heart, and our portion forever (Ps. 73:25-26); the portion of our inheritance in the other world, and of our cup in this, and then we will say that the boundary lines have fallen for us in pleasant places, and that surely we have a delightful inheritance. (Ps. 16:5-6)
- The desire of our hearts is Your name and Your renown; our souls yearn for You in the night, and our spirits long for You only. (Isa. 26:8-9)
- As the deer pants for the water, so my soul pants for You, O God; our soul thirsts for God, for the living God, by day the Lord directs his love, at night his song is with me, and our prayers to the God of our life. (Ps. 42:1-2,8)
- O that we may hunger and thirst for righteousness (Matt. 5:6); for You fill the hungry with good things, but the rich You send away empty. (Luke 1:53)
- O how our souls thirst for You, and our bodies long for You in this dry and weary land, where there is no water; that we may behold Your power and Your glory, and see You in the sanctuary. Your love is better than life; our souls shall be satisfied with You and our lips will praise and glorify You. (Ps. 63:1-3,5)

11. We must likewise profess our believing hope and confidence in God, and his all-sufficiency, in his power, providence, and promise.

- In You, O Lord, have we taken refuge, let us never be put to shame (Ps. 31:1); yes, let no one whose hope is in You ever be put to shame. (Ps. 25:3)
- Truly our souls find rest in God alone; our salvation comes from Him: He alone is our Rock and our salvation; in him our honor depends, our strength, our rest, our refuge, and our hope comes from him. (Ps. 62:1-2, 5-7)
- When we have no refuge, and no one cares for our lives, we cry to You, O Lord and say, “You are our refuge, our portion in the land of the living.” (Ps. 142:4-5)
- Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will trust in the name of the Lord our God (Ps. 20:7). We will trust in Your mercy and unfailing love, O God, for ever and ever, and will praise You in the presence of your saints. (Ps. 52:8-9)
- We have put our hope in Your word; Remember Your word to Your servants, for You have given me hope. (Ps. 119:81,49)

12. We must earnestly seek God's favourable acceptance of us, and our poor performances.

- There are many that are asking, "Who can show us any good?" But we say, "Let the light of Your face shine upon us, O Lord: for You have filled our hearts with greater joy than when our grain and new wine abound." (Ps. 4:6-7)
- We have sought Your face with our whole heart (Ps. 119:58), for it is our goal to please You, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. (2 Cor. 5:9)
- Hear our prayer, O Lord, listen to our cries for mercy; in Your faithfulness and righteousness come to our relief (Ps. 143:1). And be near to us whenever we pray to You and call upon Your name (Deut. 4:7); for You never said to Jacob's descendants, "You seek me in vain." (Isa. 45:19)
- You hear the young ravens when they call (Ps. 147:9), do not turn a deaf ear to us, for if You remain silent, we will be like those who have gone down to the pit. (Ps. 28:1)
- May our prayer be set before you like incense; and the lifting up of our hands be like the evening sacrifice. (Ps. 141:2)

13. We must beg for the powerful assistance and influence of the blessed Spirit of grace in our prayers.

- Lord, we do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. (Rom. 8:26)
- O pour upon us the Spirit of grace and supplication (Zech. 12:10); the Spirit of sonship teaching us to cry, 'Abba, Father' (Rom. 8:15); that we may find in our hearts to pray this prayer.
- O send forth Your light and Your truth; let them guide us, let them bring us to Your holy mountain, to the place where You dwell; to You O God, our exceeding joy. (Ps. 43:3)
- O Lord, open our lips, and our mouths will declare Your praise. (Ps. 51:15)

14. We must make the glory of God our highest end in all our prayers.

- This is what You, O Lord, spoke of when You said, that among those who approach You, You will show Yourself holy; in the sight of the people You will be honored. (Lev. 10:3); we therefore come and worship before You, O Lord, and glorify Your name (Ps. 86:9); and therefore we call upon You, that You may deliver us, and we may honor and glorify You. (Ps. 50:15)
- For of You and through You and to You, are all things. To You be the glory forever! (Rom. 11:36)

