



A SIMPLE WAY TO PRAY

The Wisdom
of Martin Luther
on Prayer

Dr. Archie Parrish

Foreword by Dr. R.C. Sproul

**Participant's
Guide**

A FREE PDF file of this Participant's Guide can be downloaded from the Serve International website www.kingdomprayer.org.

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A Simple Way to Pray

Participant's Exercise & Discussion Guide

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Marietta, Georgia

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This guide has been improved over earlier editions with the help of insights from participants in Kingdom Intercessors' Training. Therefore, with warm thanks for their contributions, I dedicate this guide to all past participants.

A Simple Way to Pray (SWP) Exercise Manual

A Simple Way to Pray Course Purpose

To help believers participate more effectively with the Lord Jesus Christ in His ministry of intercession by discussing Martin Luther’s example in prayer and advice on prayer in order that their prayer becomes more biblical, bold, powerful, and proactive, resulting in blessing for them, their families, their churches, and the people in their circles of influence.

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Commitment and Benefits

The benefits you receive from *A Simple Way to Pray* will be in proportion to the level of your commitment to understand and practice the truth presented in it. Many have been helped by simply reading the book. Those who read the book and use this manual for their private devotions receive additional benefits. Those who read the book and use this manual to prepare for participation in Group Discussion receive the most benefits. I urge you to commit for level one or level two. Check Commitment One if you choose to do only the personal devotions. Check Commitment Two if you desire to participate in Group Discussion. Maximum benefit from this course is received by those who make a specific commitment to finish what they start.

Level One—Read *A Simple Way to Pray*

God helping me, I will read *A Simple Way to Pray* during the next 30 days. Also, I will share one insight gained from the study with a selected friend.

Level Two—Personal Devotions

God helping me, each day for 42 days I will do the assigned Daily Exercises in this guide. Also, each week I will share one insight gained from the study with a selected friend.

Level Three—Group Discussion

God helping me, through the 42 days of the *A Simple Way to Pray* Group Discussion, each day I will do the assigned Daily Exercises in this guide and I will participate in each Group Discussion. Also, each week I will share one insight gained from the study with a selected friend.

Signature

Date

A Prayer for Those Who Use This Manual

Father, help each person who uses this *A Simple Way to Pray Participant's Exercise & Discussion Guide* to participate more effectively with the Lord Jesus Christ in His ministry of intercession. Enable them to experience more of Your presence as they complete each daily exercise. Help them use the insights they gain from Luther's example and advice on praying the Lord's Prayer to pray for the people on their prayer lists each week. Make their prayer more biblical, bold, powerful, and proactive. As they pray, bless them, their families, their churches, and the people in their circles of influence. Help each of them to share with others the most significant thing they gain each week. Through Christ our Great High Priest we pray. Amen.

The Lay Bible

Note: Luther called the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, and the Lord's Prayer the "Lay Bible." "For Luther, the Law not only contains the basics of the Christian ethical code, it reveals sin and the need for divine forgiveness. The Apostles' Creed points to the creative, redeeming, and sanctifying work of God, reminding unworthy sinners that the forgiveness they need comes through Jesus Christ. The Christian's life of prayer then grows out of the new relationship God establishes with believers. In other words, the grace of God sets the forgiven sinner free to live in the context of the relationship established by God in Jesus Christ. That is, one might say, the Christian is free to live a life of prayer."¹

The Ten Commandments

And God spoke all these words, saying, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

- I. "You shall have no other gods before me.
- II. "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.
- III. "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.
- IV. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.
- V. "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.
- VI. "You shall not murder.
- VII. "You shall not commit adultery.
- VIII. "You shall not steal.
- IX. "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
- X. "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's."

(Ex. 20:1–17)

The Apostles' Creed

Article One

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.

Article Two

And 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.

Article Three

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.

The Lord's Prayer⁺

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 also have forgiven 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. [□]
(Matt. 6:9–13)

[^] Hell in the Greek is *Hades*, the abode of the dead, the grave.

[#] The word *catholic* means “universal.”

⁺ The wording of the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments printed here is drawn from the *English Standard Version*. The wording of each is slightly different from that in Luther's letter to his barber, which is the English translation of Luther's German translation of the Greek and Hebrew. I have used this version because it not likely you will use Luther's translation after you complete this study. For this same reason, I have used a modern English version of the Apostles' Creed.

[□] The words, “For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen” are not found in all early manuscripts.

Session Three[◇]

Martin Luther, Man of Prayer

Session Purpose

To empower our prayer lives by examining Martin Luther's example in prayer and his advice to his barber on prayer.

Overview of This Week's Prayer Discipleship Assignments

1. Invest time: Each day, spend at least fifteen minutes prayerfully doing the devotional Daily Exercises. This week these include making a personal prayer list, reading Scripture, and other exercises designed to increase your understanding of what prayer is and improve your ability to use proven tools (especially the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed) to make your prayer more fruitful. Special emphasis is placed on interceding for those on your prayer list using the insights you gain from your reading and Group Discussion.

2. Read: Over the next seven days pages 7–41 of *A Simple Way to Pray (SWP)*.

Begin the "Read" portion of each exercise by praying for your Fireteam members and yourself; pray something like this: "Lord, through what we read today, teach [insert the names of your Fireteam members] and me to pray." Also, as you do the Daily Exercises, have a running conversation with the Father about what you read.

3. Write: Don't just silently run the thoughts through your mind. Read actively; underline or highlight key words or thoughts. Jot down your responses to the reading and be prepared to share them with your Fireteam at your next Group Discussion.

4. Pray: Each exercise ends with a prayer drawing on the subject of the day. If you *thoughtfully* insert the names of the people on your prayer list in the prayer, it will help you pray the insights gained from the exercise.

In the Lord's Pattern Prayer, Jesus uses the first-person plural pronouns (our, us); this is meant to remind His disciples that Jesus, God's only begotten Son,² grants to His brethren, God's adopted sons,¹⁷ the privilege of entering the Father's presence with Him. The first-person plural pronouns are used in suggested prayers in this guide to remind you that are not praying alone; rather, you are joining with the Lord Jesus and other adopted sons, especially your Fireteam members.

5. Prepare for your next Group Discussion: On the day before your Fireteam meets, review the past week's Daily Exercises and select three things you want to discuss.

[◇] Remember, sessions one and two are not contained in this Participant's Guide. All the resources for them are contained in the *SWP* Group Discussion Facilitator's Guide and DVD.

Day 1: Introduction

Read: Dr. R. C. Sproul's foreword (*SWP*, pages 7–8) and the following introduction to this course.

A Simple Way to Pray is usually the first course in Kingdom Intercessors' Training (KIT); KIT provides prayer discipleship resources* that help believers participate effectively with the Lord Jesus Christ in His ministry of intercession by igniting their passion for kingdom-focused prayer and training them to pray with kingdom focus so they can engage effectively in defensive and offensive spiritual warfare. The training consists of Daily Exercises, meetings that feature discussion, and prayer.

Praying with kingdom focus assumes wholehearted confidence in God's providence. It is the Spirit-enabled,³ loving, obedient,⁴ conversational response of God's adopted sons⁵ to their heavenly Father⁶ in harmony with His self-revelation in the Bible and most specifically in the person, work, and teaching of His only begotten Son⁷ for the purpose of advancing God's kingdom of grace,⁸ preparing for God's kingdom of glory,⁹ and destroying the kingdom of Satan and sin.¹⁰

Conversational prayer is a dialogue, not a monologue. A monologue is an uninterrupted speech by one person; a dialogue involves two or more people who alternate talking and listening to each other. God initiated this dialogue: "Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world."¹¹ God spoke to the human race through both His written Word and His Son, and He expects His people to dialogue with Him, praying for what Scripture explicitly states or for what is consistent in principle with the written text.

Disciplined daily personal devotion should include a balanced diet of reading the Bible and other literature that helps believers "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."¹² Disciplined devotions should be regularly scheduled; like meals, devotions are an essential part of every Christian's normal way of life. As the nutrition provided by meals provides physical strength that enables people to do their daily duties, so the vitality gained from regular personal devotions provides spiritual strength that enables people to do everything as unto the Lord.¹³

Scheduled prayer is important, but prayer should not be limited to scheduled times.

* Serve International provides resources to ignite passion for kingdom-focused prayer and to equip believers to be better Kingdom Intercessors. Three of these resources are primary: *A Simple Way to Pray*, *Improve Your Prayer Life*, and *Ignite Your Leadership*. These should be completed first. Three secondary courses are: *Intercede for and with Your Family*, *Invigorate Your Church*, and *Impact Your World*. These courses train believers to spiritually defend their hearts, homes, and local churches, and to accomplish God's will in their personal worlds. These are strategic targets that must be defensively guarded with kingdom-focused prayer. The flesh, the Devil, and the world are strategic offensive targets that must be proactively engaged. Serve International provides one resource designed to help local churches become "Houses of prayer for all nations." *Armorbearer Intercessor Ministry* helps to mobilize leaders and members to intercede for each other, building a corporate atmosphere of answered prayer. Two resources designed to help Christian homes become "Houses of prayer for all nations" are: *Heaven's Outpost*, *Making Your Home a House of Prayer* and *The Neighborhood Spiritual Watch*, which helps to mobilize members of local churches to intercede for their neighborhoods. These can be obtained from kingdomprayer.org

Believers should pray everywhere¹⁴ about everything¹⁵ at all times.¹⁶ Prayer should become a reflex to the Spirit's prompting as it relates to the people and situations in which Providence places the believer. Reflexive prayer is spontaneous, but a personal devotional time requires disciplined effort and planning. Consistent, disciplined devotion adds substance and strength to reflexive prayer.

Incidentally, people who pray only spontaneously tend to pray mostly for urgent matters, while people who practice disciplined daily devotion tend to deal with the more important matters and to be more biblical in their random prayer.

Daily Exercises

To encourage you to develop daily disciplined prayer, *SWP* Group Discussion urges you to invest about fifteen minutes daily doing the Daily Exercises. The entire fifteen minutes should be a prayerful dialogue with the Lord. Expect God to communicate with you through the text and the personal coaching instructions, and tell God your responses.

The tips in this Participant's Guide will coach you through each Daily Exercise. Use them like you might use training wheels on a bicycle—as they are needed. Do not read the written prayers as magical incantations. Reading aloud will sharpen your focus and assist your understanding. Then develop your responses into your own prayers. The Daily Exercises should be done, as much as possible, at the same time and in the same place every day; they should not be done in leftover minutes.

Discussion Sessions

Fireteams can discuss alone or in Squads of two or more Fireteams. Usually, members of stand-alone Fireteams are of the same gender; however, in a Squad of Fireteams, it is often necessary to mix genders. Some Fireteams discuss face to face, while others connect virtually on the Internet. Meetings can be weekly for about one hour or monthly for about two hours. Most of the meeting time should be spent discussing and praying.

Discussion is not listening to a lecture or sermon. *SWP* Group Discussion participants discuss what they are learning from the Daily Exercises. Discussion is the means for processing insights gained from the Daily Exercises into prayer so that you might “know Him.”¹⁷ As you discuss, you should remember: “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.”¹⁸

Be a contributing participant, not a mere spectator. Prepare specifically for each Fireteam Group Discussion. Once each week, review the past week's Daily Exercises and select three things to discuss with your Fireteam: things you want to understand better, things you might find hard to do, and the most significant thing you have learned from the Daily Exercises.

When you meet with your Fireteam, you all should claim Christ's promise: “Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.”¹⁹ You should rely on “the Spirit of truth” to guide you “into all the truth.”²⁰

Prayer

Prayer, sometimes silent, other times audible, should permeate your work on the Daily

Exercises and your Fireteam meetings. From your heart, you should frequently ask the Lord to teach you and your team members to pray, and expect Him to do this.

After Group Discussion, you and your Fireteam should use the insights you have gained from the Daily Exercises and the Group Discussion to pray for each other and the people on your prayer lists. You are free to pray aloud or not to pray aloud as the Spirit directs. If He directs you to pray aloud, do this conversationally, speaking with God as you would talk to a friend, praying sentence prayers. Don't worry about silence.

Word of Mouth

The purpose of this "Word of Mouth" is threefold. First, God gives more to believers who share with others what He gives to them. Second, the more people talk about prayer in a positive way, the more people will be encouraged to pray. Third, more people will participate in SWP.

Whether you are using this guide for your personal devotions or to prepare for Group Discussion, you will receive more from the Lord if you share with a selected friend each week what you are receiving. Every seventh day, you are urged to review what you have read and discussed that week. From this you are urged to find one insight, write it in your guide, and then share it with the friend you identified earlier. This sharing can be face to face or by phone, email, text messaging, Facebook, or some other social network.

A Final Reminder

As significant as prayer is, it is a means, not an end. The Spirit of supplication uses prayer to strengthen your communion with the Father and your conformity to the Son, and He empowers prayer to be a mighty weapon with which you can combat the flesh, the Devil, and the world.

Respond

1. Like Luther, I delight in prayer and cling desperately to this means of grace.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

2. What do you expect from doing the Daily Exercises and Group Discussion of *A Simple Way to Pray*?

Pray: "Father, make me aware of Satan's unbridled, vicious assault on me and Your church. In my prayer life, help me to be simple but not simplistic. Make *A Simple Way to Pray* an "open sesame" that will enable me to develop a practical method for effective prayer. I ask You to pour out Your Spirit of grace and supplication on me. Cause my soul to hunger and thirst for You, O God. Enable me to give myself to prayer, and keep me from being legalistic or mechanical in this discipline. Begin now to put in my mind

and my heart the people in my home, my church, and my personal world that You desire for me to pray for over the weeks of this course. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.”

Day 2: Developing Your Personal Prayer List

Read: Developing Your Personal Prayer List.

The purpose of this course is to help believers participate more effectively with the Lord Jesus Christ in His ministry of intercession by discussing Martin Luther’s example in prayer and advice on prayer so that their prayer becomes more biblical, bold, powerful, and proactive, resulting in blessing for them, their families, their churches, and the people in their circles of influence.

With the help of the Holy Spirit, you can achieve this goal by studying the assigned reading, discussing it, and *immediately* applying what you learn to your practice of prayer.

There are four strategic battlefields (you; your home; your local church; and your personal world) on which your enemies (the flesh, the Devil, and the wicked world) will attack. The first and most strategic battlefield is *within you*; your enemies will target your heart in order to destroy your ability to pray and the development of your leadership potential. Your enemies will also attack on three battlefields *around you*: your home; your local church; and your personal world. On each of these battlefields, there are people with whom you have contact and relationships. God desires you to intercede for some of these people. Rely on the Holy Spirit to show you which people are your strategic targets and how to pray for them using the insights gained from Luther’s example and advice. Three things will help you do this: identify, schedule, and pray.

1. Identify: Ask the Holy Spirit to impress on your heart the people for whom you should pray. Write their names on the worksheet below. Start with yourself.

