

Lecture 16-Prayer**Prayer**

My God, my Father and Preserver, who, of Thy goodness, has watched over me during the past night and brought me to this day, grant also that I may spend it wholly in the worship and service of Thy most holy name. Let me not think, or say, or do a single thing which tends not to Thy service and submission to Thy will that thus all my actions may aim at Thy glory and the salvation of my brethren. While they're taught by my example to serve Thee, and as Thou art giving light to this world for the purposes of external life by the rays of the sun, so enlighten my mind by the effulgence of Thy Spirit that He may guide me in the way of thy righteousness. To whatever purpose I apply my mind may the end which I ever propose to myself be Thy honor and service. May I expect all happiness from Thy grace and goodness only. Let me not attempt anything whatever that is not pleasing to Thee. Grant also that, while our labor for the maintenance of this life and care for the things which pertain to food and raiment, I may raise my mind above them to the blessed and heavenly life which Thou hast promised to Thy children. Be pleased also in manifesting Thyself to me as the protector of my soul as well as my body, to strengthen and fortify me against the assaults of the devil and deliver me from all the dangers which continually beset us in this life. But seeing it is a small thing to have begun, unless I also persevere, I therefore entreat of Thee, O Lord, not only to be my guide and director for this day, but to keep me under Thy protection to the very end of life, that thus my whole course may be performed under Thy superintendence. As I ought to make progress, do Thou add daily more and more to the gifts of Thy grace until I wholly adhere to thy Son, Jesus Christ, whom we justly regard as the true Sun shining constantly in our minds. In order to my obtaining of Thee these great and manifold blessings, forget, and out of thy infinite mercy, forgive my offenses, as thou hast promised that Thou wilt do to those who call upon Thee in sincerity. Amen.

Prayer**I. Importance of Prayer**

- A. It is a treasure (3, 20, 1)
- B. The picture of the Father (3, 20, 12)

II. Problem of Prayer

- A. Why do we pray if God already knows everything and has already determined what He's going to do?
 - 1. Not for His sake, but for ours
- B. We pray and God doesn't seem to hear us (3, 20, 3)

III. Description of Prayer: "Chief exercise of faith by which we daily receive God's benefits"

- A. Pray (3, 20, 14)
- B. Pray often
 - 1. Pattern of prayer (3, 20, 50)
 - 2. Model prayers: for the morning; before going to work; before going to school; blessing at table; thanksgiving after a meal; at night on going to sleep (catechism)
 - 3. The model prayer: the Lord's Prayer
 - a. Six petitions
 - 1) What is owed to God (first three petitions)
 - 2) Petitions for human needs (second three petitions)
 - 3) All are concerned with God's glory
 - b. "Our Father which art in Heaven"
 - c. "Hallowed be thy name"
 - d. "Thy kingdom come"
 - e. "Thy will be done..."

- f. "Give us this day...."
- g. "Forgive us our debts..."
- h. "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil..."

C. Pray properly (3, 20, 5)

- 1. With reverence (3, 20, 5; 3, 20, 16)
- 2. With concentration (3, 20, 16; 3, 20, 5)
- 3. With humility (3, 20, 12)
- 4. With repentance (3, 20, 9)
- 5. With confidence (3, 20, 13)
 - a. God can answer our prayers ("Calvinism is the only creed that will bear translation into prayer" - Reed, *The Gospel as Taught by Calvin*, p. 75)
 - b. God will answer our prayers (3, 20, 52)
- 6. With perseverance (3, 20, 52)

IV. Public Prayer (3, 20, 29)

- A. Time - "indifferent to God"
- B. Place - church
- C. Manner - speaking and singing
 - 1. Institutes (1536)
 - a. "Voice and song (cantum)"
 - b. "With the heart's affection"

For Further Study

Battles, Ford Lewis. *The Piety of John Calvin*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1978.

Blume, Friedrich. *Protestant Church Music: A History*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1974.

The best source for a more technical look at the music of the Genevan Psalter and all Protestant Church Music. See especially pages 507-590.

Garside, Jr., Charles. *The Origins of Calvin's Theology of Music: 1536-1543*. Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1979.

This study was a paper read at a meeting of the American Society for Reformation Research and is written with very little use of technical musical language.

Thompson, Bard. *Liturgies of the Western Church*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1961.

Calvin's liturgy along with twelve other Western liturgies.