15. We must profess our entire reliance on the Lord Jesus Christ alone for acceptance with God, and come in his name.

- We do not make requests of You because we are righteous (Dan. 9:18); for we are before You in our guilt (Ezra 9:15), and cannot stand before You because of our sins (Ps. 130:3): But we make mention of Christ's righteousness, His name only, who is the Lord our righteousness. (Jer. 23:6)
- We know that our spiritual sacrifices are acceptable to God only through Jesus Christ (I Pet. 2:5), and we cannot hope to receive anything but what we ask of You in His name (John 16:23). Therefore make me blessed in the Beloved, in the grace of which You have freely given by the One You love (Eph. 1:6), the Angel, who offers much incense with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar before the throne. (Rev. 8:3)
- We come in the name of the great High Priest, who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, who sympathizes with our weaknesses, (Heb. 4:14-15), and is therefore able to save all those who come to God through him because he always lives, making intercession for them. (Heb. 7:25)
- Behold, O God, our shield, look with favor on your anointed one (Ps. 84:9), in whom You, by a voice from heaven declared Yourself to be well pleased; Lord, be well pleased with us in him. (Matt. 3:17)

Chapter Two

Of the second part of PRAYER
which is:

- *confession* of sin
- *complaints* of ourselves
- and humble *professions of repentance*

The Second Part of Prayer

Having given glory to God which is His due, we must next

- take shame to ourselves, which is our due,
- and humble ourselves before Him in the sense of our own sinfulness and vileness;
- and herein also we must give glory to Him, as our Judge by whom we deserve to be condemned, and yet hope, through Christ, to be acquitted and absolved. (Josh. 7:19)

In this part of our work,

1. We must acknowledge the great reason we have to lie very low before God, and to be ashamed of ourselves when we come into his presence, and to be afraid of his wrath, having made ourselves both odious to his holiness and obnoxious to his justice.

- Our God! We are too ashamed and disgraced to lift our faces to you; because our sins are higher than our heads and our guilt has reached to the heavens. (Ezra 9:6)
- To us belongs shame, because we have sinned against you. (Dan. 9:8)
- We are unworthy, how can we reply to you? We will put our hand over our mouth (Job 40:4), and bury our face in the dust, - if there may yet be hope (Lam. 3:29), crying with the convicted leper under the law, 'Unclean, unclean.' (Lev. 13:45)
- You place no trust in your holy ones, even the heavens are not pure in your eyes; How much

more vile and corrupt are we who drink up evil like water. (Job 15:15-16)

- When our eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty, we have reason to cry out, 'Woe unto us, for we are ruined.' (Isa. 6:5)
- Dominion and awe belong to You, you establish order in the heights of heaven: can your forces be numbered, and on who does Your light not arise? How then can a mortal be righteous before God? How can one born of woman be pure? (Job 25:2-4)
- You, even you are to be feared, and who can stand before you when you are angry (Ps. 76:7)? Even You, our God, are a consuming fire (Heb. 12:29), and who knows the power of your anger? (Ps. 90:11)
- Even if we were innocent, our own mouth would condemn us, if we say we are blameless, it would pronounce us guilty; for if we wished to contend or argue with you, we could not answer you one time out of a thousand. (Job 9:20,3)
- Even if our conscience is clear, that does not make us innocent, for it is the Lord who judges us (I Cor. 4:4); God who is greater than our hearts, and knows all things (I Jn. 3:20). But we ourselves know that we have sinned, Father, against heaven, and against you, and are no longer worthy to be called your children. (Luke 15:21)

2. We must take hold of the great encouragement God hath given us to humble ourselves before him with sorrow, and shame, and to confess our sins.

- If you, Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord who could stand? But with You there is forgiveness, so that we can, with reverence, serve you; with You there is mercy, yes, with our God there is full redemption, and You shall redeem Israel from all their sins. (Ps. 130: 3-4; 7-8)
- The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise (Ps. 51:17); No, You are the high and exalted One who lives forever, whose name is holy (Isa. 57:15); though heaven is Your throne and the earth Your footstool, yet these are the ones You look on with favor: those who are humble and contrite in spirit, and who tremble at Your word (Isa. 66:1-2), to revive the spirit of the lowly, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. (Isa. 57:15)
- You have graciously assured us, that whoever conceals their sins will not prosper, yet those who confess and renounce them will find mercy (Prov. 28:13). And when a poor penitent said, “I will confess my transgression to the Lord,” You forgave the guilt of his sin, therefore, in like manner, let all the faithful pray to You while You may be found. (Ps. 32:5-6)
- We know, that if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us; but You have said that if we confess our sins, You are faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (I John 1:8-9)

3. We must therefore confess and bewail our original corruption in the first place, that we were the children of apostate and rebellious parents, and the nature of man is depraved and wretchedly degenerated from its primitive purity and rectitude (righteousness), and our nature is so.