A. Yourself—Jesus prayed for Himself first.²¹

Pray for your heart. Ask the Lord to show you what to pray for yourself as you prayerfully meditate on the following Scripture passages: “Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.”²² “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?”²³ “Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!”²⁴ “You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.”²⁵

Pray for your ability to pray. “We do not know what to pray for as we ought.”²⁶ We are finite and fallen creatures, limited in knowledge and biased by sin. When one of the disciples said to Jesus, “Lord, teach us to pray,”²⁷ he was praying for the ability to pray for the other disciples and himself.²⁸ We should also pray for the ability to pray for ourselves and our co-workers.

Pray for your leadership. In this context, we define leadership as being on “God’s agenda and helping other believers to be on God’s agenda, so that together we can seek and do God’s will on earth.”²⁹ This usually means expanding your comfort zone

and being open to God's directions. The apostle Paul reminds us, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."³⁰ Write what the Lord brings to mind.

My Heart:

My Ability to Pray:

My Leadership:

B. Your family—List the names of each member of your family, and then ask, "Lord, show me what to pray for each member of my family." Write this below.

C. Your local church—List the names of your pastor(s) and other key leaders; also list their family members. Ask: "Lord, show me what to pray for my pastor(s), other key leaders, and the members of their families." Write this below.

D. Your personal world—Your world contains two circles: people you influence and people who influence you. Among the people you influence, your friends, associates, and neighbors, there are people who are not "gripped with the gospel." This means *they have never told you they trust Christ alone for their salvation and their lives do not show they are seeking to live for Him*. The fact that they have not told you they are trusting Christ alone does not mean they are not believers. But it does mean you do not know if they are trusting Christ and as a Christian you should be concerned. Ask the Lord to bring to your mind two ungripped people. Write their names on the lines below and pray that God will grip them with the gospel.

The people who influence you include the president and vice president of the United States, the governor of your state, the mayor of the city in which you live, and your U.S. and state senators and representatives. Ask the Lord to bring to your mind two ungripped people. Write their names on the lines below and pray that God will grip them with the gospel.

NOTE: When you complete this list, it may be helpful to print the names on 3x5 cards and use the cards as a bookmark in your copy of *A Simple Way to Pray*. As you pray for the people on your list, the Lord may lead you to send them a copy of Luther's *A Simple Way to Pray* and a note telling them you are using the insights of this book to pray for them.

2. Schedule: Devote about fifteen minutes daily to do the Daily Exercises in this participant's manual. This will guide you in the application of insights you gain to prayer for the people on your list. Do this each day for the next six weeks. Think of this as a daily appointment with Jesus. Keep it! Don't leave it for spare minutes.

3. Pray: In each of your Fireteam's Group Discussions, ask the Holy Spirit to use the insights you and your team members gain from Luther's example and advice to pray for your heart, your ability to pray, your leadership, your home, your local church, and your personal world.

Pray: "Father, help me to faithfully study Luther's example in prayer and his advice on prayer. Help me to apply Luther's insights on prayer to my prayer life. Through this study, increase Your spiritual power in my heart, my ability to pray, my leadership, my home, my local church, and my personal world. Make my church 'a house of prayer for all the nations' by causing a significant percentage of our church members to make their hearts and their homes houses of prayer for all the nations. Place a burden for intercession for our pastor and our church's key leadership on the hearts of every member. Father, make me sensitive to the spiritual consequences of people not being gripped by the gospel. Help me pray for **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]**. Help me keep my daily appointments with You and make me a person of prayer. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen."

Day 3: Martin Luther, Man of Prayer (Part One)

Read: *SWP*, "Martin Luther, Man of Prayer," pages 13–17.

Respond

1. Luther had a daily time of disciplined prayer and then lived in the spirit of prayer throughout the day so he could accomplish his gigantic labors. As your life gets more and more hectic, what happens to your prayer life?

2. A person who works without praying and without listening to God is living unnaturally.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

3. By prayer, I proactively engage the forces of evil.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

4. Luther is not a valid role model of a praying believer for all Christians.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

5. God does not expect pastors to be examples for their followers.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Pray: “Father, pour out Your Spirit of grace and supplication on **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me. Cause our souls to hunger and thirst for You, O God. Enable us to give ourselves to prayer. By your grace, keep me from being legalistic or mechanical in this discipline. Encourage me with Luther’s example in prayer and his advice on prayer. Don’t let me be overwhelmed by the fact that I do not spend as much time in prayer as he did. Enable me to be what You desire me to be where You have placed me in my home, my local church, and my personal world. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

Day 4: Martin Luther, Man of Prayer (Part Two)

Read: *SWP*, “Luther’s Birth and Early Years” and “Prayer in the Time of Martin Luther,” pages 17–19.

Respond

1. Who influenced Luther’s early understanding of what prayer was supposed to be like?

2. Which of the following can be said of your prayers? My prayers are:

- Simple like a child’s
- Expressions of my love for God
- My joyful trust and surrender to God
- Impulsively filled with passion poured out from my heart without reservation
- Fervent expressions of the needs of my heart and conscience
- Constant cries to God for comfort, help, and grace

3. Who, outside of the Bible, has been the major influence on your pattern of prayer?

Pray: “Father, pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication on **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me. Cause our souls to hunger and thirst for You, O God. Enable us to give ourselves to prayer. Cause us to pray with a childlike simplicity and love for You. Blend into our prayers streams of joyful trust and surrender to You. Fill our prayers with holy passion poured forth without reservation from our hearts. Help us to express the needs of our hearts, simply and fervently. Enable us to constantly cry out to You for comfort, help, and grace. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

Day 5: Martin Luther, Man of Prayer (Part Three)

Read: *SWP*, “The Confrontation,” pages 20–28.

Respond

1. The reformation of my prayer life might set off a revolution that will eventually reform the church.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

2. On several occasions, both Jesus and Luther prayed through the entire night. What is the spiritual value in doing this?

3. In private struggles in prayer, I gain unshakable strength, assurance, and confidence with which I am able to defy a world of enemies.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Pray: Father, pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication on **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me. Today, much prayer has degenerated into self-centered wishful thinking. Teach us to pray in a way that pleases You. Use us to build an army of kingdom intercessors. Enable us in private struggles in prayer to gain unshakable strength, assurance, and confidence with which we will be able to defy a world of enemies. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

Day 6: Advice for a Barber

Read: *SWP*, pages 29–35.

Respond

1. Write a brief letter describing your present habits of prayer, as if you were responding to a request from your barber or hairstylist. In this letter, describe what, when, and how you pray. How helpful would this letter be to another Christian?
2. Like Luther I should whisper my prayers out loud.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Pray: “Father, pour out on **[insert your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me Your Spirit of grace and supplication. Cause our souls to hunger and thirst for You, O God. Enable us to give ourselves to prayer. By Your grace, enable us to plan when and where we will pray each day and then to do it. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

Day 7: The Way to Pray by Martin Luther

Read: *SWP*, “The Way to Pray by Martin Luther,” pages 37–41.

Respond

1. What did Luther hope to accomplish by reciting the Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles’ Creed at the beginning of his prayer time?

2. Prayer is my first business of the morning and my last business at night.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Pray: “Father, pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication on **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me. Keep us from being cool and joyless in prayer. Help us meet with You the first thing in the morning

and last thing at night. Keep us from false, deluded ideas that say prayer can wait. Transform our work into a sacrifice of praise. Enable us to guard against sin and wrongdoing. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.”

Prepare for Fireteam Group Discussion Three:

Be a contributing participant, not a mere spectator. Prepare for Group Discussion with your team by reviewing what you have read this week and writing your responses to the following three items:

1. One thing I want to understand better:

2. One thing I might find hard to do:

3. One helpful insight I gained that I will share with the friend I identified earlier:

A Simple Way to Pray Group Discussion
Session Three: Martin Luther, Man of Prayer
Feedback Form

This form will be collected at the end of the session. The information requested will be used *only* to supply you with supplemental information for this group, and for the facilitator and apprentice to pray for you. Please print legibly.

Name _____ Date _____

Please circle all that apply: **Title:** Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss Rev. Dr.

Gender: Male Female

Marital Status: Single Married Widowed Separated Divorced

Age Group: 14–17 18–25 26–34 35–44 45–54 55–65 Over 65

Occupation/Profession: _____

I. PURPOSE: To empower our prayer lives by examining Martin Luther's example in prayer and his advice to his barber on prayer.

II. ACCOUNTABILITY

(Circle the number of days you did this)

1. I invested about 15 minutes doing the exercises.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Explain:

2. I wrote my responses in my *Participant's Guide*.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment:

3. I shared one insight with a friend.

Yes No

Comment:

III. PRESENTATION: Jot down insights gained.

IV. GROUP DISCUSSION

A. FIRETEAM (SUBGROUP) From this week's Daily Exercises:

1. One thing I want to understand better is . . .

2. One thing I might find hard to do is . . .

3. The most significant thing I learned was . . .

4. Our Fireteam wants the Squad to discuss the following question . . .

B. SQUAD (WHOLE GROUP) Jot down insights gained:

V. PRAY: Pray in your Fireteam for yourself, each other, and the people on your prayer list using insights gained from this week's Daily Exercises and the Group Discussion.

Jot down what you would like the facilitator to pray for you.

VI. SHARE: From this week's Daily Exercises and the Group Discussion, one insight I will share with a friend is . . .

VII. EVALUATE: The Daily Exercises and the Group Discussion enabled me to achieve this session's purpose.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Session Four

The Lord's Prayer

Session Purpose

To empower our prayer lives by using Martin Luther's example of praying the Lord's Prayer and by studying his advice on praying the Lord's Prayer.

Overview of This Week's Prayer Discipleship Assignments

1. Invest time: Each day, spend at least fifteen minutes in a devotional time prayerfully doing the Daily Exercises and interceding for those on your prayer list using the insights gained from your reading and Group Discussion.

In the reading assignment for day eight, Luther says, "I say quietly to myself and word-for-word the Lord's Prayer, Ten Commandments, the Creed, and, if I have time, some words of Christ or of Paul, or some psalms, just as a child might do." From today through day 21, you are asked to do as Luther did—begin each prayer discipleship exercise by reading aloud or reciting "the Lay Bible" (the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed). These three tools are printed on pages 11 and 12. For Days 22-42, this is an optional exercise. Don't silently run the thoughts through your mind; at least whisper them loud enough for your ears to hear. If you recite or read these instruments aloud daily, they will be branded on your brain and will form a set of tracks on which you can drive your "train of prayer." You will have to work hard to keep this recitation from becoming mindless repetition. Thousands of Christians down through the centuries have borne testimony to the benefit of this discipline. You will also be guided to select one petition from the Lord's Prayer, one of the Ten Commandments, or one article from the creed, and to ask the Holy Spirit to direct you in the use of it as the basis of your spontaneous prayer.

2. Read: Over the next seven days, read *SWP*, pages 41–50.

Begin the "Read" portion of each exercise by praying for your Fireteam members and yourself; pray something like this: 'Lord, through what we read today, teach [insert the names of your Fireteam members] and me to pray.' This is printed on the bookmark.

The reading assignments this week are brief. Luther describes how he prayed the Lord's Prayer. His words show some of the deep implications of the Lord's Prayer.

3. Write: Jot down your responses to the reading and be prepared to share them with your Fireteam at your next Group Discussion.

4. Pray: Each exercise ends with a prayer drawing on the subject of the day. If you *thoughtfully* insert the names of the people on your prayer list in the prayer, it will help you pray the insights gained from the exercise.

5. Prepare for your next Group Discussion: On the day before your Fireteam meets, review the past week's Daily Exercises and select three things you want to discuss.

Day 8: Hallowed Be Your Name

Recite or Read Aloud

1. The Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed.
2. The first petition: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name" (Matthew 6:9b).
3. The promise: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (Romans 8:26).

NOTE: On days 8–42 you are urged to read aloud or recite this verse and claim its promise. Human knowledge of God and His plan for time and eternity is very small, and the little that we know is biased by sin. Therefore, believers need the Holy Spirit to enable them pray as they should. Reading or reciting this verse aloud each day and claiming its promise for the next 34 days will implant its truth deep in your heart.

Pray: "Holy Spirit, help us turn this first petition into our own prayer." (In a few words, pray as the Spirit guides you.)

Read: *SWP*, "The First Petition: 'Hallowed be Your name,'" pages 41–42.

Respond

1. I should pray that God would destroy and root out the abominations, idolatry, and heresy of all false teachers and fanatics who wrongly used His name and in scandalous ways took it in vain and horribly blasphemed it.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

2. I should pray that God would convert or restrain unbelievers.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Pray: "Father, pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication on **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me. Cause our souls to hunger and thirst for You, O God. Enable us to give ourselves to prayer. Lord God, root out and destroy the abominations, idolatry, and heresy of false teachers and fanatics who wrongly use Your name and in scandalous ways take it in vain and horribly blaspheme it. Father, convert or restrain unbelievers. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen."

Day 9: Your Kingdom Come

Recite or Read Aloud

1. The Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed.
2. The second petition: "Your kingdom come" (Matthew 6:10a).
3. The promise: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (Romans 8:26).

Pray: "Holy Spirit, help us turn this second petition into our own prayer." (In a few words, pray as the Spirit guides you.)

Read: *SWP*, "The Second Petition: 'Your kingdom come,'" pages 42–43.

Respond

1. How do worldly wisdom and reason profane God's name?

2. Why does God give power, might, wealth, and glory on earth?

3. I should pray that God would convert those in positions of power and defend His people from those who would not be converted.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Pray: "Father, pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication on **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me. Cause our souls to hunger and thirst for You, O God. Give us courage to confront worldly wisdom and reason that profane Your name. Help us intercede for specific people in positions of power [insert names and positions]; cause them to acknowledge that You have put them in the positions they occupy. Convert those in positions of power, but if they will not be converted, don't let them trouble Your church. Deliver us from empire builders and help us support kingdom building. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen."

Day 10: Your Will Be Done on Earth as in Heaven

Recite or Read Aloud

1. The Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed.
2. The third petition: "Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10b).
3. The promise: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (Romans 8:26).

Pray: "Holy Spirit, help us turn this third petition into our own prayer." (In a few words, pray as the Spirit guides you.)

Read: *SWP*, "The Third Petition: 'Your will be done on earth as in heaven,'" pages 43–44.

Respond

1. Why pray, "Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven"?
-
-

Pray: "Father, pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication on **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me. You know that the world cannot destroy Your name or root out Your kingdom, but it still tries to do this day and night with wicked tricks and schemes. It huddles together in secret counsel, giving encouragement and support. It rages and threatens and goes about with every evil intention to destroy Your name, Word, kingdom, and children. Lord, You promised, 'everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith' (1 John 5:4). In Jesus' name I claim the victory. Amen."

Day 11: Give Us Today Our Daily Bread

Recite or Read Aloud

1. The Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed.
2. The fourth petition: "Give us this day our daily bread" (Matthew 6:11).
3. The promise: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (Romans 8:26).

Pray: "Holy Spirit, help us turn this fourth petition into our own prayer." (In a few words, pray as the Spirit guides you.)

