



John Calvin's *Institutes in the Christian Religion* (1541)

A PPA Seminar: Winter/Spring 2018

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Study 13: Chapter Nine: Prayer, with an Explanation of Our Lord's Prayer

Read pgs. 517-559

"We are taught by faith to know that all the goodness which we need and which we ourselves lack is in God and in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom the Father has placed all the bounty of His blessing and grace, so that we may all draw from Him as from a most plentiful spring. It therefore remains for us to seek from Him what we know to be in Him, and to ask Him for it in prayer and supplication" (*Institutes*, pg. 517).

Prayer: "Grant, Almighty God, since you have reconciled us to yourself by the precious blood of Son, that we may not be our own, but devoted to you in perfect obedience, may we consecrate ourselves entirely to you. May we offer our bodies and souls in sacrifice, and may we be prepared to suffer a hundred deaths [rather] than to turn from your true and sincere worship. Grant us, especially, to exercise ourselves in prayer, to fly to you every moment and to commit ourselves to your fatherly care, that your Spirit may govern us to the end. Amen."

Scripture Reading: Psalm 145:18; Matthew 6:9-13, 7:7; Mark 11:24; Luke 11:2-4, 9; Romans 8:26; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; James 1:6-7; 1 Peter 3:12

1. Why do we need prayer as God's people? What blessings and benefits can we expect from God in prayer? [pgs. 517-18]

2. If God knows all things (omniscience), then why should we pray? How is prayer specifically ordained for our good? As the popular saying goes, does "*prayer change things*"? What would you say it changes? [pgs. 519-20]

3. What are the four important "rules for prayer" that Calvin wisely and pastorally encourages us to enjoy? List and briefly explain each of them. How is prayer "conversation with God"? How does prayer help us in cultivating God's blessings, but particularly the blessing of humility before Him? [pgs. 519-24]

- i.
- ii.
- iii.
- iv.

4. How is prayer both a command and a promise? Give two scriptural examples of this? How might this change your prayer life? [pgs. 525-27]

5. Why do we pray in Christ's Name? Give three scriptural examples. Why is our relationship to Jesus so important in our prayers? Why is it so important to pray to Christ *alone*? [pgs. 527-34]

6. What are the two main parts of prayer? Describe both of them with scriptural support. Do your prayers have both of these parts? [pgs. 534-35]

7. Make distinctions between public and private prayers, between temples that are physical in the Old Covenant and the spiritual revealed in the New Covenant. What are the implications of this for you as a believer? [pgs. 536-40]

8. **Have you memorized the Lord's Prayer?** Memorize it for this class. On a separate sheet of paper, lay it out in outline form in the six petitions, and from your reading of Calvin, give a brief devotional commentary on each part to be ready to share with the class. [pgs. 540-54]

9. How does the Holy Spirit help us in prayer? How can you be more aware of each Person of the Triune God as you pray after reading this chapter? [pgs. 554-56]

10. Why are regularity, patience, and perseverance so necessary in our prayer life? How might this change your habits in prayer? Explain. [pgs. 557-59]