- Lord, You created man upright, but we have gone in search of many schemes (Eccl. 7:29); And having wealth we lacked understanding, and do not endure, but are like the beasts that perish. (Ps. 49:20)
- By one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death came to all men, because all have sinned: By that one man's disobedience many were made sinners, and we among them. (Rom. 5:12,19)
- We are a brood of evil doers (Isa. 1:4); our father was an Amorite, and our mother a Hittite (Ez. 16:3), and we ourselves were called (and not miscalled) transgressors from birth, and You know how treacherous we are. (Isa. 48:8)
- The nature of man was planted a choice vine, of sound and reliable stock, but it has become a corrupt, wild vine (Jer. 2:21); producing the grapes of Sodom, and the clusters of Gomorrah (Deut. 32:32). How the gold has lost its luster, and the most fine gold become dull! (Lam. 4:1)
- Surely we were sinful from birth, sinful from the time our mothers conceived us (Ps. 51:5). For, who can bring what is pure from the impure? No one. (Job 14:4)

- We are by nature deserving of wrath, because we are children of disobedience. (Eph. 2:2-3)
- All people on earth have corrupted their way (Gen. 6:12), we have all turned away, we have all become corrupt, there is no one who does good, no, not even one. (Ps. 14:3)

4. We must lament our present corrupt dispositions to that which is evil, and our aversion to and impotency in that which is good. We must look into our own hearts and confess, with holy blushing,

4.1 The blindness of our understandings, and their unaptness (ineptness) to admit the rays of the divine light.

- By nature our understandings are darkened, being separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in us, because of the hardening our hearts. (Eph. 4:18)
- The things of the Spirit of God are foolishness to the person without the Spirit who cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit. (I Cor. 2:14)
- We are skilled in doing evil, we know not how to do good (Jer. 4:22). We know nothing, we understand nothing, we walk about in darkness. (Ps. 82:5)
- For God does speak – now one way, now another – though we do not perceive it (Job 33:14); but hearing, we hear, and do not understand (Matt. 13:14), we see people and to us they look like trees walking around. (Mark 8:24)

4.2 The stubbornness of our wills, and their unaptness (ineptness) to submit to the rules of divine law.

- We have within us a mind governed by the flesh, which is hostile to God, it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. (Rom. 8:7)
- You have written for us many things in Your law, but they have been accounted by us as something foreign (Hos. 8:12), and our corrupt hearts have been sometimes ready to say 'Who is the Almighty that we should serve him (Job 21:15)?' And we will certainly do everything we said we would (Jer. 44:17). For we have followed the ways of our own heart and the sight of our eyes (Ecc. 11:9), gratifying the cravings of the flesh, and of the mind. (Eph. 2:3)
- Our neck muscles, stubbornly, were iron (Is. 48:4), and we have made our hearts as hard as flint: we have refused to pay attention, have turned our backs and covered our ears (Zech. 7:11-12) like a cobra that has stopped its ears, that will not heed the tune of the charmer, however skillful the enchanter may be. (Ps. 58:4-5)
- How have we hated discipline, and our hearts spurned correction, and have not obeyed the voice of our teachers, nor turned our ear to our instructors! (Prov. 5:12-13)

4.3 The vanity of our thoughts, their neglect of those things which they ought to be conversant with, and dwelling upon those things that are unworthy of them, and tend to corrupt our minds.

- Every inclination of the thoughts of our heart is evil, only evil all the time (Gen. 6:5), and it has been so from our youth. (Gen. 8:21)
- O how long have those wicked thoughts lodged within us (Jer. 4:14)! Those thoughts of foolishness which are sin (Prov. 24:9); For out of our hearts come evil thoughts (Matt. 15:19): which plot evil upon our beds (Micah 2:1), and our eyes foolishly wander to the ends of the earth. (Prov. 17:24)
- But God is not in our thoughts, we do not seek him (Ps. 10:4): Of the Rock that fathered us, we have been unmindful (Deut. 32:18), and have forgotten the God that formed us (Jer. 2:32): We have forgotten him days without number, and our hearts have walked after vanity, and become vain . Our inward thought having been, that our days should continue forever (Ps. 49:11); this is our folly. (Ps. 49:13)

4.4 The carnality of our affections, their being placed upon wrong objects, and carried beyond due bounds.

- We have set our hearts, where our treasure is (Matt. 6:21), on things beneath instead of the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. (Col. 3:1-2)
- We have followed after worthless idols, and turned away from God's love for us (Jonah 2:8); have forsaken the fountain of living waters, for cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water. (Jer. 2:13)
- We have panted after the dust of the earth (Amos 2:7), and have been full of worry about

what we shall eat and what we shall drink, and what we shall wear, the things that the pagans seek, and the false righteousness thereof. (Matt. 6:31-33)

- We have trusted in idols and sworn to false gods (Ps. 24:4), and set our eyes upon that which is not, having looked at the things that are seen, which are temporal; but the things that are not seen, that are eternal, have been forgotten and postponed. (2 Cor. 4:18)

4.5 The corruption of the whole man; irregular appetites towards those things which are pleasing to the senses, and inordinate passions against those things that are displeasing, and an alienation of the mind, from the principles, powers, and pleasures of the spiritual and divine life.