Read: *SWP*, "The Fourth Petition: 'Give us today our daily bread,'" page 44.

Respond

1. List several of the themes that Luther included when he prayed, "Give us this day our daily bread."

Pray: "Father, pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication on **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me. Grant us Your blessing in this temporal and physical life. Protect us against war and disorder. Bless our president and all in positions of authority over us. Protect our houses, properties, and families. Deliver us from the destroyer and all his wicked angels. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen."

Day 12: Forgive Us Our Debts, as We Forgive Our Debtors

Recite or Read Aloud

1. The Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed.
2. The fifth petition: "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (Matthew 6:12).
3. The promise: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (Romans 8:26).

Pray: "Holy Spirit, help us turn this fifth petition into our own prayer." (In a few words, pray as the Spirit guides you.)

Read: *SWP*, "The Fifth Petition: 'Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,'" page 45.

Respond

1. When we pray, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," what are we asking God to do for us? And for those who harm us?

Pray: "Father, pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication on **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me. Thank You for forgiving my sin. By Your grace, enable me to forgive **[insert names of people from whom you have previously withheld forgiveness]**. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen."

Day 13: Lead Us Not into Temptation and Deliver Us from the Evil One

Recite or Read Aloud

1. The Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed.
2. The sixth petition: "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil" (Matthew 6:13).
3. The promise: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (Romans 8:26).

Pray: "Holy Spirit, help us turn this sixth petition into our own prayer." (In a few words, pray as the Spirit guides you.)

Read: *SWP*, "The Sixth Petition: 'Lead us not into temptation'" and "The Seventh Petition: 'And deliver us from the evil one,'" pages 45–46.

Respond

1. What did Luther ask for when he prayed, "Lead us not into temptation"?

2. What did Luther ask for when he prayed, "Deliver us from evil"?

Pray: "Father, pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication on **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me. Keep us fit and alert, eager, and diligent in Your Word and service, so that we do not become complacent, lazy, and slothful, as though we had already achieved everything. When our last hour comes, in Your mercy grant us a blessed departure from this vale of sorrows, so that in the face of death we do not become fearful or despondent but in firm faith commit our souls into Your hands. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen."

Day 14: The Amen

Recite or Read Aloud

1. The Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed.
2. The closing benediction: "For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen" (Matthew 6:13c).
3. The promise: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what

to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” (Romans 8:26).

Pray: “Holy Spirit, help us turn this closing benediction into our own prayer.” (In a few words, pray as the Spirit guides you.)

Read: *SWP*, “The Amen,” pages 46–50.

Respond

1. What does it mean when we say “Amen” at the end of our prayer?

2. If anything is to be done well, it requires the full attention of one’s senses and the use of every part of one’s body.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

3. How do you guard against your prayers being interrupted by thoughts dealing with the day’s activities?

4. How can we use the Lord’s Prayer daily and not have it become idle chatter?

5. The Lord’s Prayer is the greatest martyr on earth. Everybody tortures and abuses it; few take comfort and joy in its proper use.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Pray: “Father, pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication on **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me. Cause our souls to hunger and thirst for You, O God. Enable us to give ourselves to prayer. By Your grace, teach us to use the prayer Your Son gave us as the model prayer for our lives. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

Prepare for Fireteam Group Discussion Four:

Be a contributing participant, not a mere spectator. Review the past week's Daily Exercises and select three things you want to discuss:

1. One thing I want to understand better:

2. One thing I might find hard to do:

3. The most significant thing I learned this week that I will share with the friend I identified earlier:

A Simple Way to Pray Group Discussion
Session Four: The Lord's Prayer
Feedback Form

This form will be collected at the end of the session. The information requested will be used *only* to supply you with supplemental information for this group, and for the facilitator and apprentice to pray for you. Please print legibly.

Name _____ Date _____

I. SESSION PURPOSE: To empower our prayer lives by using Martin Luther's example of praying the Lord's Prayer and by studying his advice on praying the Lord's Prayer.

II. ACCOUNTABILITY

(Circle the number of days you did this)

1. I invested about 15 minutes doing the exercises.
Explain:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. I wrote my responses in my *Participant's Guide*.
Comment:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. I shared one insight with a friend.
Comment:

Yes No

III. PRESENTATION: Jot down insights gained.

IV. GROUP DISCUSSION

A. FIRETEAM (SUBGROUP) From this week's Daily Exercises:

1. One thing I want to understand better is . . .

2. One thing I might find hard to do is . . .

3. The one most significant thing I learned was . . .

4. Our Fireteam wants the Squad to discuss the following question . . .

B. SQUAD (WHOLE GROUP) Jot down insights gained:

V. PRAY: Pray in your Fireteam for yourself, each other, and the people on your prayer list using insights gained from this week's Daily Exercises and the Group Discussion.

Jot down what you would like the facilitator to pray for you.

VI. SHARE: From this week's Daily Exercises and the Group Discussion, one insight I will share with a friend is . . .

VII. EVALUATE: The Daily Exercises and the Group Discussion enabled me to achieve this session's purpose.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Session Five

The Ten Commandments and the Apostles' Creed

Session Purpose

To empower our prayer lives by using Martin Luther's example of praying the Ten Commandments and the Apostles' Creed, and by studying his advice on praying the Ten Commandments and the Apostles' Creed.

Overview of This Week's Prayer Discipleship Assignments

- 1. Invest time:** Each day, spend at least fifteen minutes prayerfully doing the Daily Exercises and interceding for those on your prayer list using the insights gained from your reading and Group Discussion.
- 2. Read:** Over the next seven days, read *SWP*, pages 51–74. Follow the same instructions as last week.
- 3. Write:** Jot down your responses to the reading and be prepared to share them with your Fireteam at your next Group Discussion.
- 4. Pray:** Each exercise ends with a prayer drawing on the subject of the day. If you insert the names of the people on your prayer list in the prayer, it will help you *thoughtfully* pray the insights gained from the exercise.
- 5. Prepare for your next Group Discussion:** On the day before your Fireteam meets, review the past week's Daily Exercises and select three things you want to discuss.

Day 15: The Ten Commandments: You Shall Have No Other Gods

Recite or Read Aloud

1. The Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed.
2. The first commandment: "And God spoke all these words, saying, 'I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me'" (Exodus 20:1–3).
3. The promise: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (Romans 8:26).

Pray: "Holy Spirit, help us turn the first commandment into our own prayer." (In a few words, pray as the Spirit guides you.)

Read: *SWP*, "The Ten Commandments" and "The First Commandment: 'I am the Lord your God. You shall have no other gods,'" pages 51–52.

Respond

1. What are the four strands in the garland Luther sees in each of the Ten Commandments?

2. After praying this commandment, what are you thankful for?

3. I should more frequently confess my sin and ingratitude for shamefully despising God's fatherly care throughout my life, and for fearfully provoking His wrath by countless acts of idolatry.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Pray: "Father, pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication on **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me. Cause our souls to hunger and thirst for You, O God. Enable us to give ourselves to prayer. Teach us to see Your commandments as instruction, grounds for thanksgiving, cause for confession, and motivation for prayer. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen."

Day 16: You Shall Not Make for Yourself a Carved Image and You Shall Not Take the Name of the Lord Your God in Vain

Recite or Read Aloud

1. The Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed.
2. The second and third commandments: "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain" (Exodus 20:4–7).
3. The promise: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (Romans 8:26).

Pray: "Holy Spirit, help us turn the second and third commandments into our own prayer." (In a few words, pray as the Spirit guides you.)

Read: *SWP*, "The Second Commandment: 'You shall not make for yourself a carved image'" and "The Third Commandment: 'You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain,'" pages 52–55.

Respond

1. How does praying the second and third commandments impact you?

2. Modern men and women no longer worship idols.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

3. God's name is my refuge to which I flee and find protection.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Pray: “Father, I confess my great sin of idolatry in that I have made a god of my appetites. I am an immoral, impure, greedy, covetous idolater. I brag about shameful things and most of my thoughts are focused on life here on earth. I have not properly esteemed the instruction and preaching of Your Word, nor have I kept pure and entire the worship and ordinances You have appointed in Your Word. I repent of these sins and ask for Your mercy and grace.

“I confess that I have grievously and shamefully sinned against Your commandment, taking Your name in vain all my life. I have not only failed to invoke, extol, and honor Your holy name, I have been ungrateful for such gifts and have—by swearing, lying, and betraying—misused them in the pursuit of shame and sin. This I bitterly regret and ask for grace and forgiveness.

“O my God and Lord, help **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me to learn and understand Your commandment against idolatry more fully every day and to live by it in sincere confidence. Deliver us from trying to be wiser than You. Keep us from fearing, loving, or trusting any person or thing as we should fear, love and trust You. Enable us to delight in the instruction and preaching of Your Word. Help us trust You with all our hearts and lean not on our own understanding. Help us delight in the fact that we belong to You and that You totally rule over all Your creation. Help us to receive and observe the worship and ordinances You have appointed in Your Word. I pray this in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.”

Day 17: Remember the Sabbath Day

Recite or Read Aloud

1. The Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles’ Creed.
2. The fourth commandment: “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy” (Exodus 20:8–11).
3. The promise: “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” (Romans 8:26).

Pray: “Holy Spirit, help us turn the fourth commandment into our own prayer.” (In a few words, pray as the Spirit guides you.)

Read: *SWP*, “The Fourth Commandment: ‘Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy,’” pages 55–57.

Respond

1. What sanctifies the Sabbath?

2. Others observing me would realize that on the Sabbath, I give the highest priority to hearing and contemplating God's Word.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Pray: "Father, pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication on **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me. I thank You for Your great and beautiful goodness and grace that You have given us in the preaching of Your Word. You have instructed us to make use of it, especially on the Sabbath day. The meditation of the human heart can never exhaust the treasure of Your Word. Your Word is the only light in the darkness of this life; it is a word of life, consolation, and supreme blessedness. Where this precious and saving word is absent, nothing remains but a fearsome and terrifying darkness, error and faction, death and every calamity, and the tyranny of the Devil himself. We can see this with our own eyes every day.

"I acknowledge and confess great sin and wicked ingratitude on my part because all my life I have made disgraceful use of the Sabbath and have thereby despised Your precious and dear Word in a wretched way. I have been too lazy, listless, and uninterested to listen to it, let alone to have desired it sincerely or to have been grateful for it. You, my dear God, have proclaimed Your Word to me and I have treated it vainly, dismissed the noble treasure, and trampled it underfoot. You have tolerated this in Your great and divine mercy and have not ceased in Your fatherly, divine love and faithfulness to keep on preaching to me and calling me to the salvation of my soul. For this I repent and ask for grace and forgiveness. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen."

Day 18: Honor Your Father and Mother and You Shall Not Kill

Recite or Read Aloud

1. The Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed.
2. The fifth and sixth commandments: "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. You shall not murder" (Exodus 20:12–13).
3. The promise: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (Romans 8:26).

Pray: “Holy Spirit, help us turn the fifth and sixth commandments into our own prayer.”
(In a few words, pray as the Spirit guides you.)

Read: *SWP*, “The Fifth Commandment: ‘Honor your father and your mother’” and “The Sixth Commandment: ‘You shall not kill,’” pages 58–63.

Respond

1. What does Luther say is the purpose of the commandment “Honor your father and your mother”?

2. God Himself may withhold long life from disobedient children.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

3. What are the implications of the command “You shall not murder”?

Pray: “Father, pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication on **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me. Cause our souls to hunger and thirst for You, O God. Enable us to give ourselves to prayer.

“Thank You for the life You gave me through my parents. Enable me to glorify You in the way I live the gift of life. Dear Father, lead us to an understanding of Your sacred commandments to honor our parents and to not murder. Help us keep them and live in accordance with them. Grant us Your grace that we and all others may treat each other in kind, gentle, charitable ways, forgiving one another from the heart, bearing each other’s faults and shortcomings, and thus living together in true peace and concord, as the commandments teach and require us to do. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

Day 19: You Shall Not Commit Adultery

Recite or Read Aloud

1. The Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles’ Creed.
2. The seventh commandment: “You shall not commit adultery” (Exodus 20:14).
3. The promise: “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what

to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” (Romans 8:26).

Pray: “Holy Spirit, help us turn the seventh commandment into our own prayer.” (In a few words, pray as the Spirit guides you.)

Read: *SWP*, “The Seventh Commandment: ‘You shall not commit adultery,’” pages 63–65.

Respond

1. What are the implications of the command “You shall not commit adultery”?

2. God is too busy running the universe to care what people do sexually.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Pray: “Father, pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication on **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me. Cause our souls to hunger and thirst for You, O God. Enable us to give ourselves to prayer. Enable us to assist, save, protect, and guard our marriages. Use us to protect decency to the best of our ability. Help us preserve and protect the good character and honor of our neighbors’ families. Make Your people holy; keep us morally pure. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

Day 20: You Shall Not Steal; You Shall Not Bear False Witness; You Shall Not Covet

Recite or Read Aloud

1. The Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles’ Creed.
2. The eighth, ninth, and tenth commandments: “You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor’s” (Exodus 20:15–17).
3. The promise: “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” (Romans 8:26).

Pray: “Holy Spirit, help us turn the eighth, ninth, and tenth commandments into our own prayer.” (In a few words, pray as the Spirit guides you.)

Read: *SWP*, “The Eighth Commandment: ‘You shall not steal,’” “The Ninth Commandment: ‘You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor,’” and “The Tenth Commandment: ‘You shall not covet . . . ,’” pages 65–69.

Respond

1. I support myself by the sweat of my brow and eat my bread in honor.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

2. I see to it that my neighbors are not defrauded, just as I wish for myself.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

3. I am truthful to others.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

4. Luther said, “With practice, one can take the Ten Commandments on one day, a psalm or chapter of Holy Scripture the next day, and use them as flint and steel to kindle a flame in your heart.” What do you think of this plan?

Pray: “Father, pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication on **[insert names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me. Cause our souls to hunger and thirst for You, O God. Enable us to give ourselves to prayer. Keep us sensitive to the Holy Spirit; when He begins to preach in our hearts, help us honor Him by being still and listening to Him. Also, help us keep healthy variety in our devotional time with You.

“Grant us the grace to learn from the commandments not to steal, not to bear false witness, and not to covet. Enable us to become better people, so that there may be less theft, robbery, usury, cheating, and injustice. With all the saints and the whole of

creation, we pray that the Judgment Day shall soon bring all stealing to an end.

“I confess and ask forgiveness that I have spent so much of my life in ingratitude and sin and have maligned my neighbor with false and wicked talk, though I owe him the same preservation of honor and integrity which I desire for myself. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen. “

Day 21: The Apostles’ Creed

Recite or Read Aloud

1. The Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles’ Creed.
2. The Apostles’ Creed: “I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. And 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. 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.”
3. The promise: “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” (Romans 8:26).

Pray: “Holy Spirit, help us turn the Apostles’ Creed into our own prayer.” (In a few words, pray as the Spirit guides you.)

Read: *SWP*, “The Apostles’ Creed,” pages 70–74.

