

Be Thou My Vision

A Liturgy for Daily Worship

Jonathan Gibson

Be Thou My Vision: A Liturgy for Daily Worship

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*You move us to delight in praising you;
for you have made us for yourself,
and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.*

AUGUSTINE

For
David and Jenny
Tim and Katie

*For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us
an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison,
as we look not to the things that are seen
but to the things that are unseen.
For the things that are seen are transient,
but the things that are unseen are eternal.*

2 CORINTHIANS 4:17-18

In Memoriam
Samuel David Dodson Chapman
(1990–2020)

They stand, those halls of Zion,
all jubilant with song,
and bright with many an angel,
and all the martyr throng.
The Prince is ever in them,
the daylight is serene;
the pastures of the blessed
are decked in glorious sheen.

There is the throne of David;
and there, from care released,
the song of them that triumph,
the shout of them that feast;
and they who with their Leader
have conquered in the fight,
forever and forever
are clad in robes of white.

“JERUSALEM THE GOLDEN,” BERNARD OF CLUNY
(STANZAS 2 AND 3)

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Preface

IN 2020, DURING THE COVID-19 lockdowns, I reflected on my devotional life as I became increasingly dissatisfied with its content and structure. My basic format of reading and petitioning, with a few praise points thrown in, began to feel more like a bland time with God than a blessed time with God. Around the same time, my friend Mark Earngey informed me of a short liturgical guide that he had put together for the Sydney diocese to aid families and churches during the lockdown. It inspired me to think about how I might structure my own personal or family devotions more like a mini church service, with elements of a call to worship, adoration, confession, assurance, creed and catechism, *Gloria Patri*, prayer for illumination, Bible reading, prayer of intercession, and the Lord's Prayer. As an experiment, I decided to include these liturgical elements in my devotional times. As a result, I experienced something of a renewal in my devotional life. I found my prayers helped by saints in the past, my knowledge of the Scriptures expanded with a set reading plan, my understanding of the Christian faith deepened through regular instruction from the historic creeds and

the church's catechisms. My devotional times became more praiseworthy rather than mainly petitionary. Overall, I found myself less distracted, more concentrated; less bored, more engaged. The flow of the liturgy was meaningful; the varied content of each element, enriching. My devotional life began to feel more like a delight than a duty. I then "trialed" it with my wife, Jackie, and on occasions with the whole family, before exploring the possibility of publishing the material for the benefit of others. *Be Thou My Vision* is the fruit of that initial experiment and subsequent exploration. My prayer is that this liturgy of daily worship might provide the same experience in your personal or family devotions as it did for me and my family.

Jonathan Gibson, Glenside
Michaelmas 2020
Soli Deo Gloria

Acknowledgments

A NUMBER OF PEOPLE DESERVE my thanks in bringing this book to fruition. Although Mark Earngey declined to be involved in this book, I wish to thank him for being a catalyst in my initial thinking about a liturgy of daily worship. Justin Taylor and Anthony Gosling at Crossway were enthusiastic from the beginning and patiently helped me to configure the best possible format. I am also thankful to Elliott Pinegar for his advice on copyright issues, Lydia Brownback for her careful editorial work on the manuscript, and Dan Farrell and Jordan Singer for the beautiful cover design in keeping with the origins of the ancient Irish hymn “Be Thou My Vision.” The majority of prayers in this book are taken from the *ESV Prayer Bible* (2018); a dozen or so are taken from *Reformation Worship: Liturgies from the Past for the Present* (2018). These latter prayers were translated by Matthias Mangold and Bernard Aubert. I am grateful to Crossway and New Growth Press for permission to use a select number of prayers from these respective works. Other prayers have been modernized from original sources that are in the public domain, such as Augustine’s *Confessions* (c. 400), Gregory the Great’s

“Seven-Fold Litany” (c. 600), the Anglican Book of Common Prayer (1552 and 1662), the Middelburg Liturgy (1586), the Savoy Liturgy (1661), and *A Book of Public Prayer* (1857). The prayer by Jonathan Edwards is adapted from a comment he made about God in *A Dissertation Concerning the Nature of True Virtue* (1765). The Heidelberg Catechism (1563) in appendix 2 is the modern version published by the Christian Reformed Church in North America and is used here with permission. The Westminster Shorter Catechism (1647) in appendix 2 has been modernized by myself, as well as the Collects from the Book of Common Prayer (1552) in appendix 4.