- We are born of the flesh, and we are flesh (Jn. 3:6): we are dust (Gen. 3:19): We have borne the image of the image of the man of dust (I Cor. 15:49); and in us, that is, in our flesh, there dwells nothing good; For we have the desire to do what is good but not the ability to carry it out; for we do not do the good we want; but the evil that we do not want to do is what we keep doing. (Rom. 7:18-19)
- We have a law at work in us waging war against the laws of our mind, and making us captives to the law of sin at work in us (Rom. 7:23): So that when we would do good, evil is present with us. (Rom. 7:21)

- The whole head is sick, the whole heart faints, from the sole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no soundness in us, but bruises and sores and raw wounds. (Isa. 1:5-6)
- We are bent on turning away from the living God (Hosea 11:7): Our hearts are deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can understand them (Jer. 17:9)? They are like a treacherous bow. (Hosea 7:16)

5. We must lament and confess our omissions of our duty, our neglect of it, and triflings in it; and that we have done so little since we came into the world, of the great work we were sent into the world about; so very little to answer the end of our creation, or of our redemption, of our birth and of our baptism; and that we have profited no more by the means of grace.

- We have been as fig-trees planed in the vineyard, and You have come many years later seeking fruit from us, but have found none; and therefore we might fully be cut down and cast into the fire for using up the ground (Luke 13:6-7), you have come looking for good grapes, but found only bad (Isa. 5:4); for we have been empty vines, bringing forth fruit unto ourselves. (Hosea 10:1)
- We have known the good we ought to do, but have not done it (James 4:17); we have hid our Lord's money, and therefore deserve the doom of the wicked and lazy servant. (Matthew 25:18,26)
- We have been unfaithful stewards who have wasted our Lord's possessions (Luke 16:1); for one sinner destroys much good. (Eccl. 9:18)

- Much money has been put into our hands to get wisdom, which we have had no heart to understand (Prov. 17:16), for our hearts are inclined away from wisdom. (Eccl. 10:2)
- Our childhood and youth were in vain (Eccl. 11:10), and we have brought our years to an end with a moan. (Ps. 90:9)
- We did not recognize the time of God's coming to us (Luke 19:44), we have not stored provisions in summer, nor gathered food in harvest, though we have had guides, overseers, and rulers. (Prov. 6:7-8)
- We are slow of heart to understand and believe (Luke 24:25); for by this time we ought to be teachers, but we need someone to teach us the basic principles of God; we need milk, and cannot bear solid food. (Heb. 5:12)
- We have undermined piety and hindered devotion to God (Job 15:4); we have not called upon your name, nor strived to lay hold of You. (Isa. 64:7)
- We have come before you, as your people usually do, and have sat before you and have heard your words, but do not put your words into practice, our mouths speak of love while our hearts are greedy for unjust gain (Ezekiel 33:31). And thus have we offered blind, lame and diseased animals for sacrifice, which we would not have offered to our governor: and have vowed and sacrificed to the Lord corrupt things when we have in our flock an acceptable sacrifice. (Malachi 1:8, 14)

6. We must likewise bewail our many actual transgressions, in thought, word, and deed.

- We have sinned, Father, against heaven and against you (Luke 15:18), we have all sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23); for we did not honor the God who holds in his hand our life and all our ways. (Dan. 5:23)
- Against you, you only, have we sinned, and have done much evil in your sight (Ps. 51:4): we have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, or kept the laws he gave us (Dan. 9:10); though they are holy, righteous, and good. (Rom. 7:12)
- Who can understand their own errors? Forgive my hidden faults. (Ps. 19:12)
- We all stumble in many ways (James 3:2); and our sins are more than the hairs of our head. (Ps. 40:12)
- As a well pours out its waters, so do our hearts pour out wickedness (Jer. 6:7); and this has been our way from our youth, that we have not obeyed your voice. (Jer. 22:21)
- Out of the evil stored up in our hearts we have brought forth many evil things. (Matthew 12:35)