Respond

1. What prayer insights did you gain from Luther’s treatment of the Apostles’ Creed?

2. I must think of myself as one redeemed by God through Christ.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

3. The church exists where the Word of God is rightly preached.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Pray: “Father, pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication on **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me. Cause our souls to hunger and thirst for You, O God. Enable us to give ourselves to prayer. Of ourselves, we are nothing: we can do nothing, we know nothing, and we are capable of nothing. But You tell us not to be anxious about anything. In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving we make our requests known to You. When we do this, we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us (see Philippians 4:6, 13).

“Father, thank You for Your Son and Your Holy Spirit. May Your kingdom come and Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

Prepare for Fireteam Group Discussion Five:

Be a contributing participant, not a mere spectator. Review the past week’s Daily Exercises and select three things you want to discuss:

1. One thing you want to understand better:

2. One thing you might find hard to do:

3. The most significant thing I learned this week that I will share with the friend I identified earlier:

A Simple Way to Pray Group Discussion
Session Five: “The Ten Commandments and the Apostles’ Creed”
Feedback Form

This form will be collected at the end of the session. The information requested will be used *only* to supply you with supplemental information for this group, and for the facilitator and apprentice to pray for you. Please print legibly.

Name _____ Date _____

I. SESSION PURPOSE: To empower our prayer lives by using Martin Luther’s example of praying the Ten Commandments and the Apostles’ Creed, and by studying his advice on praying the Ten Commandments and the Apostles’ Creed.

II. ACCOUNTABILITY

(Circle the number of days you did this)

1. I invested about 15 minutes doing the exercises.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Explain:

2. I wrote my responses in my *Participant’s Guide*.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment:

3. I shared one insight with a friend.

Yes No

Comment:

III. PRESENTATION: Jot down insights gained.

IV. GROUP DISCUSSION

A. FIRETEAM (SUBGROUP) From this week's Daily Exercises:

1. One thing I want to understand better is . . .

2. One thing I might find hard to do is . . .

3. The one most significant thing I learned was . . .

4. Our Fireteam wants the Squad to discuss the following question . . .

B. SQUAD (WHOLE GROUP) Jot down insights gained:

V. PRAY: Pray in your Fireteam for yourself, each other, and the people on your prayer list using insights gained from this week's Daily Exercises and the Group Discussion.

Jot down what you would like the facilitator to pray for you.

VI. SHARE: From this week's Daily Exercises and the Group Discussion, one insight I will share with a friend is . . .

VII. EVALUATE: The Daily Exercises and the Group Discussion enabled me to achieve this session's purpose.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Session Six

Praying the Psalms

Session Purpose

To empower our prayer lives by using Martin Luther's example of praying the Psalms and by studying the advice of Luther and others on praying the Psalms.

Overview of This Week's Prayer Discipleship Assignments

1. Invest time: Each day, spend at least fifteen minutes prayerfully doing the Daily Exercises and interceding for those on your prayer list using the insights gained from your reading and Group Discussion.

2. Read: Over the next seven days, read *SWP*, pages 75–86.

3. Write: Jot down your responses to the reading and be prepared to share them with your Fireteam at your next Group Discussion.

4. Pray: Each exercise ends with a prayer drawing on the subject of the day. If you insert the names of the people on your prayer list in the prayer, it will help you *thoughtfully* pray the insights gained from the exercise.

5. Prepare for your next Group Discussion: On the day before your Fireteam meets, review the past week's Daily Exercises and select three things you want to discuss.

Note: The two disciples on the road to Emmaus said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?" (Luke 24:32). Luther probably had this scene in mind when he developed the habit of "warming his heart" with a psalm. Starting today, you will be urged each day to warm your heart by reciting or reading a psalm.

The daily reciting or reading aloud of the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed now becomes optional; however, I urge you to continue doing it until their truth is branded on your soul.

Day 22: Praying the Psalms

Recite or Read Aloud

(**Optional:** The Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed.)

The Promise: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (Romans 8:26).

Warm Your Heart: Psalm 1:1–6 (ESV)

This wisdom psalm sets forth the righteousness for which the believer is to strive, but which we can only fully realize in the righteousness of Christ.³¹

Seek grace for sanctification.

¹ Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers;

² but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.

³ He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.

Intercede for the lost.

⁴ The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away.

⁵ Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;

Praise the Lord for His sovereignty in salvation.

⁶ for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Read: *SWP*, "Praying the Psalms," pages 75–77.

Respond

1. Why did Luther call the Psalter a Bible in miniature?

2. Why did Luther say, "Whoever begins to pray the Psalter earnestly and regularly will soon take leave of those other light and personal little devotional prayers"?

3. The Psalms run through the Lord's Prayer and the Lord's Prayer runs through the Psalms.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Pray: "Lord Jesus, teach [insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list] and me to discern the praying Christ in the Psalms. Show us how to pray Psalm 1:1–6. [Draw on the thoughts of Psalm 1:1–6 and pray for your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list.] In Your name I pray. Amen."

Day 23: Psalms—the Language of Prayer

Recite or Read Aloud

(Optional: The Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed.)

The Promise: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (Romans 8:26).

Warm Your Heart: Psalm 2:1–12 (ESV)

A royal psalm celebrating the enthronement of God's king and of Christ and calling the nations to submit to Him.

Review the world's rebellion against the Lord.

¹ Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?

² The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his anointed, saying,

³ "Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us."

Praise God for His exalted King.

⁴ He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision.

⁵ Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying,

⁶ "As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill."

⁷ I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you.

Praise God for His promise that Christ should inherit the nations.

⁸ Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.

⁹ You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

Pray for the nations to heed the call of the gospel.

¹⁰ Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth.

¹¹ Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

Pray that they and we may be vibrant in our love for Christ.

¹² Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

Read: *SWP*, “The Psalms—the Language of Prayer,” pages 77–80.

Respond

1. How does God use the Psalms to teach His children to pray?

2. What does the Holy Spirit enable us to do when we pray the Psalms?

3. We should ask the Holy Spirit to adapt us to the truth of the Psalms.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

4. Only sons in a conscious, vital relationship with their Father and His family in a local church can effectively serve as soldiers in *Jehovah Sabaoth’s* victorious army.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Pray: “Lord, teach **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me to pray. Especially use the book of Psalms to teach us the language of prayer. Conform our lives to Your inspired Word. Through praying the Psalms, enable us to balance our communion with the Father; conformity to the Son; and combat with the flesh, the Devil, and the world. We are Your sons; build us into effective spiritual warriors in *Jehovah Sabaoth’s* victorious army. Show us how to pray Psalm 2:1–12. **[Draw on the thoughts of Psalm 2:1–12 and pray for your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list.]** In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

Day 24: Psalms—the Secret of the Psalms

Recite or Read Aloud

(**Optional:** The Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed.)

The Promise: “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” (Romans 8:26).

Warm Your Heart: Psalm 4:1–8 (ESV)

David confidently testifies of his trust in the Lord in the face of unknown adversity and leads us to express our trust in Christ during our own trials.

TO THE CHOIRMASTER: WITH STRINGED INSTRUMENTS. A PSALM OF DAVID.

Seek the mercy of God in the face of adversity.

¹ Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness! You have given me relief when I was in distress. Be gracious to me and hear my prayer!

² O men, how long shall my honor be turned into shame? How long will you love vain words and seek after lies? *Selah*

³ But know that the LORD has set apart the godly for himself; the LORD hears when I call to him.

Meditate on God's goodness, give thanks, and seek the Lord's peace.

⁴ Be angry, and do not sin; ponder in your own hearts on your beds, and be silent. *Selah*

⁵ Offer right sacrifices, and put your trust in the LORD.

Seek the renewing grace of God, and rest in Him.

⁶ There are many who say, “Who will show us some good? Lift up the light of your face upon us, O LORD!”

⁷ You have put more joy in my heart than they have when their grain and wine abound.

⁸ In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for you alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.

Read: *SWP*, “The Secret of the Psalms,” pages 80–81.

Respond

1. According to Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who is praying the Psalms we can't pray?

2. What does it mean when you feel uncomfortable praying a psalm?

Pray: “Lord Jesus, teach [insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list] and me to pray. You declared that all things must be

fulfilled which were written in the Psalms concerning You. Thank You for being and doing all that is described in this book. Help us to see You in the Psalms, and having seen You, enable us to love and serve You better. Father, help us pray Psalm 4:1–8. **[Draw on the thoughts of Psalm 4:1–8 and pray for your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list.]** In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.”

Day 25: The Example of Jesus

Recite or Read Aloud

(**Optional:** The Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed.)

The Promise: “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” (Romans 8:26).

Warm Your Heart: Psalm 5:1–12 (ESV)

This wisdom psalm counsels us to resist temptation and to seek the Lord for the righteousness of Christ that is pleasing to Him.

TO THE CHOIRMASTER: FOR THE FLUTES. A PSALM OF DAVID.

Cry to God to hear your prayer.

¹ Give ear to my words, O LORD; consider my groaning.

² Give attention to the sound of my cry, my King and my God, for to you do I pray.

³ O LORD, in the morning you hear my voice; in the morning I prepare a sacrifice for you and watch.

Seek God's help in resisting temptation.

⁴ For you are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil may not dwell with you. ⁵ The boastful shall not stand before your eyes; you hate all evildoers.

⁶ You destroy those who speak lies; the LORD abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.

Thank God for His mercy, worship Him, and seek His righteousness.

⁷ But I, through the abundance of your steadfast love, will enter your house. I will bow down toward your holy temple in the fear of you.

⁸ Lead me, O LORD, in your righteousness because of my enemies; make your way straight before me.

Rest in God's justice toward the wicked.

⁹ For there is no truth in their mouth; their inmost self is destruction; their throat is an open grave; they flatter with their tongue.

¹⁰ Make them bear their guilt, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; because of the abundance of their transgressions cast them out, for they have rebelled against you.

Rejoice and praise God for His saving protection.

¹¹ But let all who take refuge in you rejoice; let them ever sing for joy, and spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may exult in you.

¹² For you bless the righteous, O LORD; you cover him with favor as with a shield.

Read: *SWP*, “The Example of Jesus,” pages 81–82.

Respond

1. How do we know that the Psalms were part of the fabric of Jesus’ life?

Pray: “Lord Jesus, by Your Holy Spirit teach [insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list] and me to pray the Psalms regularly. Prepare us through this prayer discipleship for the tests of life. Father, help me pray Psalm 5:1–12 [Draw on the thoughts of Psalm 5:1–12 and pray for your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list.] In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

Day 26: The Example of the Early Believers

Recite or Read Aloud

(Optional: The Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles’ Creed.)

The Promise: “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” (Romans 8:26).

Warm Your Heart: Psalm 6:1–10 (ESV)

In this psalm of complaint David teaches us to cry out to the Lord in the midst of every adversity, that we may obtain mercy and find help in our time of need.

TO THE CHOIRMASTER: WITH STRINGED INSTRUMENTS; ACCORDING TO THE SHEMINITH. A PSALM OF DAVID.

Seek mercy in times of trouble.

¹ O LORD, rebuke me not in your anger, nor discipline me in your wrath.

² Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am languishing; heal me, O LORD, for my bones are troubled.

³ My soul also is greatly troubled. But you, O LORD—how long?

⁴ Turn, O LORD, deliver my life; save me for the sake of your steadfast love.

⁵ For in death there is no remembrance of you; in Sheol who will give you praise?

Express your trouble in the Lord.

⁶ I am weary with my moaning; every night I flood my bed with tears; I drench my couch with my weeping.

⁷ My eye wastes away because of grief; it grows weak because of all my foes.

Rest in the Lord's grace and victory.

⁸ Depart from me, all you workers of evil, for the LORD has heard the sound of my weeping.

⁹ The LORD has heard my plea; the LORD accepts my prayer.

¹⁰ All my enemies shall be ashamed and greatly troubled; they shall turn back and be put to shame in a moment.

Read: *SWP*, "The Example of the Early Believers," pages 82–83.

Respond

1. How did the Psalms shape the lives of the early Christians?

Pray: "Lord Jesus, by Your Spirit help [**insert the names of our Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list**] and me to become prayer personified. Give to us passion for the book of Psalms. Help us memorize them word for word. Let the word of Christ dwell in us richly so that we can teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, as Colossians 3:16 exhorts us to do. Help us sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in our hearts, to You our God, as Ephesians 5:19 commands. Father, help us pray Psalm 6:1–10. [**Draw on the thoughts of Psalm 6:1–10 and pray for your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list.**] In Jesus' name I pray. Amen."

Day 27: How to Pray the Psalms (Part 1)

Recite or Read Aloud

(**Optional:** The Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed.)

The Promise: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (Romans 8:26).

Warm Your Heart: Psalm 14:1–7 (ESV)

This psalm of complaint seeks a renewal of God's salvation among His people in the face of a generation that denies Him and troubles His people.

TO THE CHOIRMASTER. OF DAVID.

Deploing the arrogance and corruption of the unbelieving.

¹ The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds, there is none who does good.

Rest in God’s sovereignty over this situation.

² The LORD looks down from heaven on the children of man, to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God.

³ They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one.

Rest in the Lord, who will judge the wicked.

⁴ Have they no knowledge, all the evildoers who eat up my people as they eat bread and do not call upon the LORD?

⁵ There they are in great terror, for God is with the generation of the righteous.

⁶ You would shame the plans of the poor, but the LORD is his refuge.

Pray that God will revive His people and that they will make His salvation known.

⁷ Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion! When the LORD restores the fortunes of his people, let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad.

Read: *SWP*, “How to Pray the Psalms,” page 83 to “One question that often is asked . . .,” page 84.

Respond

1. How do you pray the Psalms?

Pray: “Lord Jesus, teach [insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list] and me to pray, not from the poverty of our hearts, but from the richness of Your Word. Father, help me pray Psalm 14:1–7. [Draw on the thoughts of Psalm 14:1–7 and pray for your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list.] In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

Day 28: How to Pray the Psalms (Part 2)

Recite or Read Aloud

(Optional: The Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles’ Creed.)

The Promise: “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” (Romans 8:26).

Warm Your Heart: Psalm 17:1–15 (ESV)

This is a psalm of testimony and cursing. David answers his innocence before the Lord and calls on Him to deal with his enemies. We can use this psalm to examine ourselves before the Lord and rest in His wise and righteous judgment.

A PRAYER OF DAVID.

Let God examine your heart.

¹ Hear a just cause, O LORD; attend to my cry! Give ear to my prayer from lips free of deceit!

² From your presence let my vindication come! Let your eyes behold the right!

³ You have tried my heart, you have visited me by night, you have tested me, and you will find nothing; I have purposed that my mouth will not transgress.

⁴ With regard to the works of man, by the word of your lips I have avoided the ways of the violent.

⁵ My steps have held fast to your paths; my feet have not slipped.

Look to God for His favor for protection against those who threaten you.

⁶ I call upon you, for you will answer me, O God; incline your ear to me; hear my words.

⁷ Wondrously show your steadfast love, O Savior of those who seek refuge from their adversaries at your right hand.