Jackie, my wife, joined me in “trialing” the liturgy and provided helpful feedback. My children Benjamin, Zachary, and Hannah each participated in the trial in different ways (from reading prayers to raising hands in the *Gloria Patri*). We will always associate this liturgy of daily worship with our holiday at Litchfield Beach, South Carolina, where we praised God “from whom all blessings flow” while we watched dolphins swim gracefully in the calm morning water. Our daughter Leila is never far from our minds during our family worship or on our holidays—always an empty space at the table, always one less ice cream to buy. But we know that she is happy elsewhere, praising God with the great company of heaven (Heb. 12:22–24). In his poem “Resignation,” Henry Wadsworth Longfellow captures, beautifully and poignantly, our experience and hope:

Day after day we think what she is doing
In those bright realms of air;
Year after year, her tender steps pursuing,
Behold her grown more fair.

Thus do we walk with her, and keep unbroken
The bond which nature gives,
Thinking that our remembrance, though unspoken,
May reach her where she lives.

Not as a child shall we again behold her;
For when with raptures wild
In our embraces we again enfold her,
She will not be a child;

But a fair maiden, in her Father's mansion,
Clothed with celestial grace;
And beautiful with all the soul's expansion
Shall we behold her face. (stanzas 8–11)

This book is dedicated to my Australian in-laws—David and Jenny (parents-in-law) and Tim and Katie (siblings-in-law)—all devoted Christians, committed to reading their Bibles and praying regularly. Although they greatly miss their daughter and sister (and now grandchildren, and nephews and nieces), they have graciously supported our calling, for which we are grateful. I pray that this book enriches their devotional lives while together we wait for the eternal weight of glory, when the things that are unseen will finally be seen (2 Cor. 4:17).

This book is also written in *memoriam* of a dear friend, Samuel David Dodson Chapman (1990–2020). Sam or Sammy, as he was affectionately known, was diagnosed with a rare form of leukemia in his late teenage years. He survived the life-threatening disease on several occasions but suffered terribly from the symptoms of a debilitating graft-versus-host disease that robbed him of life's most basic comforts and joys. Yet by the grace of God, he remained a man of faith to

the end (2 Tim. 4:7–8). The times I spent with Sam during his illness were some of my most spiritually uplifting, when the transient things of this world faded and the eternal things of the world to come appeared more solid and real than ever. During his more-than-a-decade-long illness, Sam lived for two days—“today” and “that day.” On February 3, 2020, “that day” came, as he heard the voice of Jesus calling him home to another shore and a greater light. Sam is now at peace, without pain, and praising his Savior all the day long. I pray that this book might help us all to live each day like Sam did—to live today for that day, when our worship by faith on earth will give way to our worship by sight in heaven.

Jerusalem the golden,
with milk and honey blest,
beneath your contemplation
sink heart and voice oppressed.

I know not, O I know not,
what joys await us there;
what radiance of glory,
what bliss beyond compare.

O sweet and blessed country,
the home of God’s elect!
O sweet and blessed country,
that eager hearts expect!
Jesus, in mercy bring us
to that dear land of rest;
who are, with God the Father
and Spirit, ever blest.

“Jerusalem the Golden,” Bernard of Cluny
(stanzas 1 and 4)

PART I

DAILY WORSHIP
IN SCRIPTURE

Scriptural Foundation for Daily Worship

IT MAY COME AS A SURPRISE, but there is no explicit command in Scripture to have a time of worship each day, either as an individual or as a family. And yet it is a habit that every Christian believer or Christian family is encouraged to practice. The name of the habit may vary depending on one's Christian tradition or background—"devotion," "quiet time," or "personal or family worship"—but the basic elements of Bible reading and prayer are usually present. As one can see from the subtitle of this book, I have opted for the general term "daily worship"; it covers a time of personal or family devotion while maintaining the vertical dimension of worship. But from where do we get this idea of a time of daily worship, which consists mainly in Bible reading and prayer? The answer is that the practice is implied in a number of Scriptures.