6.1 We must confess and bewail the workings of pride in us.

- We have reason to be humbled for the pride of our hearts (II Chron. 32:26), that we have thought more highly of ourselves than we ought, and have not used sober judgment (Rom. 12:3), nor walked humbly with our God. (Micah 6:8)
- We have leaned on our own understanding (Prov. 3:5), and trusted in our own hearts (Prov. 28:26); and have sought to live in luxury and enjoy the choicest food. (Habakkuk 1:16)
- We have sought our own glory more than the glory of him that sent us (John 7:18), and have been proud instead of mourning. (I Cor. 5:2)

6.2 The breaking out of passion and rash anger.

- We have not had the self-control which we ought to have had over our own spirits, like a city whose walls are broken through. (Prov. 25:28)
- We have been quick to become angry (Eccl. 7:9). And when our spirits have been provoked, rash words came from our lips (Ps. 106:33): and have been guilty of bitterness, rage and anger which should have been put far from us. (Eph. 4:31)

6.3 Our covetousness and love of the world.

- Our conversations have not been free from the love of money (Heb. 13:5), nor have we learned to be content in all circumstances. (Phil. 4:11)
- Who can say that he is clean from the love of money which is the root of all kinds of evil (I Tim. 6:10), that covetousness which is idolatry (Col. 3:5)?
- We have sought great things for ourselves, when you have said, 'Do not seek them'. (Jer. 45:5)

6.4 Our sensuality and self-pleasing.

- We have lived according to the flesh with our minds set on what the flesh desires than the things of the spirit (Rom. 8:5), and have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence, and have fattened ourselves in the day of slaughter. (James 5:5)
- We have thought about how to gratify the desires of the flesh (Rom. 13:14): even those sinful desires which wage war against our souls (I Peter 2:11); and in many instances have acted as if we had been lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. (2 Timothy 3:4)
- When we did eat, and when we did drink, did we not feast to ourselves? (Zech. 7:6)

6.5 Our security and unmindfulness of the changes we are liable to in this world.

- We have put off the day of disaster (Amos 6:3), and in our prosperity have said, we should never be shaken (Ps. 30:6), as if tomorrow will be like today and much more abundant. (Is. 56:12)
- We have encouraged our souls to take their ease, to eat and drink, and be merry, as if we had grain laid up for many years, when perhaps this night our souls may be demanded from us. (Luke 12:19-20)
- We have been ready to trust in wealth, which is so uncertain, more than in the living God (I Tim. 6:17); to say to the gold, 'You are my hope' and 'You are my security.' (Job 31:24)

6.6 Our fretfulness and impatience, and murmurings under our afflictions, our inordinate dejection and distrust of God and his providence.

- When You disciplined us, we were disciplined, like an unruly calf unaccustomed to the yoke (Jer. 31:18); and though our own folly has led to our ruin, yet our heart rages against the Lord (Prov. 19:3); and thus in our distress and time of trouble we have become even more unfaithful against the Lord. (II Chron. 28:22)
- We have despised the Lord's discipline, and have resented his rebuke (Prov. 3:11); and if we falter in a time of trouble, our strength is small. (Prov. 24:10)

- We have said in our alarm, We are cast off from your sight (Psalm 31:22); and have said that “The Lord has forsaken us, our God has forgotten us.”, as if God could forget His children (Isa. 49:14); as if he had forgotten to be gracious (Ps. 77:7), and had forgotten to be merciful. This has been our grief and infirmity. (Ps. 77:9)

6.7 Our uncharitableness towards our brethren, and unpeacableness with our relations, neighbors, and friends, and perhaps injustice toward them.

- We have been very guilty concerning our brother (Gen. 42:21): for we have not made every effort to do what leads to peace and mutual edification. (Rom. 14:19)
- We have been ready to judge our brother and sister, and to treat them with contempt, forgetting that we will all stand before God’s judgment-seat. (Rom. 14:10)
- Contrary to the royal law of love, we have taken pride in ourselves and been puffed up, dishonored others, been self-seeking and easily angered, delighted in evil (I Cor. 13:4-6) and been secretly glad at disasters. (Prov. 17:5)
- We have been become conceited, provoking and envying one another (Gal. 5:26): when we should have considered how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. (Hebrews 10:24)

- We have not had compassion on those that are in need (1 John 3:17); and we have turned away from our own flesh and blood (Isa. 58:7), we have shown ill will toward the needy (Deut. 15:9) and we have despised the poor. (James 2:6)
- And if we have wronged or taken advantage of a brother or sister (1 Thess. 4:6), if our steps have turned from the path, if our heart has been led by the eye and our hands have been defiled (Job 31:7), Lord, teach us what we cannot see, that if we have done wrong, we will not do it again. (Job 34:32)