⁸ Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings,

⁹ from the wicked who do me violence, my deadly enemies who surround me.

Review the threats to your well-being, and give them to the Lord.

¹⁰ They close their hearts to pity; with their mouths they speak arrogantly.

¹¹ They have now surrounded our steps; they set their eyes to cast us to the ground.

¹² He is like a lion eager to tear, as a young lion lurking in ambush.

¹³ Arise, O LORD! Confront him, subdue him! Deliver my soul from the wicked by your sword,

¹⁴ from men by your hand, O LORD, from men of the world whose portion is in this life. You fill their womb with treasure; they are satisfied with children, and they leave their abundance to their infants.

Rejoice in the prospect of seeing the Lord and becoming more like Him.

¹⁵ As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness.

Read: *SWP*, from “One question that often is asked . . . ,” page 84, through page 86.

Respond

1. How can you pray a psalm when it does not express exactly what you feel in your heart at the moment?

2. After all is said and done, it is not what we want to pray that is important, but what God wants us to pray.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

3. Christians should memorize the Psalms.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Pray: “Lord Jesus, teach **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me to hide Your Word in our hearts so that we may pray it as we should. Help us develop a schedule for memorizing the Psalms and give us the steadfastness to do it. Father, help me pray Psalm 17:1–15. **[Draw on the thoughts of Psalm 17:1–15 and pray for your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list.]** In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

Prepare for Fireteam Group Discussion Six:

Be a contributing participant, not a mere spectator. Review the past week’s Daily Exercises and select three things you want to discuss:

1. One thing you want to understand better:

2. One thing you might find hard to do:

3. The most significant thing you learned (after you discuss this “most significant thing” in your Fireteam, share it with a friend):

Additional Resources: The following books and recordings provide help in praying the Psalms through reading, listening, and singing:

Tremper Longman III, *How to Read the Psalms* (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1988).

The Psalms are Hebrew poetry; understanding how they were written and how they are to be read helps believers gain much for prayer.

Max McLean, *The Listener's Bible*. "The Psalms" is available in the King James Version, the New International Version, and the English Standard Version; available in MP3, CD, and DVD. Max is a very gifted oral interpreter of literature. I find it helpful to listen to Max while reading the text; his voice inflections often bring out new insights.

T. M. Moore, *God's Prayer Program: Passionately Using the Psalms in Prayer* (Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2005). This little book is the fruit of many years of Moore's personal practice of praying the Psalms. It is full of helpful insights.

Trinity Psalter (Pittsburgh: Crown and Covenant Publications, 1994). The Psalms were originally written for use in public worship. This *Psalter* is written in meter to aid private and public singing of the Psalms.

A Simple Way to Pray Group Discussion
Session Six: "Praying the Psalms"
Feedback Form

This form will be collected at the end of the session. The information requested will be used *only* to supply you with supplemental information for this group, and for the facilitator and apprentice to pray for you. Please print legibly.

Name _____ Date _____

I. SESSION PURPOSE: To empower our prayer lives by using Martin Luther's example of praying the Psalms and by studying the advice of Luther and others on praying the Psalms.

II. ACCOUNTABILITY

(Circle the number of days you did this)

1. I invested about 15 minutes doing the exercises.
Explain:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. I wrote my responses in my *Participant's Guide*.
Comment:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. I shared one insight with a friend.
Comment:

Yes No

III. PRESENTATION: Jot down insights gained.

IV. GROUP DISCUSSION

A. FIRETEAM (SUBGROUP) From this week's Daily Exercises:

1. One thing I want to understand better is . . .

2. One thing I might find hard to do is . . .

3. The one most significant thing I learned was . . .

4. Our Fireteam wants the Squad to discuss the following question . . .

B. SQUAD (WHOLE GROUP) Jot down insights gained:

V. PRAY: Pray in your Fireteam for yourself, each other, and the people on your prayer list using insights gained from this week's Daily Exercises and the Group Discussion.

Jot down what you would like the facilitator to pray for you.

VI. SHARE: From this week's Daily Exercises and the Group Discussion, one insight I will share with a friend is . . .

VII. EVALUATE: The Daily Exercises and the Group Discussion enabled me to achieve this session's purpose.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 *Strongly agree*

Explain:

Session Seven

Discipline Born of Grace

Session Purpose

To empower our prayer lives by using the example of the spiritual disciplines of Martin Luther's life and by studying the advice of Luther and others on the use of spiritual disciplines.

Overview of This Week's Prayer Discipleship Assignments

- 1. Invest time:** Each day, spend at least fifteen minutes prayerfully doing the Daily Exercises and interceding for those on your prayer list using the insights gained from your reading and Group Discussion.
- 2. Read:** Over the next seven days, read *SWP*, pages 87–123.
- 3. Write:** Jot down your responses to the reading and be prepared to share them with your Fireteam at your next Group Discussion.
- 4. Pray:** Each exercise ends with a prayer that draws on the subject of the day. If you insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list in the prayer, it will help you *thoughtfully* pray the insights gained from the exercise.
- 5. Prepare for your next Group Discussion:** On the day before your Fireteam meets, review the past week's Daily Exercises and select three things you want to discuss.

Day 29: Solitude

Recite or Read Aloud

(Optional: The Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed.)

The Promise: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (Romans 8:26).

Warm Your Heart: Psalm 54:1–7 (ESV)

In this psalm of complaint and testimony, David renews his trust in the Lord in the face of adversity. We can use it to seek God's help against our foes, be they human or spiritual.

TO THE CHOIRMASTER: WITH STRINGED INSTRUMENTS. A MASKIL OF DAVID, WHEN THE ZIPHITES WENT AND TOLD SAUL, "IS NOT DAVID HIDING AMONG US?"

Rest in the Lord to vindicate and protect you against the accusations and threats of all foes.

¹ O God, save me, by your name, and vindicate me by your might.

² O God, hear my prayer; give ear to the words of my mouth.

³ For strangers have risen against me; ruthless men seek my life; they do not set God before themselves. *Selah*

Express your confidence in the Lord and praise His name.

⁴ Behold, God is my helper; the Lord is the upholder of my life.

⁵ He will return the evil to my enemies; in your faithfulness put an end to them.

⁶ With a freewill offering I will sacrifice to you; I will give thanks to your name, O LORD, for it is good.

⁷ For he has delivered me from every trouble, and my eye has looked in triumph on my enemies.

Read: *SWP*, "Discipline Born of Grace" through "Solitude," pages 87–96.

Respond

1. What is a spiritual discipline?

2. What is solitude as it relates to prayer?

3. No one prays for anything deeply who has not been deeply alarmed.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

4. Spiritual disciplines begin with solitude.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

5. Before we can have a meaningful conversation with God, we must have regular times of solitude.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Pray: “Father, pour out Your Spirit of grace and supplication on **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me. Cause our souls to hunger and thirst for You, O God. Enable us to give ourselves to prayer. Help me to properly use the spiritual disciplines in this study. Keep me from being legalistic or mechanical. By Your grace, enable me to glorify You by properly using the discipline of solitude. Help me to consistently have daily appointments with You in a place and at a time when I will not be distracted. Father, help me pray Psalm 54:1–7. **[Draw on the thoughts of Psalm 54:1–7 and pray for your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list.]** In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

Day 30: Silence

Recite or Read Aloud

(**Optional:** The Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles’ Creed.)

The Promise: “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” (Romans 8:26).

Warm Your Heart: Psalm 20:1–9 (ESV)

This psalm of testimony expresses David's confidence in the Lord's saving might. Use it to seek the Lord's blessing on all your works and ways, and to declare your trust in Him.

TO THE CHOIRMASTER. A PSALM OF DAVID.

Seek God's help for all your needs.

¹ May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble! May the name of the God of Jacob protect you!

² May he send you help from the sanctuary and give you support from Zion!

³ May he remember all your offerings and regard with favor your burnt sacrifices! *Selah*

⁴ May he grant you your heart's desire and fulfill all your plans!

Rejoice in the salvation of the Lord.

⁵ May we shout for joy over your salvation, and in the name of our God set up our banners! May the LORD fulfill all your petitions!

Declare your trust in the saving grace of the Lord.

⁶ Now I know that the LORD saves his anointed; he will answer him from his holy heaven with the saving might of his right hand.

⁷ Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God.

⁸ They collapse and fall, but we rise and stand upright.

⁹ O LORD, save the king! May he answer us when we call.

Read: *SWP*, "Silence," pages 96–98.

Respond

1. Before we talk to God, we should quiet our souls.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

2. What is one difference between Christian prayer and pagan prayer?

Pray: "Father, pour out Your Spirit of grace and supplication on **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me. Cause our souls to hunger and thirst for You, O God. Enable us to give ourselves to prayer. Help us today to learn how to be still and know that You are God. Father, help me pray Psalm 20:1–9. **[Draw on the thoughts of Psalm 20:1–9 and pray for your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list.]** In Jesus' name I pray. Amen."

Day 31: Listening

Recite or Read Aloud

(**Optional:** The Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed.)

The Promise: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (Romans 8:26).

Warm Your Heart: Psalm 27:1–14 (ESV)

This is a psalm of testimony. Declare your confidence in the Lord, your determination to serve and follow Him, and your expectation that His goodness will be your aim.

OF DAVID.

Express your confidence in the Lord.

¹ The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

² When evildoers assail me to eat up my flesh, my adversaries and foes, it is they who stumble and fall.

³ Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war arise against me, yet I will be confident.

Seek the presence and protection of the Lord.

⁴ One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple.

⁵ For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will lift me high upon a rock.

⁶ And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me, and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing and make melody to the LORD.

⁷ Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud; be gracious to me and answer me!

Ask God to help you obey Him and realize His constant presence.

⁸ You have said, "Seek my face." My heart says to you, "Your face, LORD, do I seek."

⁹ Hide not your face from me. Turn not your servant away in anger, O you who have been my help. Cast me not off; forsake me not, O God of my salvation!

¹⁰ For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the LORD will take me in.

Seek the Lord's will and His goodness. Resolve to wait on Him.

¹¹ Teach me your way, O LORD, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.

¹² Give me not up to the will of my adversaries; for false witnesses have risen against me, and they breathe out violence.

¹³ I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living!

¹⁴ Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!

Read: *SWP*, “Listening,” pages 98–103.

Respond

1. What must we do to be prepared for prayer?

2. The petitions of true disciples are echoes, so to speak, of Christ’s words.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

3. It is great presumption to rush into the presence of God without a call from His Word.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Pray: “Father, help [insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list] and me to spend time reading, studying, and memorizing Your Word today. Help us to understand Your truth. Cause our souls to hunger and thirst for You, O God. Make answered prayer a regular and normal part of our lives. Father, help me pray Psalm 27:1–14. [Draw on the thoughts of Psalm 27:1–14 and pray for your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list.] In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

Day 32: Meditating

Recite or Read Aloud

(Optional: The Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles’ Creed.)

The Promise: “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” (Romans 8:26).

Warm Your Heart: Psalm 29:1–9 (ESV)

David praises the glory of the Lord and the power of His Word. Rejoice with him in God’s sovereign, unshakable rule.

A PSALM OF DAVID.

Give glory to God for His beauty and strength.

¹ Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

² Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness.

Praise the Lord, who rules the world by His sovereign Word.

³ The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD, over many waters.

⁴ The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.

⁵ The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars; the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.

⁶ He makes Lebanon to skip like a calf, and Sirion like a young wild ox.

⁷ The voice of the LORD flashes forth flames of fire.

⁸ The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness; the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

⁹ The voice of the LORD makes the deer give birth and strips the forests bare, and in his temple all cry, "Glory!"

Read: *SWP*, "Meditation," pages 103–106.

Respond

1. How does meditation improve prayer?

2. Why should meditation be audible?

3. How does biblical meditation differ from transcendental meditation?

Pray: "Father, help [insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list] and me to glorify You by properly using the discipline of meditation. Help me to meditate on Your Word so that I can better apply its truth to my life today. Father, help us pray Psalm 29:1–9. [Draw on the thoughts of Psalm 29:1–9 and pray for your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list.] In Jesus' name I pray. Amen."

Day 33: Journaling

Recite or Read Aloud

(Optional: The Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed.)

The Promise: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (Romans 8:26).

Warm Your Heart: Psalm 33:1–22 (ESV)

This is a psalm of testimony, celebrating the power of God's Word, His sovereignty over the nations, and His care for those who fear Him. Use it to renew your faith in the Lord.

Praise God for His mighty, sovereign Word and His good and righteous works.

¹ Shout for joy in the LORD, O you righteous! Praise befits the upright.

² Give thanks to the LORD with the lyre; make melody to him with the harp of ten strings!

³ Sing to him a new song; play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.

⁴ For the word of the LORD is upright, and all his work is done in faithfulness.

⁵ He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD.

Testify of God's powerful, faithful Word.

⁶ By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host.

⁷ He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap; he puts the deeps in storehouses.

⁸ Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!

⁹ For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.

¹⁰ The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; he frustrates the plans of the peoples.

¹¹ The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of his heart to all generations.

¹² Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!

Rehearse the sovereignty of God and His saving mercy.

¹³ The LORD looks down from heaven; he sees all the children of man;

¹⁴ from where he sits enthroned he looks out on all the inhabitants of the earth,

¹⁵ he who fashions the hearts of them all and observes all their deeds.

¹⁶ The king is not saved by his great army; a warrior is not delivered by his great strength.

¹⁷ The war horse is a false hope for salvation, and by its great might it cannot rescue.

¹⁸ Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love,

¹⁹ that he may deliver their soul from death and keep them alive in famine.

Wait on the Lord and rejoice in Him.

²⁰ Our soul waits for the LORD; he is our help and our shield.

²¹ For our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name.

²² Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us, even as we hope in you.

Read: *SWP*, “Journaling,” pages 106–108, then read the following practical suggestions for keeping a journal:

- Do whatever works for you.
- Make journaling as convenient as possible.
- Carry a notebook for thoughts that occur to you during the day. Some prefer small notebooks they can carry in a coat pocket or purse. Others prefer to use larger notebooks.
- If you write your journal entries in longhand, be sure to write enough to retain your full thought. If you are able to use a word processor and one is convenient for you, try it. But if your access to it is limited, stick to old-fashioned handwriting.
- Don’t worry about sentence structure, spelling, or penmanship. You will be the only one seeing your writing.
- Don’t just copy words from the text. Express your thoughts in your own words. It is important to think these matters through. Don’t blindly accept the thoughts in the text.

Respond

1. Why is it important for you to have a written record of your prayer life?

2. What are the fixed rules of journaling?

Pray: “Father, pour out Your Spirit of grace and supplication on **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me. Cause our souls to hunger and thirst for You, O God. Enable us to give ourselves to prayer. By Your grace, enable me to glorify You by writing explanations of my responses as a start in the discipline of journaling. Father, help me pray Psalm 33:1–22. **[Draw on the thoughts of Psalm 33:1–22 and pray for your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list.]** In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

Day 34: Prayer

Recite or Read Aloud

(**Optional:** The Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles’ Creed.)

