

The Lord's Prayer

AS THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY SHOULD TEACH IT
IN A SIMPLE WAY TO HIS HOUSEHOLD

**Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.**
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

The Introduction

Our Father who art in heaven.

What does this mean? With these words God tenderly invites us to believe that He is our true Father and that we are His true children, so that with all boldness and confidence we may ask Him as dear children ask their dear father.

The First Petition

Hallowed be Thy name.

What does this mean? God's name is certainly holy in itself, but we pray in this petition that it may be kept holy among us also.

How is God's name kept holy? God's name is kept holy when the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we, as the children of God, also lead holy lives according to it. Help us to do this, dear Father in heaven! But anyone who teaches or lives contrary to God's Word profanes the name of God among us. Protect us from this, heavenly Father!

The Second Petition

Thy kingdom come.

What does this mean? The kingdom of God certainly comes by itself without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may come to us also.

How does God's kingdom come? God's kingdom comes when our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead godly lives here in time and there in eternity.

The Third Petition

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

What does this mean? The good and gracious will of God is done even without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may be done among us also.

How is God's will done? God's will is done when He breaks and hinders every evil plan and purpose of the devil, the world, and our sinful nature, which do not want us to hallow

God's name or let His kingdom come; and when He strengthens and keeps us firm in His Word and faith until we die. This is His good and gracious will.

The Fourth Petition

Give us this day our daily bread.

What does this mean? God certainly gives daily bread to everyone without our prayers, even to all evil people, but we pray in this petition that God would lead us to realise this and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.

What is meant by daily bread? Daily bread includes everything that has to do with the support and needs of the body, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, land, animals, money, goods, a devout husband or wife, devout children, devout workers, devout and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, self-control, good reputation, good friends, faithful neighbours, and the like.

The Fifth Petition

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

What does this mean? We pray in this petition that our Father in heaven would not look at our sins, or deny our prayer because of them. We are neither worthy of the things for which we pray, nor have we deserved them, but we ask that He would give them all to us by grace, for we daily sin much and surely deserve nothing but punishment. So we too will sincerely forgive and gladly do good to those who sin against us.

The Sixth Petition

And lead us not into temptation.

What does this mean? God tempts no one. We pray in this petition that God would guard and keep us so that the devil, the world, and our sinful nature may not deceive us or mislead us into false belief, despair, and other great shame and vice. Although we are attacked by these things, we pray that we may finally overcome them and win the victory.

The Seventh Petition

But deliver us from evil.

What does this mean? We pray in this petition, in summary, that our Father in heaven would rescue us from every evil of body and soul, possessions and reputation, and finally, when our last hour comes, give us a blessed end, and graciously take us from this valley of sorrow to Himself in heaven.

The Conclusion

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. * Amen.

What does this mean? This means that I should be certain that these petitions are pleasing to our Father in heaven, and are heard by Him; for He Himself has commanded us to pray in this way and has promised to hear us. Amen, amen means "yes, yes, it shall be so."

*These words were not in Luther's Small Catechism.

Luther's Small Catechism

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

I am the Lord your God.

The First Commandment
You shall have no other gods.

What does this mean for us?
We are to fear, love, and trust God above anything else.

The Second Commandment
You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

What does this mean for us?
We are to fear and love God so that we do not use his name superstitiously, or use it to curse, swear, lie, or deceive, but call on him in prayer, praise, and thanksgiving.

The Third Commandment
Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

What does this mean for us?
We are to fear and love God so that we do not neglect his Word and the preaching of it, but regard it as holy and gladly hear and learn it.

The Fourth Commandment
Honor your father and your mother.

What does this mean for us?
We are to fear and love God so that we do not despise or anger our parents and others in authority, but respect, obey, love, and serve them.

The Fifth Commandment
You shall not kill.

What does this mean for us?
We are to fear and love God so that we do not hurt our neighbor in any way, but help him in all his physical needs.

The Sixth Commandment
You shall not commit adultery.

What does this mean for us?
We are to fear and love God so that in matters of sex our words and conduct are pure and honorable, and husband and wife love and respect each other.

The Seventh Commandment
You shall not steal.

What does this mean for us?
We are to fear and love God so that we do not take our neighbor's money or property, or get them in any dishonest way, but help him to improve and protect his property and means of making a living.

The Eighth Commandment
You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

What does this mean for us?
We are to fear and love God so that we do not betray, slander, or lie about our neighbor, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain his actions in the kindest way.

The Ninth Commandment
You shall not covet your neighbor's house.