In Genesis, God says that he chose Abraham so that he might command his children and his household to keep the way of the Lord (Gen. 18:19). This would involve Abraham having a time in the day or week to teach his family and servants what God had commanded him. In Deuteronomy, God commands Israel to love him with heart and soul and mind and strength, a love that is to be expressed by parents taking every opportunity during the day to teach their children the words of God (Deut. 6:5–6). In Joshua, after Moses dies, God exhorts Joshua to be “strong and very courageous” by being careful to obey the law of Moses (Josh. 1:7). The command implies that Joshua would need to familiarize himself with the books of Moses throughout his life, a discipline that would require regular, systematic reading of the sacred text. At the end of his life, Joshua declares to Israel that his commitment to God is not just personal but familial: “But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD” (Josh. 24:15). For his family to serve the Lord, Joshua would first have to know the law of Moses for himself before instructing his family in it. The practice is reflected in the Psalms where Israel is encouraged to tell the glorious deeds of the Lord to the next generation (Ps. 78:4). The prophetic books contain a similar idea of personally hearing from God in his word before passing on the revelation to others. In Isaiah, the servant of the Lord is said to be awakened “morning by morning” to listen to God’s instruction (Isa. 50:4) before he undertakes the work to which God has called him. In Amos, God says that he does no great work in history without first revealing his secret to his servants the prophets (Amos 3:7). In Ezekiel, the prophet is told to eat the words of God from the scroll as a symbolic gesture of first digesting the word of God for himself before proclaiming it to Israel (Ezek. 3:1–2).

In each of these examples—with Abraham, Israel, Joshua, Isaiah, Amos, and Ezekiel—it is reasonable to think that the personal reading of Scripture or the familial instruction from Scripture would have also involved times of prayer. This is supported by the fact that the canon of Christian Scripture contains its own prayer book. The book of Psalms includes individual and corporate prayers (e.g., Pss. 3; 96) mixed with encouragement to meditate on God’s word and his promises (e.g., Pss. 1; 119).

The New Testament reflects similar sentiments on reading the Scriptures and praying, either as an individual, a family, or a church. Jesus frequently asks the Pharisees, “Have you not read?” as he rebukes them for not knowing their Bibles (Matt. 12:3, 5; 19:4; 22:31; Mark 12:10, 26), which means that he believed that they ought to have been reading the Old Testament for themselves. Jesus also teaches on corporate and individual prayer. On the one hand, the Lord’s Prayer is intended to be a public prayer said by the church, seen in the plural forms that run throughout it: “Our Father in heaven. . . Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil” (Matt. 6:9–13). On the other hand, individual prayer is something Jesus envisages being performed alone, in private: “When you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret” (Matt. 6:6). So, according to Jesus, there is a time to pray together as a church and a time to pray on our own. We see a similar focus on reading the Scriptures and praying in the writings and lives of the apostles. Peter encourages Christians to crave the spiritual milk of God’s word like newborn infants (1 Pet. 1:24–2:2), while also exhorting them to

be alert and sober-minded so that they might pray (1 Pet. 4:7). In his epistles, Paul commands the public and private reading of Scripture (1 Tim. 4:15; 2 Tim. 3:15), alongside prayer (1 Tim. 2:8). He reveals the content of his own personal prayers for the churches (Eph. 1:17–19; 3:16–19; Phil. 1:9–11; Col. 1:9–12), while also encouraging believers toward a similar commitment to daily prayer: “Be constant in prayer” (Rom. 12:12) and “Pray without ceasing” (1 Thess. 5:17). Finally, family instruction from the Scriptures, along with prayer, is implied in Paul’s exhortation to fathers to raise their children in the fear and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4).