The Promise: “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know

what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” (Romans 8:26).

Warm Your Heart: Psalm 32:1–11 (ESV)

This psalm is appropriate for daily confession of sin, but especially when the hand of the Lord is weighing on you with conviction.

A MASKIL OF DAVID.

Praise God for forgiving grace.

¹ Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

² Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

Acknowledge the convicting power of God’s Spirit and confess your sins.

³ For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.

⁴ For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. *Selah*

⁵ I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,” and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. *Selah*

Express confidence in the deliverance and leading of the Lord.

⁶ Therefore let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found; surely in the rush of great waters, they shall not reach him.

⁷ You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with shouts of deliverance. *Selah*

⁸ I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you.

⁹ Be not like a horse or a mule, without understanding, which must be curbed with bit and bridle, or it will not stay near you.

¹⁰ Many are the sorrows of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the LORD.

¹¹ Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!

Read: *SWP*, “Prayer,” pages 108–114.

Respond

1. Different characteristics of God motivate distinctive types of prayer; list some of God’s characteristics and the types of prayer motivated by each one.

2. All prayer should be spontaneous.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

3. The soundness of prayer is measured by the eloquence of our words and the fervor of our feelings.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Pray: “Father, pour out Your Spirit of grace and supplication on **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me. Cause our souls to hunger and thirst for You, O God. Enable us to give ourselves to prayer. Enable all our praying to be a healthy balance of adoration, confession, thanksgiving, lamentation, supplication, and intercession. Keep us from letting the cares of this world rob us of daily time alone with You. Father, help me pray Psalm 32:1–11. **[Draw on the thoughts of Psalm 32:1–11 and pray for your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list.]** In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

Day 35: Obedience

Recite or Read Aloud

(**Optional:** The Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles’ Creed.)

The Promise: “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” (Romans 8:26).

Warm Your Heart: Psalm 39:1–13 (ESV)

This psalm has elements of confession (vv. 2–3), testimony (vv. 7–11), and complaint (vv. 4–6, 12–13). David seems concerned to make sure his life, fleeting though it is, counts for the Lord, and we can use his words to seek that as well.

TO THE CHOIRMASTER: TO JEDUTHUN. A PSALM OF DAVID.

Consider whether your words—and your life—are as fully invested for the Lord as they might be.

¹ I said, “I will guard my ways, that I may not sin with my tongue; I will guard my mouth with a muzzle, so long as the wicked are in my presence.”

² I was mute and silent; I held my peace to no avail, and my distress grew worse.

³ My heart became hot within me. As I mused, the fire burned; then I spoke with my tongue:

Renew your resolve to live each day fully for the Lord.

⁴ “O LORD, make me know my end and what is the measure of my days; let me know how fleeting I am!

⁵ Behold, you have made my days a few handbreadths, and my lifetime is as nothing before you. Surely all mankind stands as a mere breath! *Selah*

⁶ Surely a man goes about as a shadow! Surely for nothing they are in turmoil; man heaps up wealth and does not know who will gather!

Hope in the Lord for forgiveness and renewing grace.

⁷ “And now, O Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in you.

⁸ Deliver me from all my transgressions. Do not make me the scorn of the fool!

⁹ I am mute; I do not open my mouth, for it is you who have done it.

¹⁰ Remove your stroke from me; I am spent by the hostility of your hand.

¹¹ When you discipline a man with rebukes for sin, you consume like a moth what is dear to him; surely all mankind is a mere breath! *Selah*

¹² “Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear to my cry; hold not your peace at my tears! For I am a sojourner with you, a guest, like all my fathers.

¹³ Look away from me, that I may smile again, before I depart and am no more!”

Read: *SWP*, “Obedience” and “Conclusion,” pages 114–123.

Respond

1. The sin of doing and not praying is rivaled only by praying and not doing.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

2. All God’s revelations are sealed until they are opened to us by obedience.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

3. Christians today do not have time to pray without ceasing.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

4. My prayer is audacious and perseveres fearlessly and unflinchingly.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Pray: “Father, pour out on **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me Your Spirit of grace and supplication. Cause our souls to hunger and thirst for You, O God. Enable us to give ourselves to prayer. By your grace, keep me from being legalistic or mechanical in this discipline. Help me today to do whatever I can to be part of the answer to the prayers Your Spirit has guided me to pray. Father, help me pray Psalm 39:1–13. **[Draw on the thoughts of Psalm 39:1–13 and pray for your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list.]** In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

Prepare for Fireteam Group Discussion Seven:

Be a contributing participant, not a mere spectator. Review the past week’s Daily Exercises and select three things you want to discuss:

1. One thing you want to understand better:

2. One thing you might find hard to do:

3. The most significant thing you learned (after you discuss this “most significant thing” in your Fireteam, share it with a friend):

A Simple Way to Pray Group Discussion
Session Seven: "Discipline Born of Grace"
Feedback Form

This form will be collected at the end of the session. The information requested will be used *only* to supply you with supplemental information for this group, and for the facilitator and apprentice to pray for you. Please print legibly.

Name _____ Date _____

I. SESSION PURPOSE: To empower our prayer lives by using the example of the spiritual disciplines of Martin Luther's life and by studying the advice of Luther and others on the use of spiritual disciplines.

II. ACCOUNTABILITY

(Circle the number of days you did this)

1. I invested about 15 minutes doing the exercises.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Explain:

2. I wrote my responses in my *Participant's Guide*.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment:

3. I shared one insight with a friend.

Yes No

Comment:

III. PRESENTATION: Jot down insights gained.

IV. GROUP DISCUSSION

A. FIRETEAM (SUBGROUP) From this week's Daily Exercises:

1. One thing I want to understand better is . . .

2. One thing I might find hard to do is . . .

3. The one most significant thing I learned was . . .

4. Our Fireteam wants the Squad to discuss the following question . . .

B. SQUAD (WHOLE GROUP) Jot down insights gained:

V. PRAY: Pray in your Fireteam for yourself, each other, and the people on your prayer list using insights gained from this week's Daily Exercises and the Group Discussion.

Jot down what you would like the facilitator to pray for you.

VI. SHARE: From this week's Daily Exercises and the Group Discussion, one insight I will share with a friend is . . .

VII. EVALUATE: The Daily Exercises and the Group Discussion enabled me to achieve this session's purpose.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Session Eight

Looking Back, Around, and Ahead

Session Purpose

To review the content of *A Simple Way to Pray* and to consider suggestions for applying the insights gained from this study to your ongoing practice of prayer.

Overview of This Week's Prayer Discipleship Assignments

1. Invest time: Each day, spend at least fifteen minutes prayerfully doing the Daily Exercises and interceding for those on your prayer list using the insights gained from your reading and Group Discussion.

In previous Daily Exercises, you were asked to recite or read aloud the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed; you also have been urged to warm your heart with specific psalms. For this week, these steps are optional; however, you are encouraged to continue doing them on your own.

2. Read: This week's daily reading is printed in this *Participant's Guide*. First, we will look back at a summary of the course just completed; then we will look around at the context of spiritual warfare; finally, we will look ahead with suggestions for follow-through

3. Write: Jot down your responses to the reading and be prepared to share them with your Fireteam at your next Group Discussion.

4. Pray: Each exercise ends with a prayer that draws on the subject of the day. If you insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list in the prayer, it will help you *thoughtfully* pray the insights gained from the exercise.

5. Prepare for your next Group Discussion: On the day before your Fireteam meets, review the past week's Daily Exercises. This week, there is a list of suggestions for practicing what you have recently learned. On the list of suggestions, check those you believe God desires you to do.

6. Complete the Participant's Course Evaluation

Day 36: Looking Back and Around

Recite or Read Aloud

(**Optional:** The Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed.)

The Promise: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (Romans 8:26).

Warm Your Heart

(**Optional:** Psalm 90:1–10)

Pray: "Lord, through what we read today, teach **[insert the names of your Fireteam members]** and me to pray."

Read: A Summary of *A Simple Way to Pray*

A Simple Way to Pray presented Martin Luther's example in prayer and his advice on prayer. In all of history, there has been only one Luther, but his example provides a method and principles that can transform any believer's prayer life. In his advice to his barber, Luther described his private practice of prayer. He explained how he used the words of the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed as tracks on which his prayer moved. Luther began his scheduled prayer time by "warming his heart" with a psalm; therefore, we considered some basic thoughts on praying the Psalms from Luther's written works and other sources. Luther's prayer life was the outflow of the spiritual disciplines of his total life, so we considered seven disciplines that Luther practiced each day: solitude, silence, listening, meditation, journaling, prayer, and obedience. For thirty-five days, we have completed exercises in which we have read, responded, and prayed for specific people in our circles of influence. We have met each week to discuss in our Fireteams the insights gained from *A Simple Way to Pray*, and then we have prayed together.

Respond

1. Reflect on what you have learned from Luther's example in prayer and his advice on prayer. Write three helpful insights you have gained.

Read: Know Your Enemies, Part 1

Your study of Martin Luther's *A Simple Way to Pray* needs to be seen in the context of the larger picture of spiritual warfare. Spiritual warfare is the result of a state of hostility between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the Devil. The kingdom of God consists of God, His holy angels, and His redeemed people. The kingdom of the Devil consists of the Devil, evil angels, all who are not trusting Christ as Savior and Lord. The flesh and the wicked world collaborate with the Devil to try to destroy God and all creatures that bear God's image, especially believers. With these wicked foes, members of the kingdom of God can make no appeasement, no compromise, no collaboration, and no surrender.

The essence of spiritual war is the violent clash between the will of God, the sovereign Creator, and the will of the Devil, a limited creature. In prideful rebellion, the Devil sought to dethrone God. He said, "I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High."³² For his traitorous transgression, God cast him out of heaven. Luther sang of him:

"The Prince of Darkness grim,
we tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure,
for lo, his doom is sure,
One little word shall fell him.
That word above all earthly powers,
no thanks to them, abideth;
The Spirit and the gifts are ours
through Him Who with us sideth:
Let goods and kindred go,
this mortal life also;
The body they may kill:
God's truth abideth still,
His kingdom is forever."

Understanding four factors will help you succeed in spiritual warfare. These factors are: 1. your enemies, 2. the battlefields on which they attack, 3. the strategic targets they desire to destroy, and 4. the weapon of prayer and how it must be used to defeat them. Let's first consider your enemies, starting with the flesh. Tomorrow we will consider the Devil and the wicked world.

A. The flesh

In the New Testament, the word *flesh* describes "the force in men that makes for evil."³³ It refers to the habits, instincts, and tendencies of mind that believers retain from their lives before they were Christians. The flesh wages war against believers,³⁴ but as believers increasingly "walk by the Spirit," the flesh is slain and the "works of the flesh" are replaced by the fruit of the Spirit.³⁵

The apostle Paul's representative list of the works of the flesh includes sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these.³⁶

Even Paul struggled with the corrupting power of his flesh. He confessed, "I see in

my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members.”³⁷ The passions of the flesh wage war against the soul.³⁸ Believers must not flirt with the flesh but seek to slay it.³⁹ As soon as you sense the flesh luring and enticing your heart, pray, “Father, lead me not into temptation.” Then flee—run from it! Usually you can identify the specific temptation. For example, when King David was walking on the roof of his house, he saw a beautiful woman, Bathsheba, bathing on a nearby roof. Instead of “inquiring about the woman,”⁴⁰ he should have prayed, “Lord, lead me not into the temptation of adultery.”⁴¹

Paul declared, “Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”⁴² He uses the crucifixion of Christ⁴³ as a metaphor for destroying the flesh.⁴⁴ Death by crucifixion was a painful and prolonged process. At best, death might come in hours; at worst, it might take a number of days, depending on exact methods, the prior health of the condemned, and environmental circumstances. Death could result from blood loss, shock, infection, by the process of being nailed itself, or by loss of body fluids. When the whole body weight was supported by the stretched arms, the typical cause of death was suffocation. The condemned would have intense difficulty inhaling due to hyper-expansion of the chest muscles and lungs. If the condemned could draw himself up by his arms, he would receive a degree of relief, but eventually he would become exhausted and then stop breathing.

Crucifixion cannot be self-inflicted. By extraordinary effort, one might nail his feet and one hand to a cross, but the other hand would still be free and he would never be able to lift the cross into an upright position. The flesh must die, but slaying the flesh cannot be achieved by human effort; it requires the supernatural work of God the Holy Spirit. To this end, like Paul, we should pray, “That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.”⁴⁵

The Spirit’s first saving work is a spiritual heart transplant: He removes the sinner’s dead heart of stone and replaces it with a living spiritual heart of flesh.⁴⁶ The sinner is then born again of the Spirit,⁴⁷ and the Spirit settles down to live in him.⁴⁸ The Bible states, “Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him.”⁴⁹ Believers become new creations.⁵⁰ “By the Spirit Christians call Jesus Lord.”⁵¹ The indwelling “Spirit of grace and supplication”⁵² helps all believers in their weakness to pray as they should, and He intercedes for them according to the will of God.⁵³

The Holy Spirit’s heart transplant and indwelling presence enable believers to walk by the Spirit. Paul urges: “Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. . . . If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.”⁵⁴ Walking by the Spirit is a loving, obedient way of life that should be normal for every Christian.

Paul commanded the Ephesian believers to “be filled with the Spirit,”⁵⁵ that is, to be “continuously filled and stimulated with the (Holy) Spirit.”⁵⁶ Eugene Peterson paraphrases Ephesians 5:18: “Don’t drink too much wine. That cheapens your life. Drink the Spirit of God, huge draughts of him. Sing hymns instead of drinking songs! Sing songs from your heart to Christ. Sing praises over everything, any excuse for a song to God the Father in the name of our Master, Jesus Christ.”⁵⁷

The book of Acts shows that being “filled with the Spirit” is a pragmatic, functional work that enables believers to know and do God’s will.⁵⁸ Scripture indicates that Christians need repeated fillings of the Spirit for specific tasks. This filling must be

asked for and acted upon.⁵⁹ When the flesh attacks, we should ask the Holy Spirit to fill us and to enable us to flee⁶⁰ temptation and abstain from sin.⁶¹ When the Spirit fills us, He helps us put to death the deeds of the body.⁶² Being repeatedly filled with the Spirit comes in answer to praying in the Spirit. The watchword against the flesh is *flee*—run away from the flesh by running to the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

Respond

1. Christians must learn to compromise with their flesh.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

2. Slaying the flesh can be achieved by heroic human effort.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

3. Christians need repeated fillings of the Spirit.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

4. The watchword against the flesh is _____

Explain:

Pray: “Father, continue to pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication on **[insert the names of the people on your Fireteam]** and me. Fill us with Your Spirit. Enable us, by Your Spirit, to put to death the flesh with all its destructive works. Let us be crucified with Christ so that we no longer live, but Christ lives in us. May the life we now live in the flesh be by faith in the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us. Show us how to flee from the flesh to the fullness of the Holy Spirit. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

Day 37: The Devil and the Wicked World

Recite or Read Aloud

(**Optional:** The Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles’ Creed.)

The Promise: “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” (Romans 8:26).