6.8 Our tongue sins.

- Sin is not ended by multiplying words (Prov. 10:19), nor can a man full of talk be justified. (Job 11:2)
- While the lips of the righteous feed many (Prov. 10:21), our lips have poured out foolishness (Prov. 15:2) and have spoken what is perverse. (Prov. 10:32)
- Much foolish talk has proceeded out of our mouths; obscenity and coarse joking which are out of place (Eph. 5:4) and little of what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, which might benefit those who listen. (Eph. 4:29)
- If everyone will have to give an account on the day of judgment for every empty word that men have spoken, and if by our words we will be acquitted, and if by our words we will be

condemned (Matthew 12:36-37); woe unto us, for we are ruined; for we are of unclean lips, and live among a people of unclean lips. (Isa. 6:5)

- What would become of us if God should turn our own tongues against us? It will bring us to ruin. (Ps. 64:8)

6.9 Our spiritual slothfulness and decay.

- We have been slothful in the business of religion, lacking in zeal and not fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. (Rom. 12:11)
- The things which are about to die and our works have not been found perfect before God. (Rev. 3:2)
- We have watched the winds and therefore have not planted, have regarded the clouds and therefore have not reaped (Ecc. 11:4), and with the sluggard have frightened ourselves with the fancy of a lion in the road, a fierce lion roaming in the streets, and have turned on our bed as a door on its hinges (Prov. 26:13-15); still crying, "Yet a little sleep, and a little slumber." (Prov. 6:10)
- We have lost our first love (Rev. 2:4); and where now is the blessing we sometimes spoke of? (Gal. 4:15)
- Our love has been as the morning mist and like the early dew that disappears. (Hosea 6:4)
- At the bottom of it all, is the evil heart of unbelief in us which turns away from the living God. (Hebrews 3:12)

7. We must acknowledge the great evil that there is in sin, and in our sin; the malignity of its nature, and its mischievousness to us.

7.1 The sinfulness of sin.

- O that sin might be recognized as sin to us and that through God's commandments we may see it to be exceedingly sinful (Rom. 7:13), because everyone who sins breaks God's law. (1 John 3:4)
- By every willful sin we have in effect said, "We don't want Christ to be our King" (Luke 19:14). And "who is the Lord, that we should obey his voice" (Exodus 5:2)? And thus we have blasphemed the Lord (Num. 15:30), and have turned our back to his laws. (Neh. 9:26)

7.2 The foolishness of sin.

- O God, you know our foolishness, and our sins are not hidden from you (Ps. 69:5): we were too foolish and disobedient (Titus 3:3): and our lusts are foolish and harmful. (1 Timothy 6:9)
- Folly was bound up in our hearts when we were children (Prov. 22:15); but the witless can no more be wise, than a wild donkey's colt can be born a human. (Job 11:12)
- Our way has been our folly (Ps. 69:5), and in many instances we have done foolish things. (2 Sam. 24:10)
- So foolish have we been and ignorant, brute beasts before God. (Ps. 73:22)

7.3 The unprofitableness of sin.

- We have sinned and perverted what is right. (Job 33:27)
- What benefit have we reaped at that time from the things we should have been ashamed of, those things that result in death (Rom. 6:21)? And what good will it be if we should gain the whole world, and lose our own souls? (Matt. 16:26)

7.4 The deceitfulness of sin.

- Sin has deceived us, and by it put us to death (Rom. 7:11); for our hearts have been hardened through the deceitfulness of sin (Hebrews 3:13): and we have been dragged away by our own evil desire and enticed. (James 1:14)
- It has promised us freedom, but has made us the servants of depravity (2 Peter 2:19); has promised that we will surely not die, and that we will be like gods (Gen. 3:4-5): but it has flattered us, and spread a net for our feet. (Prov. 29:5)
- The pride of our heart particularly has deceived us. (Obadiah 3)

7.5 The offence which by sin we have given to the holy God.

- By breaking the law we have dishonored God (Rom. 2:23), and have provoked the Holy One of Israel to bitter anger (Hosea 12:14, Isa. 1:4). And many things we have done has displeased the Lord. (2 Sam. 11:27)
- God has been grieved by our adulterous hearts, and our eyes that have lusted after our idols. (Ezekiel 6:9)
- We have tested him, and tried him, and grieved him in the wilderness (Ps. 95:9-10), have rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit (Isa. 63:10), and crushed him with our iniquities, as a cart crushes when it is loaded full of grain. (Amos 2:13)
- We have grieved the Holy Spirit of God, by whom we are sealed until the day of Redemption. (Eph. 4:30)