So it is clear from this brief overview that while there is no explicit command to have a time of daily worship as an individual or a family, consisting in reading the Scriptures and praying to God, the habit is certainly assumed or implied in a number of places. If this is so, then some questions arise: How should we structure our own daily worship? What should we do and how should we do it? At a basic level, it obviously involves hearing from God in Scripture and responding to him in prayer. However, can we be more intentional and creative than that? I think that we can be. For example, we know that Jesus would rise early in the morning to spend time with his Father. Was this worship time structured or random? I think that we have good reason to believe that it was structured. For one, Jesus knew the Old Testament Scriptures comprehensively and precisely, and he could only have attained such knowledge if he was reading God’s word regularly and sequentially. At the very least, he would have heard the consecutive reading of Scripture at the synagogue. Second, when Jesus taught his disciples how to pray, he provided a basic structure in the Lord’s Prayer

of adoration, petition, confession, and further petition. So it is reasonable to assume that when Jesus spent time with his Father each day in worship, he had a system for reading and meditating on the Old Testament as well as a structure for praying. Following our Lord's example can only serve to improve our own daily worship in terms of Bible reading and prayer.

In regard to Bible reading, the last few decades have seen a more systematic read-through-the-Bible approach. This is a welcome advance from the more random verse-a-day reading plan. Systematic reading plans help us to grasp "the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27), and in the order in which God has revealed it. The sequential reading of Scripture deepens our knowledge of God's word and aids its memorization. In regard to prayer, however, I am not sure we have seen much advance beyond saying a short prayer before reading our Bibles, followed by a list of petitions in which we ask God to bless this or that person and this or that endeavor. Let's be honest: prayer is the hardest part of our devotions and often leaves us feeling distracted and directionless. However, the good news is that help is available to us from those in the past who have exemplified an intentional structure within their prayers as well as a varied use of different prayers, such as adoration, confession, illumination, and intercession. In addition to systematic Bible reading and structured-but-varied prayer, our worship of God each day may be enriched by affirming our Christian faith with a creed or receiving doctrinal instruction from a catechism.

Ordering all these elements in a fixed liturgy provides a healthy and enjoyable rhythm to our worship. This is precisely what this new liturgy of daily worship seeks to do. Of

course, the aim is not to replace corporate worship on the Lord's Day; rather, it is to help prepare us for corporate worship on the Lord's Day by improving our personal or family worship each day. Indeed, it is my prayer that the rhythms of fixed liturgy contained in this book, practiced over a month or a whole year, will instill in us habits of worship that will last a lifetime.

Structural Format of Daily Worship

THIS DAILY WORSHIP DEVOTIONAL consists of thirty-one days of set liturgy that can be repeated each month. The order of the elements in the liturgy is fixed and repeated each day, while the content of the elements changes each day, except for the Lord's Prayer. The order and content of the elements is as follows, accompanied by a rubric to make the liturgy interactive.

Call to Worship

Hear God call you to worship through his word:

Thirty-one Scripture readings (alternating Old Testament and New Testament daily; repeated monthly)

Adoration

Pray or sing this praise to God:

Thirty-one prayers from church history (repeated monthly, including the doxology repeated weekly)

Reading of the Law

Hear God's law as his will for your life:

Seven Scripture readings (repeated weekly)

Confession of Sin

Confess your sins to God:

Thirty-one prayers from church history (repeated monthly)

Assurance of Pardon

Receive these words of comfort from God:

Thirty-one Scripture readings (alternating Old Testament and New Testament daily; repeated monthly)

Creed

Confess what you believe about the Christian faith:

Apostles' Creed | Nicene Creed | Athanasian Creed (3 parts)
(repeated weekly in a chiasm: Apostles' | Nicene | Athanasian
1, 2, 3 | Nicene | Apostles'; on Day 31 the Athanasian Creed is
presented in its entirety)

Praise

Say or sing this praise to God:

Gloria Patri (two versions, alternating weekly)

Catechism

Receive this instruction from one of the church's catechisms: see appendix 2

Heidelberg Catechism and Westminster Shorter Catechism
(one question daily)

Prayer for Illumination

As you read his word, ask God to enlighten your mind and heart:

Seven prayers from church history (repeated weekly)

Scripture Reading

Read a portion of God's word: see appendix 3

M'Cheyne Bible Reading Plan (one chapter daily)

Prayer of Intercession

As you make your requests to God, pray this prayer:

Thirty-one prayers from church history (repeated monthly)

Further Petition

- Personal
- Church
- World

Lord's Prayer

In closing, pray the words that Jesus taught us to pray:

Traditional or modern version (repeated daily)

The Collects in appendix 4 serve to supplement intercessory prayers throughout the year in accordance with the church calendar, for those so inclined.