Warm Your Heart

(Optional: Psalm 56:1–13)

Pray: “Lord, through what we read today, teach **[insert the names of your Fireteam members]** and me to pray.”

Read: Know Your Enemies, Part 2

B. The Devil

The Devil is a spiritual being created by God to be an archangel of light, possibly God's vicegerent over the earth.⁶³ His pride moved him to rebel against God. For this sin he “was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.”⁶⁴ He is the archenemy of God. He and his demons hate God and all humans. They hate God because they could not overthrow Him and He judged them for their rebellion. They hate humans because they are God's image bearers.⁶⁵ When Adam and Eve yielded to Satan's temptation,⁶⁶ they came under his power⁶⁷ and God's image in them was shattered. When believers trust Christ, they “put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.”⁶⁸

The Devil's blasphemous hatred for God deludes him into thinking he can depose God from His celestial throne and establish his own kingdom. Humans are finite, physical creatures, totally dependent on God, their infinite Creator. In Him they live and move and have their being.⁶⁹ Without the Holy Spirit's help, no human can withstand the Devil. Accepting this reality enabled the apostle Paul to exclaim, “Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”⁷⁰ Like Paul, we get our strength from recognizing our weakness and relying on the fullness of the Holy Spirit for wisdom and strength.

Defeating the Devil begins with praying, “Deliver us from the evil one.”⁷¹ The act of prayer is a declaration of human inability and humble reliance on our heavenly Father. Christ's encounter with Satan in the wilderness gives believers the best example for dealing with the Devil. In the power of the Spirit, Christ used Scripture to defeat the Devil, and the Devil fled from Him.⁷² In the closing prayer of this exercise, there is an example of how you can proactively pray Scripture to fight the Devil. The watchword against the Devil is *fight*.

C. The wicked world

The Bible uses the word *world* in three ways: to refer to the planet Earth,⁷³ to the world of humans,⁷⁴ and to the spirit of the age.⁷⁵ It is “the spirit of this age” that we here call “the wicked world.” Worldliness is frequently seen as a list of external taboos—drinking, smoking, dancing, etc. It is more accurate to say that *worldliness is the embrace of fallen humanity's world and life view*. The wicked world is the cumulative, corporate expression of the flesh, a culture of corruption; Satan is the prince of this world.⁷⁶

Throughout the history of the church, some Christians have retreated from the world to monasteries. They confused separation from sin⁷⁷ with isolation from sinners.⁷⁸ The Bible promises: “Everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is

the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.”⁷⁹ Faith that overcomes the world is nourished by the Word of Christ and expresses itself in loving obedience.⁸⁰ Paul tells believers how to overcome the world:

So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.⁸¹

Believers reject the fallen world's way of defining life. By faith they embrace the cross of Christ to crucify the world to them, and them to the world.⁸² The watchword against the world is *faith*.

Three watchwords become the banners of victory for believers: *flee*, *fight*, and *faith*. To win life's battles, you must know your enemies—the flesh, the Devil, and the wicked world—and, walking by the Spirit, you must wisely choose how and when to flee, to fight, and to be faithful.

The most strategically significant enemy

The flesh is the enemy within each believer; the Devil and the world are enemies outside each believer. John Bunyan's *Holy War* allegory of the loss and recapture of the town of Mansoul shows that the most strategic foe is the flesh.

The story goes like this. Once upon a time in a place called Universe, there was a town called Mansoul. King Shaddai built Mansoul for His Son, Prince Immanuel. High walls that reached to the heavens protected Mansoul from all her external enemies. In the walls there were five gates: the eye-gate, the ear-gate, the nose-gate, the mouth-gate, and the feeling-gate. The wicked prince, Diabolos, desired to have Mansoul, but he could not gain entrance unless the flesh opened one of the gates from within.

Mansoul is an accurate allegory of the human soul.⁸³ The Devil and the world are external enemies that cannot gain entrance to the believer unless the enemy within, the flesh, opens the way. This shows that the flesh is the most strategically significant enemy.

Never forget that the flesh, the Devil, and the wicked world are an axis of evil working together to destroy God and all who bear His image. For instance, when believers express uncontrolled anger, this act of the flesh makes them vulnerable to the Devil's attacks in their hearts, their homes, their churches, and their personal worlds.⁸⁴ The flesh and the Devil also join forces in the intimacy of believers' bedrooms. Lack of proper sex in marriage can cause compulsive lust of the flesh that opens the door for the Devil to tempt believers to commit sexual sins.⁸⁵

Respond

1. Who are the foes that form an axis of evil and what is their mission?

2. Why do the Devil and his demons hate God and all humans?

3. Without the Holy Spirit's help, no human can withstand the Devil.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

4. Believers' strength and wisdom come from recognizing their weakness and relying on the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

5. Defeating the Devil begins with praying, "Deliver us from the evil one."

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

6. The act of prayer is a declaration of human ability.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

7. The watchword against the Devil is _____.

8. What is worldliness?

9. The watchword against the world is _____.

Explain:

Pray: “Father, deliver [insert the names of the people on your Fireteam] and me from the Evil One; he is our adversary who prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking to devour us.⁸⁶ You have promised that if we submit ourselves to You and resist the Devil, he will flee from us.⁸⁷ We put on the whole armor of God, that we may be able to stand against the Devil’s schemes.⁸⁸ Protect our minds with the helmet of salvation. Guard our hearts with the breastplate of righteousness. Keep our armor in place with the belt of truth. Enable us to walk in the reality of the gospel. Never let us venture out without the shield of faith and the sword of the Spirit. By the power of the Spirit, Christ used Scripture to resist the Devil, and the Devil fled from Him. Help us to do the same. May prayer be like the breath in our lungs, so that at all times with all prayer and supplication we pray in the Spirit.⁸⁹ Enable us to reject fallen humanity’s world and life view. Do not let us be conformed to this world, but transform us by the renewal of our minds, that by testing we may discern what is Your good, acceptable, and perfect will—and do it. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

Day 38: The Battlefield of the Heart

Recite or Read Aloud

(Optional: The Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles’ Creed.)

The Promise: “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” (Romans 8:26).

Warm Your Heart

(Optional: Psalm 57:1–11)

Pray: “Lord, through what we read today, teach [insert the names of your Fireteam members] and me to pray.”

Read: Know Your Battlefields, Part 1

Military warfare provides insights for waging spiritual warfare. Both military and spiritual

warfare have fields where battles are fought. Each battlefield has both strategic targets and targets of opportunity. In military warfare, strategic targets must be controlled for battles to be won. The term “target of opportunity” is used to describe a target which, in a combat scenario, presents itself in addition to the expected strategic targets of any particular military campaign.

In spiritual warfare, a “target of opportunity” is one that presents itself in addition to those targets you already consider to be strategic. Such a target is usually a person in an unexpected situation who gives you opportunity for meaningful ministry. More will be said about this below.

Both military and spiritual warfare require defensive and offensive actions. Defensive action provides resisting power to protect targets. Offensive action provides striking power to destroy enemy strongholds.

The battlefields on which spiritual warfare must be fought are *within* and *around* all believers. Within each believer is the most strategic battlefield: the heart. Around each believer are three additional battlefields: their homes, their local churches, and their personal worlds. Some of the people in these battlefields are targets; we will deal with this below

Prayer should always be the first activity in spiritual warfare. Before Israel engaged their enemies in combat, their leaders “enquired of the LORD” to discover whether they should fight and how they should fight.⁹⁰ You can do no more than pray before you pray; but after you pray you must do more than pray. Prayer as a defensive spiritual action provides resisting power to protect targets of our enemies. As an offensive spiritual action, prayer provides striking power to impose God’s designs on His enemies.

The Day 2 Exercise in this *Simple Way to Pray Participant’s Guide* coached you through the process of identifying the strategic targets on the battlefields within and around you, and forming them into your prayer list. Let’s look at these targets in more detail.

A. The heart of each believer

Each believer is a battlefield; this is the essence of John Bunyan’s *Holy War* allegory. Satan’s specific target is the heart; he seeks to detach its affections from God and attach them to himself. Defeating the Devil on this battlefield requires that believers guard their hearts and use their hearts to pray for their ability to pray and their leadership.

Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, urged, “Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.”⁹¹ Your physical heart is the organ in your body that circulates blood; it is the seat of your physical life and the center of all your physical vigor. The Bible considers your spiritual heart as the seat and center of all your spiritual life, the seat of feelings, desires, and passions such as joy, pain, love, desire, and lust. The overall accomplishment of your life and each separate personal act receive their character and moral value from the constitution and contents of your heart.⁹²

John Flavel’s *On Keeping the Heart* is a very helpful study. He says: “The heart of man is his worst part before it is regenerated, and the best afterward; it is the seat of principles, and the fountain of actions. The eye of God is, and the eye of the Christian ought to be principally fixed upon it.” A free copy of this valuable little book in PDF format is available from kingdomprayer.org.

Prayer is essential for keeping your heart. David cried out, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.”⁹³ Likewise, keeping your heart affects

your ability to pray and to receive the answers you seek. Christians with clean hearts receive answers to their prayers. The apostle John encourages, “Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him.”⁹⁴ Above we noted that when one of the disciples said to Jesus, “Lord, teach us to pray,”⁹⁵ he was praying for the ability to pray for the other disciples and himself.⁹⁶ To improve our ability to pray, we also must ask for it.⁹⁷

Korean Christians are renowned for their pervasive, powerful prayer. I once asked a Korean chaplain in the 82nd Airborne what was the secret to Korean prayer. He replied: “If you understood the Korean language and you attended one of our prayer meetings, you would see that there is no secret. What you call a secret is our practice of spending a lot of time praying for our ability to pray.”

Days 8–42 of this course have asked and will ask you to recite or read aloud Romans 8:26. In this verse, the apostle Paul confessed, “we do not know what to pray for as we ought.”⁹⁸ Paul included himself with all believers in his “we.” He understood that all humans are finite and fallen creatures, limited in knowledge and biased by sin. Humans judge by outward appearance; God alone knows “the hearts of all the children of mankind.”⁹⁹ Even when we pray for people we know well, we don’t know all that is in their hearts. God the Creator is infinite, all-knowing, and holy. He can provide the help we need to properly pray. The Spirit of supplication is available to help.¹⁰⁰

When I pray for my ability to pray, the first thing I do is admit to God that I don’t know what to pray and ask Him to put in my heart what He wants me to pray and for whom He wants me to pray. Scripture reading is always part of my scheduled prayer. I ask the Spirit to help me pray what I read. I ask the Lord to use the Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles’ Creed to reveal Himself to me and to remind me of my inability to save myself, of the glorious truths of the gospel, and of how to continuously claim it. I ask the Spirit of supplication to help me balance my prayer with adoration, confession, thanksgiving, petition, and intercession. I ask God to teach me what and how to pray with inspired examples from the Psalms.

Keeping your heart also affects your ability to develop your leadership potential. The word *leadership* usually brings to mind highly visible people like Moses, the great lawgiver of Israel, or Joshua, the military genius. I am using the word *leadership* in a broader manner. If somebody follows you, you are a leader. If you ever guide or direct others by showing them the way or telling them how to behave, you are a leader. In this training, we define leadership as “being on God’s agenda and helping other believers to be on God’s agenda, so that together we can seek and do God’s will on earth.”¹⁰¹ By this definition, parents are the most important leaders.

Believers “are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”¹⁰² When Jesus came to the end of His earthly sojourn, He said to His Father, “I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.”¹⁰³ When you come to the end of your life, will you be able to echo Christ’s words? Ask the Lord each day to show you what you need to do today so that when you come to the end of your life you too can say, “I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.” Pray this also for the people who participated with you in your *Simple Way to Pray* Group Discussion Fireteam. Place their names on your prayer list and pray for one of them each day for the next three months. Ask God to show them and you new ministries and to enable you to do them. Share with them what God is putting in your heart and ask them to pray for

you. Pray for and with them—on the spot or at some more appropriate place. The more your heart is yielded in loving obedience to Christ, the greater will be your ability to pray, and as your ability to pray increases, guarding your heart will be easier.¹⁰⁴

When your internal battlefield is properly defended, you have the base needed to defend and attack the targets on the battlefields around you.

Respond

1. Prayer should always be the last activity in spiritual warfare.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

2. A properly defended heart provides what? _____

3. The first battlefield is _____

4. Guarding your heart increases your ability to pray with power.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

5. What is the secret to Korean prayer?

6. We do not know what to pray for as we ought.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

7. Guarding your heart helps you develop your leadership potential.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

8. If somebody follows you, you are a leader.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

9. Leadership is “being on God’s agenda and helping other believers to be on God’s agenda, so that together we can seek and do God’s will on earth.”

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

10. To be able to say to the Father at the end of your life, “I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do,” what must you do today?

Pray: “Father, enable **[insert the names of the people on your Fireteam]** and me to continuously be on Your agenda and help other believers to be on Your agenda, so that together we can seek and do Your will on earth. Help us do what we need to do today so that when we come to the end of our lives on earth, we, like Jesus, can say, “I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.” In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

Day 39: The Battlefields of Your Home and Church

Recite or Read Aloud

(**Optional:** The Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles’ Creed.)

The Promise: “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” (Romans 8:26).

Warm Your Heart

(**Optional:** Psalm 67:1–7)

Pray: “Lord, through what we read today, teach **[insert the names of your Fireteam members]** and me to pray.”

Read: Know Your Battlefields, Part 2

Yesterday we began looking at the battlefields on which believers engage in spiritual warfare with the flesh, the Devil, and the wicked world. We saw that the most strategic battlefield is within believers—the heart. There are also three battlefields around believers. Today we will look at your home and your church; tomorrow we will deal with your personal world.

B. Your home (household)

In the original Hebrew and Greek languages of the Bible, the words for “house” and “household” or “family” are the same. The house you live in might be a residence, a college dorm, or a military barracks. A household is made up of all the people living under the same roof. You may live alone or with others. The others may be immediate members of your family, such as your husband or wife and your children, but they may also include other relatives, friends, or classmates.

The flesh, the world, and the Devil consider households to be strategic targets. The flesh makes us selfish; unchecked, the flesh in one will rub the flesh in others and cause conflict. The world seeks to redefine who we are as individuals and families and tries to make us believe that accumulation of things and power produces real happiness. The Devil builds on the work of the flesh and the world and seeks also to detach us from trust in Christ and His saving work.

Our focus here is on those who live with you who are gripped with the gospel, that is, they have told you they are trusting Christ alone for their salvation and their lives show they are seeking to live for Him. Those who are not gripped with the gospel will be considered under your personal world in tomorrow’s reading.

Martin Luther equipped pastors to pray so they could equip parents to pray and they, in turn, could equip their children to pray. He considered the Ten Commandments, the Apostles’ Creed, and the Lord’s Prayer to be “the Lay Bible.” The Ten Commandments, the law, showed sinful humans their deep need and their inability to meet that need by themselves. The Apostles’ Creed, the gospel, provided the solution to the need. The Lord’s Prayer taught them how to appropriate the solution to the problem.