7.6 The damage which by sin we have done to our own souls, and their great interests.

- By our iniquities we have sold ourselves (Is. 50:1), and in sinning against thee we have harmed our own souls. (Prov. 8:36)
- Our sins have separated us from God (Isa. 59:2), and have kept us from good things (Jeremiah 5:25); and by them our minds and consciences are corrupted. (Titus 1:15)
- Our wickedness has punished us and our backsliding has rebuked us, and we cannot but

know and see, that it is an evil and bitter thing, and that we have forsaken the Lord our God, and we have no awe of him. (Jeremiah 2:19)

- O what fools are they that mock at sin!
(Proverbs 14:9)

8. We must look at our sins in the worst light, and take notice of those things which make more heinous in the sight of God, and more dangerous to ourselves.

- We confess to you all our sins, and all our wickedness and rebellion in all our sins.
(Leviticus 16:21)

8.1 The more knowledge we have of good and evil, the greater is our sin.

- We have known our master's will, but have not done it, and therefore deserve to be beaten with many blows. (Luke 12:47)
- We have known the way of the Lord, and the requirements of our God, and yet with one accord have broken off the yoke and torn off the bonds. (Jeremiah 5:4-5)
- We have known the judgment of God and those things that are worthy of death, and yet we continue to do them and approve of those who do them. (Romans 1:32)
- We have taught others, and yet have not taught ourselves (Romans 2:21); and while we claim to know God, by our actions we have denied him. (Titus 1:16)

8.2 The greater profession we have made of religion, the greater hath been our sin.

- We call ourselves of the holy city and rely upon the God of Israel, and take oaths in his name, but not in truth and in righteousness (Isaiah 48:1-2). For we have dishonored that worthy name by which we are called (James 2:23), and have shown utter contempt for the Lord. (2 Samuel 12:14)
- We have confessed the name of Christ, and yet have not turned away from wickedness. (2 Timothy 2:19)

8.3 The more mercies we have received from God, the greater have been our sin.

- You have nourished us and brought us up as children, but we have rebelled against you. (Isa. 1:2)
- We have ill repaid you, O Lord, as foolish people and unwise: You are our father who made us and bought us and formed us, yet our appears has not been the appearance of your children. (Deut. 32:5-6)
- We have not respond to the kindness shown to us. (2 Chronicles 32:25)

8.4 The fairer warning we have had from the word of God, and from our own consciences concerning our danger of sin, and danger by sin, the greater is the sin, if we go on it in it.

- We have been often rebuked, and yet have remained stiff-necked (Prov. 29:1), and have kept on our willful ways. (Isa. 57:17)
- You have sent us saying, “Do not do this detestable thing that I hate”; but we did not listened or pay attention. (Jer. 44:4-5)
- The word of God has been to us precept upon precept (Isa. 28:13); but not doing what it says, we have been like those who have looked at their faces in a mirror, and after going away, immediately forgetting what we looked like. (James 1:23-24)

8.5 The greater afflictions we have been under or sin, the greater is the sin, if we go on in it.

- You have stricken us, but we have not grieved; we have refused to received correction, and have made our faces harder than rock (Jer. 5:3); and the rod of correction has not driven the foolishness out of our hearts. (Prov. 22:15)
- You have punished us with a rod wielded by men, and with floggings inflicted by human hands (2 Sam. 7:14), yet we have not returned to him that struck us nor have we sought the Lord Almighty. (Isa. 9:13)
- When some have been overthrown as Sodom and Gomorrah were, we have been as burning sticks snatched out of the fire, yet have we not returned to You, O Lord (Amos 4:11). And when Your hand is lifted high, we have not seen it. (Isa. 26:11)

8.6 The more vows and promises we have made of better obedience, the greater has our sin been.

- We have violated your covenant and fulfilled the terms of the covenant which we made before You (Jer. 34:18), but as treacherous betrayers, we have betrayed You. (Isa. 24:16)
- Did we not say, we would not transgress (Jer. 2:20), we would offend no more (Job 34:31)? We did, as a dog returns to his vomit (2 Peter 2:22), we have returned to folly after God has promised peace. (Ps. 85:8)