The fixed order of the elements is to aid concentration, while the variety of content in the elements is to avoid boredom. The repetition of Scripture readings, prayers, creeds, praises (repeated every seven or thirty-one days) encourages

familiarity and memorization. If one follows this liturgy of worship each day of the month and repeats it monthly throughout the year, then one will become well acquainted with the creeds of the Christian church and also historic prayers throughout church history—some of which were written for corporate worship on the Lord’s Day, others of which were written for personal or family worship on any day. After the set intercessory prayer, there is a time for further petitions covering personal, church, or world matters, as the individual or family desires. The Lord’s Prayer closes the worship time and may be said in whatever version with which one is most familiar. (The modern version is provided in the liturgy.)

If one is using the liturgy for personal worship, then the rubric may be read silently, as if one is being led in worship. If one is using the liturgy for family worship, then the person leading may read the rubric aloud, while other family members might wish to read some of the prayers or Bible passages to ensure a collective participation. In either case, it is best practice to read the content of the elements *aloud*. This adds a level of formality that will help concentration and deepen a sense of worship. The musical tunes for the doxology and the *Gloria Patri* (two versions) are indicated in appendix 1. The three ribbons serve to help the worshiper(s): (1) to mark the day; (2) to mark the catechism question; and (3) to mark the Bible reading plan. If one proceeds through the Heidelberg Catechism (129 questions) at the pace of one question a day, followed by the Westminster Shorter Catechism (107 questions), followed by the Heidelberg Catechism (129 questions) again—this will complete 365 days exactly. In practice, the daily worship time (allowing for one

chapter of the Bible to be read from the M'Cheyne Reading Plan) will take about 15 to 20 minutes. On days when circumstances may restrict one's time more than other days, the liturgy allows for flexibility by dropping one or two of the elements, such as the creed and/or the *Gloria Patri*. If days are missed entirely, then the undated days allow one to pick up where one left off or to continue on any given day of the month.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism asks the question, "What is the chief end of man?" It provides the answer: "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever." This liturgy of daily worship aims to help us toward the goal of glorifying God and enjoying him in a time of personal or family worship each day. So, as we rise each morning to experience God's mercies anew, let us hear him call us to his worship through his word:

Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness;
tremble before him, all the earth!

Psalm 96:9

PART 2

DAILY WORSHIP
IN PRACTICE

DAY 1

Call to Worship

Hear God call you to worship through his word:

Praise the LORD!

For it is good to sing praises to our God;
for it is pleasant,
and a song of praise is fitting.

Psalm 147:1

Adoration

Say or sing this praise to God:

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him all creatures here below;
Praise him above you heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen. Doxology

Reading of the Law

Hear God's law as his will for your life:

The words of our Lord Jesus Christ:

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets. *Matthew 22:37-40*

Confession of Sin

Confess your sins to God:

Almighty God,

unto whom all hearts are open,

all desires known,

and from whom no secrets are hidden—

cleanse the thoughts of our hearts

by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,

so that we may perfectly love you,

and worthily magnify your holy name;

through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Book of Common Prayer (1552)

Assurance of Pardon

Receive these words of comfort from God:

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. *Matthew 11:28–30*

Apostles' Creed

Confess what you believe about the Christian faith:

I believe in God the Father Almighty,

Maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only-begotten Son, our Lord;

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the

Virgin Mary;

suffered under Pontius Pilate;

was crucified, dead, and buried;

he descended into hell;
the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from there he shall come to judge the living and the dead.

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.

Praise

Say or sing this praise to God:

Glory be to the Father
and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit:
As it was in the beginning,
is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen. Gloria Patri

Catechism

Receive this instruction from one of the church's catechisms: see appendix 2

Prayer for Illumination

As you read his word, ask God to enlighten your mind and heart:

Almighty God, and most merciful Father, we humbly submit ourselves, and fall down before your Majesty, asking you from the bottom of our hearts, that this seed of your Word now sown among us, may take such deep root, that neither the burning

heat of persecution cause it to wither, nor the thorny cares of this life choke it. But that, as seed sown in good ground, it may bring forth thirty, sixty, or a hundredfold, as your heavenly wisdom has appointed. Amen. Middelburg Liturgy