What does this mean for us?
We are to fear and love God so that we do not desire to get our neighbor's possessions by scheming, or by pretending to have a right to them, but always help him keep what is his.

The Tenth Commandment
You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant, or his maidservant, or his cattle, or anything that is your neighbor's.

What does this mean for us?
We are to fear and love God so that we do not tempt or coax away from our neighbors his wife or workers, but encourage them to remain loyal.

What does God say of all these commandments?
He says:
"I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments."

What does this mean for us?
God warns that he will punish all who break these commandments. Therefore we are to fear his wrath and not disobey him. But he promises grace and every blessing to all who keep these commandments. Therefore we are to love and trust him, and gladly do what he commands.

Luther's Small Catechism

The Sacrament of Holy Baptism

1. What is Baptism?

Baptism is not water only, but it is water used together with God's Word and by his command.

What is this Word?

In Matthew 28 our Lord Jesus Christ says:

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

2. What benefits does God give in Baptism?

In Baptism God forgives sin, delivers from death and the devil, and gives everlasting salvation to all who believe what he has promised.

What is God's promise?

In Mark 16 our Lord Jesus Christ says:

"He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."

3. How can water do such great things?

It is not water that does these things, but God's Word with the water and our trust in this Word. Water by itself is only water, but with the Word of God it is a life-giving water which by grace gives the new birth through the Holy Spirit.

St. Paul writes in Titus 3:

"He saved us . . . in virtue of his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit, which he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life. The saying is sure."

4. What does Baptism mean for daily living?

It means that our sinful self, with all its evil deeds and desires, should be drowned through daily repentance; and that day after day a new self should arise to live with God in righteousness and purity forever.

St. Paul writes in Romans 6:

"We were buried therefore with him by Baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life."

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

1. What is Holy Communion?

Holy Communion is the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ given with bread and wine, instituted by Christ himself for us to eat and drink.

Where do the Scriptures say this?

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Paul say:

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

2. What benefits do we receive from this sacrament?

The benefits of this sacrament are pointed out by the words, *given and shed for you for the remission of sins*. These words assure us that in the sacrament we receive forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.

3. How can eating and drinking do all this?

It is not eating and drinking that does this, but the words, *given and shed for you for the remission of sins*. These words, along with the eating and drinking, are the main thing in the sacrament. And whoever believes these words has exactly what they say, forgiveness of sins.

4. When is a person rightly prepared to receive this sacrament?

Fasting and other outward preparations serve a good purpose. However, that person is well prepared and worthy who believes these words, *given and shed for you for the remission of sins*. But anyone who does not believe these words, or doubts them, is neither prepared nor worthy, for the words *for you* require simply a believing heart.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

The First Article

I believe in God,
The Father almighty.
Creator of heaven and earth.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

I believe that God has created
me and all that exists.
He has given me and still
preserves my body and soul
with all their powers.

He provides me with food and
clothing, home and family,
daily work, and all I need
from day to day.
God also protects me in time
of danger and guards me
from every evil.

All this he does out of fatherly
and divine goodness and
mercy, though I do not
deserve it.
Therefore I surely ought to
thank and praise, serve and
obey him.

This is most certainly true.

The Second Article

I believe in Jesus Christ,
His only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power
of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate
Was crucified, died, and
Was buried.

He descended into hell.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
And is seated at the right hand
Of the Father.
He will come again to judge
The living and the dead.

What does this mean?

I believe that Jesus Christ--
true God, Son of the Father
from eternity, and true man,
born of the virgin Mary -- is my
Lord.

At great cost
He has saved and redeemed me,
a lost and condemned person.
He has freed me
from sin, death, and the power
of the devil --
not with silver or gold,
but with his holy and precious
blood and his innocent
suffering and death.

All this he has done
that I may be his own,
live under him in his kingdom,
and serve him in everlasting
righteousness, innocence,
and blessedness,
just as he is risen from the dead
and lives and rules eternally.

This is most certainly true.

THE THIRD ARTICLE

I Believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my
own understanding or effort
Believe in Jesus Christ my Lord
or come to him.
But the Holy Spirit has called
me through the Gospel,
Enlightened me with his gifts,
and sanctified and kept me
in true faith

In the same way he calls,
gathers, enlightens,
and sanctifies
the whole Christian church
on earth,
and keeps it united with Jesus
Christ in the one true faith.

In this Christian church
day after day
He fully forgives my sins
and the sins of all believers.
On the last day he will raise me
and all the dead
and give me and all believers
in Christ eternal life.
This is most certainly true.