9. We must judge and condemn ourselves for our sins, and own ourselves liable to punishment.

- And now, O our God, what can we say after this, we have forsaken Your commandments (Ezra 9:10)? We have sinned, what shall we do to You, O You preserver of man? (Job 7:20)
- We know that the law curses everyone that continues to do everything written in the book of the Law (Gal. 3:10); that the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23); and that because of these things the wrath of God comes on those who are disobedient. (Eph. 5:6)
- And we are all accountable to God (Rom. 3:19); the Scripture has concluded us all under the control of sin (Gal. 3:22); therefore would You not be angry with us to destroy us, leaving no remnant or survivor. (Ezra 9:14)
- If You should make justice the measuring line and righteousness the plumb line (Isa. 28:17), You

could justly declare all of us evil, according to the curses of the covenant, and blot out our names from under heaven. (Deut. 29:20)

- You could justly declare in Your anger that we should never enter into Your rest (Ps. 95:11); could justly strip us naked and bare (Hosea 2:3), and take away our grain when it ripens (Hosea 2:9), and put into our hands the cup of wrath, and make us drink even to the dregs of the cup. (Isa. 51:17)
- You remain righteous in whatever You are pleased to lay upon us; for You have acted faithfully, while we have acted wickedly (Nehemiah 9:33). And yet our God has punished us less that our sins have deserved. (Ezra 9:13)
- You therefore are right in your verdict, and justified when you judge (Ps. 51:4); and we will accept of the punishment of our sins (Lev. 26:43), and humble ourselves under You mighty hand (1 Peter 5:6), and say that the Lord is just. (2 Chronicles 12:6)
- Wherefore should the living complain, when punished for their sins (Lam. 3:39)? No: we will bear the Lord's wrath, because we have sinned against him. (Micah 7:9)

10. We must give to God the glory of his patience and long-suffering towards us, and his willingness to be reconciled.

- O the riches of the forbearance and patience of God (Rom. 2:4)! how patient He is to us, not wanting anyone to perish, but that all should

come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9)

- You do not treat us as our sins deserve, nor repaid us according to our iniquities (Ps. 103:10), but You long to be gracious to us. (Isa. 30:18)
- The sentence against our crime has not been quickly carried out (Eccl. 8:11), but You have given us time to repent, and make our peace with You (Rev. 2:21); and call even backsliding children to return to You, and have promised to cure our backsliding; and therefore, we will come to You, for You are the Lord our God. (Jer. 3:22)
- Surely the patience of our Lord means salvation (2 Peter 3:15); and if the Lord had meant to kill us, he would not have showed us all these things. (Judges 13:23)
- And O that this goodness of God might lead us to repentance (Romans 2:4)! For though we have been unfaithful to our God, there is still hope in Israel. (Ezra 10:2)
- You have said it, and have confirmed it with an oath, that You have no pleasure in the death of sinners, but rather that we should turn and live (Ezekiel 3:11): Therefore will we rend our hearts, and not our garments, and return to the Lord our God; for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, and abounding in love. Who knows if He will turn and relent, and leave behind a blessing? (Joel 2:13-14)

11. We must humbly profess our sorrow and shame for sin, and humbly engage ourselves in the strength of divine grace, that we will be better, and do better for the future.

- Lord, we repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near (Matthew 3:2); to which You have exalted Your Son Christ Jesus, to bring repentance and forgiveness of sins. (Acts 5:31)
- Our ears had heard of You, but now our eyes have seen You; therefore we abhor ourselves, and repent in dust and ashes (Job 42:5-6); therefore will we be like the doves of the valleys, every one mourning for his own sins. (Ezekiel 7:16)
- O that our heads were a spring of water, and our eyes fountains of tears, that we might weep day and night for our transgressions (Jer. 9:1), and in such a manner sow with tears and may reap with songs of joy; may go forth weeping, carrying seed to sow, and may return with rejoicing, carrying in our sheaves with us. (Ps. 126:5-6)
- Our guilt has overwhelmed us, like a burden too heavy to bear (Ps. 38:4); but weary and heavy laden under this burden we come to Christ, who has promised that in him we shall find rest to our souls. (Matthew 11:28)
- Being aware of the afflictions of our own hearts (1 Kings 8:38), may we look unto him, the one that we have pierced and mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a first-born (Zech. 12:10). That we may sorrow in a godly way, a sorrow that brings repentance and leads to salvation and leaves no regret (2 Cor. 7:10); and that we may remember, and be ashamed, and never open our

mouth any more, because of our shame, when
You atone for all we have done. (Ezekiel 16:63)

- And, O that we may bring forth fruit in keeping with repentance (Matthew 3:8)! and may never return again to folly (Ps. 85:8); for what have we to do any more with idols (Hosea 14:8). Sin shall no longer be our master, for we are not under the law, but under grace. (Rom. 6:14)
- We have gone astray like lost sheep; seek Your servants, for we have not forgotten Your commands. (Ps. 119:176)