Scripture Reading

Read a portion of God's word: see appendix 3

Prayer of Intercession

As you make your requests to God, pray this prayer:

Your glorious Majesty surround me,
the blessed Trinity protect me,
and the eternal Godhead preserve me.
Your unlimited mercy support me;
your loving kindness encompass me;
your favor make me to rejoice.
The eternal truth of God be my delight,
the saving knowledge of Christ strengthen me,
and the all-prevailing grace of God be sufficient for me.
May the grace of God the Father lead me,
the wisdom of God the Son be my consolation,
and the power of the Holy Spirit enlighten me.
Lord my Creator, stand by me;
my Redeemer, save me;
and my Comforter, dwell with me. Amen.

Johann Habermann

Further Petition

- Personal
- Church
- World

Lord's Prayer

In closing, pray the words that Jesus taught us to pray:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name;
your kingdom come;
your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For yours is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever. Amen.

DAY 2

Call to Worship

Hear God call you to worship through his word:

I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he will display at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

1 Timothy 6:13–16

Adoration

Pray this praise to God:

With what shall we come before you, O Lord? Or bow ourselves in your presence, O you Most High God? Cause us to come unto you in faith: mentioning no other name, pleading no other righteousness, and trusting in no other atonement than the name, righteousness, and atonement of your blessed Son and our adorable Mediator Jesus Christ. In him, we desire to be found; through him, we hope for favor with you, and acceptance in your sight. Blessed be your goodness for the

mercies of the day, for the blessings of your providence, the comforts of your Spirit, and the privileges we enjoy. Amen.
Augustus Toplady

Reading of the Law

Hear God's law as his will for your life:

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.
You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and
with all your soul and with all your might.

And these words that I command you today shall be on
your heart.

You shall teach them diligently to your children,
and shall talk of them when you sit in your house,
and when you walk by the way,
and when you lie down,
and when you rise.

You shall bind them as a sign on your hand,
and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.

You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and
on your gates. Deuteronomy 6:4–9

Confession of Sin

Confess your sins to God:

O Lord, in whose hands are life and death, by whose power I am sustained, and by whose mercy I am spared—look down upon me with pity. Forgive me that I have until now so much neglected the duty which you have assigned to me, and suffered the days and hours of which I must give account to pass away without any endeavor to accomplish your will. Make me to remember, O God, that every day is your gift, and ought to

be used according to your command. Grant me, therefore, so to repent of my negligence, that I may obtain mercy from you, and pass the time which you shall yet allow me in diligent performance of your commands, through Jesus Christ. Amen.
Samuel Johnson

Assurance of Pardon

Receive these words of comfort from God:

The LORD, the LORD, [is] a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin. Exodus 34:6-7

Nicene Creed

Confess what you believe about the Christian faith:

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and
invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God;
begotten of the Father before all worlds;
God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God;
begotten, not made, being of one substance with the
Father;
by whom all things were made.

Who, for us men and for our salvation,
came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary,
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate;

he suffered and was buried;
and the third day he rose again, according to the
 Scriptures;
and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of
 the Father;
and he shall come again, with glory, to judge the living
 and the dead;
whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life;
who proceeds from the Father and the Son;
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped
 and glorified;
who spoke by the prophets.

And I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
I acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins;
and I look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Praise

Say or sing this praise to God:

Glory be to the Father
 and to the Son
 and to the Holy Spirit:
As it was in the beginning,
 is now and ever shall be,
 world without end. Amen. Gloria Patri

Catechism

Receive this instruction from one of the church's catechisms: see appendix 2

Prayer for Illumination

As you read his word, ask God to enlighten your mind and heart:

Blessed Lord, you have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning—grant us that we may in such a way hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them; that by patience and comfort of your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.
Book of Common Prayer (1552)

Scripture Reading

Read a portion of God’s word: see appendix 3

Prayer of Intercession

As you make your requests to God, pray this prayer:

Almighty God, heavenly Father, because we are so weak in ourselves that we cannot stand even for a moment, and moreover, our sworn enemies—the devil, the world, and our own flesh—do not cease to attack us; will you, therefore, keep and strengthen us by the power of your Holy Spirit, so that we may firmly resist them and not go down to defeat in this spiritual war, but remain persistent until we finally obtain the complete victory and reign together with your Son, our Lord and Protector Jesus Christ, in your kingdom forevermore. Amen. *Zacharias Ursinus*

Further Petition

- Personal
- Church
- World

Lord's Prayer

In closing, pray the words that Jesus taught us to pray:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name;
your kingdom come;
your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For yours is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever. Amen.

DAY 3

Call to Worship

Hear God call you to worship through his word:

We give thanks to you, O God;
we give thanks, for your name is near.

We recount your wondrous deeds.

Psalm 75:1

Adoration

Pray this praise to God:

We bless you for your preservation of us during the past night; and we desire to acknowledge again our dependence upon you, and our unfeigned obligations toward you. We thank you for having poured down upon us so many blessings of this life; we thank you for our health and strength; for our food and dress; and for all the comforts and conveniences which we enjoy. But, above all, we praise you for the inestimable privilege of being born in a land of religious light and knowledge. For these, and for all your various and great mercies, we would render unto you a grateful heart; and we would endeavor to show our gratitude, not with our lips only, but with our lives; by giving up ourselves to your service, and by walking before you, in holiness and righteousness, all our days on earth. Amen. *Henry Thornton*

Reading of the Law

Hear God's law as his will for your life:

Our Lord Jesus said,

Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn,
for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek,
for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they shall be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful,
for they shall receive mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they shall be called sons of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. *Matthew 5:3–10*

Confession of Sin

Confess your sins to God:

O Lord, you have mercy upon all—take away from me my sins, and mercifully kindle in me the fire of your Holy Spirit. Take away from me the heart of stone, and give me a heart of flesh, a heart to love and adore you, a heart to delight in you, to follow and to enjoy you, for Christ's sake. Amen. *Ambrose*

Assurance of Pardon

Receive these words of comfort from God:

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16

Athanasian Creed, Part I

Confess what you believe about the Christian faith:

Whoever desires to be saved should above all hold to the catholic faith. Anyone who does not keep it whole and unbroken will doubtless perish eternally. Now this is the catholic faith:

that we worship one God in Trinity and the Trinity in unity, neither confounding their persons nor dividing the essence.

For the person of the Father is a distinct person,
the person of the Son is another,
and that of the Holy Spirit still another.

But the divinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is one,
the glory equal, the majesty coeternal.

Such as the Father is, such is the Son and such is the
Holy Spirit.

The Father is uncreated, the Son is uncreated, the Holy
Spirit is uncreated.

The Father is immeasurable, the Son is immeasurable,
the Holy Spirit is immeasurable.

The Father is eternal, the Son is eternal, the Holy Spirit
is eternal.

And yet there are not three eternal beings; there is but
one eternal being.

So too there are not three uncreated or immeasurable
beings;
there is but one uncreated and immeasurable being.
Similarly, the Father is almighty, the Son is almighty,
the Holy Spirit is almighty.
Yet there are not three almighty beings; there is but one
almighty being.
Thus, the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit
is God.
Yet there are not three gods; there is but one God.
Thus, the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, the Holy Spirit
is Lord.
Yet there are not three lords; there is but one Lord.
Just as Christian truth compels us to confess each person
individually as both God and Lord,
so catholic religion forbids us to say that there are
three gods or lords.

Praise

Say or sing this praise to God:

Glory be to the Father
and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit:
As it was in the beginning,
is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen. *Gloria Patri*

Catechism

Receive this instruction from one of the church's catechisms: see appendix 2

Prayer for Illumination

As you read his word, ask God to enlighten your mind and heart:

O, make your Word a swift Word,
passing from the ear to the heart,
from the heart to the lip and conversation;
that, as the rain returns not empty,
so neither may your Word,
but accomplish that for which it is given. Amen.

George Herbert

Scripture Reading

Read a portion of God's word: see appendix 3

Prayer of Intercession

As you make your requests to God, pray this prayer:

Let your mighty hand and outstretched arm, O Lord, still
be our defense;
your mercy and loving kindness in Jesus Christ your dear
Son, our salvation;
your true and holy Word, our instruction;
your grace and Holy Spirit, our comfort and consolation
unto the end, and in the end. Amen. John Bradford

Further Petition

- Personal
- Church
- World

Lord's Prayer

In closing, pray the words that Jesus taught us to pray:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name;
your kingdom come;
your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For yours is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever. Amen.

DAY 4

Call to Worship

Hear God call you to worship through his word:

Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out, “Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory.” Revelation 19:6–7

Adoration

Pray this praise to God:

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not the good he has done to me, who forgives all your sins and heals all your infirmities, who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with grace and mercy. The Lord is merciful, patient, and of great goodness. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor does he repay us according to our offense. For as high as the heaven is above the earth, he shows his grace toward those who fear him. As far as the rising of the sun is from its setting, so far he removes our transgression from us. As a father takes pity on his children, so the Lord takes pity on those who fear him. Who also did not spare his own Son, but has delivered him up for us all and has given us with him all things. In this way, God shows his love toward

us, that Christ died for us while we were still sinners. So we will all the more be saved by him from wrath, after we have been justified by his blood. For if we are reconciled to God by the death of his Son while we were still enemies, how much more will we be saved by his life, after we have been reconciled to him. Therefore, my mouth and heart shall proclaim the Lord's praise, from now on and forevermore. Amen. Zacharius Ursinus

Reading of the Law

Hear God's law as his will for your life:

Our Lord said,

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

John 15:9–12

Confession of Sin

Confess your sins to God:

Cleanse me from my secret faults, O Lord, and forgive those offenses to your servant which he has caused in others. I contend not in judgment with you, who are truth; I fear to deceive myself, lest my sin should make me think that I am not sinful. Therefore I contend not in judgment with you; for if you, Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall abide it? Amen. Augustine

Assurance of Pardon

Receive these words of comfort from God:

Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good!

Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!

Psalm 34:8

Athanasian Creed, Part 2

Confess what you believe about the Christian faith:

Whoever desires to be saved should above all hold to the catholic faith. Anyone who does not keep it whole and unbroken will doubtless perish eternally. Now this is the catholic faith: that we worship one God in Trinity and the Trinity in unity, neither confounding their persons nor dividing the essence. . . .

The Father was neither made nor created nor begotten
from anyone.

The Son was neither made nor created; he was begotten
from the Father alone.

The Holy Spirit was neither made nor created nor
begotten;

he proceeds from the Father and the Son.

Accordingly, there is one Father, not three fathers;

there is one Son, not three sons;

there is one Holy Spirit, not three holy spirits.

None in this Trinity is before or after, none is greater or
smaller;

in their entirety the three persons are coeternal and
coequal with each other.

So in everything, as was said earlier, the unity in Trinity,
and the Trinity in unity, is to be worshiped.
Anyone then who desires to be saved should think thus
about the Trinity.

Praise

Say or sing this praise to God:

Glory be to the Father
and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit:
As it was in the beginning,
is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen. *Gloria Patri*

Catechism

Receive this instruction from one of the church's catechisms: see appendix 2

Prayer for Illumination

As you read his word, ask God to enlighten your mind and heart:

Divine Spirit, illumine to me the words of the Lord.
Show me the wealth of glory that lies beneath the old
familiar stories.
Teach me the depths of meaning hidden in the songs of Zion.
Raise me to the heights of aspiration that is reached by the
wings of the prophet.
Lift me to the summit of faith that is trod by the feet of the
apostle.
Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of
your law. Amen. *George Matheson*

Scripture Reading

Read a portion of God's word: see appendix 3

Prayer of Intercession

As you make your requests to God, pray this prayer:

As a reconciled Father, take me to be your child; and give me your renewing Spirit, to be in me a principle of holy life, and light, and love, and your seal and witness that I am yours. Let him quicken my dead and hardened heart. Let him enlighten my dark unbelieving mind, by clearer knowledge and firm belief. Let him turn my will to the ready obedience of your holy will. Let him reveal to my soul the wonders of your love in Christ, and fill it with love to you and my Redeemer, and to all your holy Word and works. Amen. Richard Baxter

Further Petition

- Personal
- Church
- World

Lord's Prayer

In closing, pray the words that Jesus taught us to pray:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name;
your kingdom come;
your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For yours is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever. Amen.