Most people could not read in Luther’s day, so Luther urged all Christians to learn by heart this “Lay Bible.” In the preface to his Large Catechism, Luther wrote: “In these three parts everything that we have in the Scriptures is comprehended in short, plain, and simple terms. They are the most necessary parts which one should first learn to repeat word for word and which our children should be accustomed to recite daily when they arise in the morning, when they sit down to their meals, and when they retire at night; and until they repeat them, they should be given neither food nor drink.”

Can you and each member of your household recite from memory this “Lay Bible”? I urge you to give this high priority. Trying to memorize by rote can become burdensome, but reading these three instruments aloud each morning and evening as a part of devotions will burn their truth into your heart without any conscious effort to memorize. The following suggestions might help accomplish this:

- Do the *Simple Way to Pray* Group Discussion with your household. Moses wrote: “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.”¹⁰⁵ Doing the *Simple Way to Pray* Group Discussion with your family can help you obey this command. As a parent, you may need to guide your children through the Daily Exercises, Group Discussion, and prayer. Some have done the *Simple Way to Pray* Group Discussion with children under fifteen by doing the Daily Exercises with them. Younger children need a parent to explain it to them on their level of understanding. Both you and your children will benefit much from this. If you are home schooling your children, you can use this material as part of your curriculum.

- Do the *Simple Way to Pray* Group Discussion with your spouse. If you are married and your spouse did not participate in the *Simple Way to Pray* Group Discussion with you, talk with your spouse about doing it together. Doing this will help the two of you be on the same page in your understanding and practice of prayer. This will draw you closer to the Lord and each other.

If both you and your spouse participated in the *Simple Way to Pray* Group Discussion, consider doing it again as a couple. Do the Daily Exercises individually and then schedule one hour each week to discuss and pray. This review will deepen your understanding and give you opportunity to practice what you have learned.

C. Your church

Your local church includes leaders, workers, and fellow members. List the names of your pastor(s) and other key leaders, workers, fellow members, and their family members. Use insights gained from the *Simple Way to Pray* Group Discussion to intercede for them.

The flesh, the world, and the Devil consider local churches to be strategic targets. The tactics they use here are similar to what they use against households. The Devil depends on the flesh and the world to create an environment that enables him to transform the local church into a synagogue of Satan.¹⁰⁶ The most important people to pray for are the leaders, especially the pastor.¹⁰⁷

Most local churches have an alphabetical directory of members. If you select one family a day, you can pray for 365 families a year. Large churches usually have affinity groups and sub-congregations. You may find it helpful to focus on the members you are most closely related to. Don't overload yourself by trying to pray for too many.

When I pray for the members of my local church, I pray for their specific needs, and then I pray truth drawn from 3 John 2, Zechariah 12:10, and Mark 11:17. If I am praying for Jeff, my prayer will be something like this: “Father, I pray that all may go well with Jeff and that he may be in good health, as it goes well with his soul. Lord, pour out on Jeff and me Your Spirit of grace and supplication. Help us make our hearts, our homes, and our churches houses of prayer for all nations.”

Jesus told Peter not only that He had prayed for him, but *what* He had prayed for him. Ask the Spirit to guide you in following the Lord's example. When I pray through our church directory, I sometimes tell people when I see them at church that I have prayed for them. Other times, I use the phone, email, or Facebook to tell them. I say something like this: “Jeff, I am praying for the members of our church. I select one family each day. This week I prayed for you.” Then I tell the person the essence of the prayer above.

You may want to give a copy of *A Simple Way to Pray* to those for whom you pray and tell them you are using insights you gained from this book to pray for them.

Respond

1. Explain the difference between the people who are gripped with the gospel and the people who are not gripped with the gospel.

2. Pastors should equip parents to pray, and they, in turn, should equip their children to pray.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

3. The Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, and the Lord's Prayer are "the Lay Bible."

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

4. Parents should learn by heart "the Lay Bible."

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

5. Our children should be accustomed to recite "the Lay Bible" daily when they arise in the morning, when they sit down to their meals, and when they retire at night; and until they recite it, they should be given neither food nor drink.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

6. I should do the *Simple Way to Pray* Group Discussion with my family.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

7. I should do the *Simple Way to Pray* Group Discussion with my spouse.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

8. It is impossible to overload myself by trying to pray for too many people.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Pray: “Father, pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication on **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me. You providentially placed each of us in our families and local churches that we might minister and be ministered to. By Your Spirit, equip our pastors to pray and equip parents to pray and to equip their children to pray. Help us learn by heart and pray by heart “the Lay Bible.” Help **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** pray for their families and their church families so that we will seek with all our hearts Your kingdom, power, and glory. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

Day 40: The Battlefield of Your Personal World

Recite or Read Aloud

(**Optional:** The Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles’ Creed.)

The Promise: “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” (Romans 8:26).

Warm Your Heart

(**Optional:** Psalm 79:1–13)

Pray: “Lord, through what we read today teach **[insert the names of your Fireteam members]** and me to pray.”

Read: Know Your Battlefields, Part 3

We have seen that believers are involved in spiritual warfare with the flesh, the Devil, and the wicked world. This warfare occurs on the battlefields of the heart, the home, and the church, as well as the believer’s personal world, which is our focus for today.

D. Your personal world

Your personal world consists of people in two circles: those you influence and those who influence you.

Those you influence include members of your family, friends, associates, and neighbors who are *not gripped* with the gospel; that is, they have never told you they are trusting Christ alone for their salvation and their lives do not show they are seeking to live for Him. Of course, the fact that they have not told you they are trusting Christ alone does not mean they are not believers. But it does mean you do not know whether they are trusting Christ, and as a Christian, you should be concerned.

Are there any people on the prayer list you developed on Day 2 who should be removed? Are there any people not on the list who should be added? Once you have your updated list, pray for your “ungripped.” Since I don’t know if my “ungripped” are trusting Christ alone, as the Holy Spirit guides me, I use specific Scripture passages when I pray for them. My prayer is something like this: “Father, draw ____ to Christ and reveal to him/her that Jesus is the Christ.¹⁰⁸ Father, reveal to ____ that he/she has been captured by the Devil.¹⁰⁹ Show him/her that he/she is under the power of Satan and following him.¹¹⁰ Grant repentance to _____. Bring ____ to his/her senses and enable him/her to escape from the snare of the Devil.¹¹¹ Replace his/her blindness with a clear understanding of the gospel.¹¹² Lord Jesus, destroy the Devil’s works in _____.¹¹³ Exercise Your authority over the Devil and his angels. By Your death, deliver ____ from slavery to the Devil.¹¹⁴ Lord, enable ____ to resist the Devil and draw near to You.” Usually I use only one or two of the verses used in this prayer.

In addition to praying for those you influence, you should also pray for those who influence you. These include political leaders such as the president and vice president of the United States, the governor of your state, the mayor of the city in which you live, and your U.S. and state senators and representatives. Include other key leaders of government, business, and education. The Bible explicitly commands believers to pray for “all who are in high positions.”¹¹⁵ Where possible, pray also for the spouses and children of these leaders.¹¹⁶ Some of these influencers are very public about their faith in Christ. For them, pray that they will “walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.”¹¹⁷ For those who are not gripped with the gospel, pray especially that they will soon be drawn to true faith in Christ.

When I pray for the president, I draw on truth found in Psalm 76:6–7, Romans 13:1–7, and 2 Timothy 2:1–2. I pray something like this: “Father, there is no authority except from You, and those who are in positions of authority have been put there by You. As Your Word commands, I pray for our president. Grant him grace, wisdom, and integrity to fulfil the ministry You have called him to. Work in and through him, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. If he is not converted to Christ, convert him; if he will not be converted, do not let him damage Your people.”

As you pray for those who influence you, if you think it is appropriate, send a copy of *A Simple Way to Pray* to them and tell them you are using insight from this book to pray for them.

Organize your prayer list

As your list grows, you will need to prioritize and cluster the people on it. Here is how I do it:

Priority one is the people and issues for which I pray daily: My own heart, my ability to pray, my leadership, my home (my wife, my children, my grandchildren), my church (my pastor(s), my fellow members), and my personal world (some of my ungripped friends and the president).

Priority two is the people and issues for which I pray once a week: Friends, associates, neighbors, missionaries, and other leaders of my local church, the governor of my state, the mayor of my city, and my senators and representatives.

Priority three is the people and issues for which I pray once a month: Additional friends, associates, and neighbors.

Priority four is the people and needs for which I pray occasionally. In my normal

daily activities, God frequently moves me to pray. Sometimes in the midst of casual conversation, I sense the Spirit's prompting to pray for the person to whom I am talking. Sometimes I do this silently to myself; other times I ask whether I can pray for them and do so then and there. As God guides, I write the request in my prayer notebook and continue to pray for it as long as God prompts me to do so.

Your targets

In addition to enemies and battlefields, believers have two targets in their spiritual warfare—strategic prayer targets and targets of opportunity.

A. Strategic prayer targets

You are your own first prayer target, but you also have contact and relations with people in your home, your church, and your personal world; God desires you to intercede for some of these people. These people are your strategic prayer targets.

B. Targets of opportunity

We said above that a target of opportunity is usually a person in an unexpected situation who gives you opportunity for meaningful ministry.

On his return to the United States after six years in Kenya, a missionary said to me, "It seems to me that most Americans see other people as scenery or machinery but not as persons." In the course of your normal daily life, are you seeing people who need your intercession? Ask God to show you these targets of opportunity, then use the insights you gained from the *Simple Way to Pray* Group Discussion and lift them up to the throne of grace. Providence determines when and where each of us is born, and it also determines the people we contact in the course of our normal daily lives, our targets of opportunity. We should pray for these people and situations reflexively; that is, prayer should be our automatic response.

As I am writing this, I am in one of my "branch offices," otherwise known as Starbucks. There are four customers and three staff members. As I drink my regular black Café Verona coffee, I am asking the Lord to show me what I should pray for them. I sense that I should use "the Lay Bible" to pray for them. In my heart, I ponder each part and pray for each person. I have gone through this process many times in various places. I have come to expect people to strike up conversations that result in my sharing Christ with them.

Respond

1. Explain your two circles of influence.

2. People who are not gripped with the gospel are not Christians.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

3. What are strategic prayer targets?

4. Christians should pray regularly for “all who are in high positions.”

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

5. What are targets of opportunity?

Pray: “Father, all around **[insert the names of the people on your Fireteam]** and me are people who are not gripped with the gospel. The Lord Jesus prayed not only for His disciples, but for those who would believe in Him through their word. Help us to pray properly with Your Word for the people in our circles of influence. Also, help us to properly pray for those who influence us. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

Day 41: Your Weapon—Prayer

Recite or Read Aloud

(Optional: The Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles’ Creed.)

The Promise: “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” (Romans 8:26).

Warm Your Heart

(Optional: Psalm 65:1–13)

Pray: “Lord, through what we read today teach **[insert the names of your Fireteam members]** and me to pray.”

Read: Your Weapon—Prayer

In our discussion of spiritual warfare, we have talked about the enemies of believers, the battlefields on which they engage those enemies, and the targets of believers in the battle. Today our focus is on the weapon believers wield—prayer.

A. What prayer can do

In response to prayer, God altered the course of history. The sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation was the greatest upheaval in Western society since the fall of the Roman Empire a thousand years earlier. The influence of the Reformation can still be seen today. God raised up an obscure Augustinian monk named Martin Luther to challenge the corruption of the day. Luther was a man of prayer. For about twenty years he practiced his simple way to pray. He also developed tools and trained pastors to train parents to train their children to practice this simple way to pray. In this way, he built a prayer movement that God used to change people who changed the church and the world. Luther affirmed the place of prayer in this movement:

We know that our defence lies in prayer alone. We are too weak to resist the devil and his vassals. Let us hold fast to the weapons of the Christian; ¹¹⁸ they enable us to combat the devil. For what has carried off these great victories over the undertakings of our enemies which the devil has used to put us in subjection, if not the prayers of certain pious people who rose up as a rampart to protect us? Our enemies may mock at us. But we shall oppose both men and the devil if we maintain ourselves in prayer and if we persist in it. For we know that when a Christian prays in this way: "Dear Father, Your will be done," God replies to him, "Dear child, yes, it shall be done in spite of the devil and the whole world."¹¹⁹

In response to prayer, God sustained Luther, defeated the Devil, reformed the church, and changed the course of human history. For more than four hundred years, multitudes of believers of all ages and cultures have practiced this method of prayer and have been transformed into bold, powerful, proactive prayer warriors. They have been blessed, and they have been a blessing to their families, their churches, and the people in their personal worlds, because they practiced this simple way and helped others to do the same. You have been introduced to this simple way; now will you take the time needed to master it?

B. How to master the simple way to pray

Mastering Luther's simple way to pray can make your prayer more bold, powerful, and proactive. Consistent practice is the key to mastering Luther's simple way to pray. If you have done the Daily Exercises, the weekly Group Discussions, and prayer, you probably have a lot of information about praying that you are still trying to integrate into your daily practice of prayer. You may feel like David when he was clothed in Saul's armor: "He tried in vain to go, for he had not tested them."¹²⁰ Testing comes through practice. When you begin to practice, you may feel a little mechanical, maybe even artificial, but if you consistently practice Luther's simple way for about three months, you will find that with each passing day less conscious effort will be required; it will become part of your spiritual DNA and you will just do it!

I have been practicing Luther's simple way to pray for more than sixteen years. I start each day by reading a portion of the Old Testament and I end each day with a passage from the New Testament. In this way, I read the Old Testament once a year and the New Testament twice a year. I also pray through the Psalms once a month, some in the morning and some in the afternoon. After reading the Bible, I recite from memory the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed. Then I reflect on what I have read and recited, asking the Holy Spirit to help me pray for my

heart, my home, my church, and my personal world. I ask the Father to fill me with His Holy Spirit and enable me “to walk by the Spirit, and not gratify the desires of my flesh.”¹²¹ I pray for God to clothe me with His full armor and give me the ability to resist the Devil. In response to the mercies of God, as my act of spiritual worship, I present my body as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. I ask Him to help me not to be conformed to this world and to be transformed by the renewal of my mind, that by testing I may discern God’s good, acceptable, and perfect will.¹²² I conclude by asking the Lord to help me recognize and properly respond to each “divine appointment” He provides. The more I practice this way to pray, the more biblical, bold, powerful, and proactive my prayer life is becoming.

Respond

1. Prayer has no effect on history.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

2. In response to Luther’s prayer movement, God changed people who changed the church and the world.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

3. Through prayer, God sustained Luther, defeated the Devil, reformed the church, and changed the course of human history.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

4. Time and effort are needed to master the simple way to pray.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

5. Consistent practice is the key to mastering Luther's simple way to pray.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Explain:

Pray: "Father, pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication on **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me. Enable us to practice in our normal daily lives what we have learned from the example and advice of Martin Luther. Deliver **[insert the names of your Fireteam members and the people on your prayer list]** and me from the insanity of ever thinking that prayer is primarily about us; rather, let us always seek with all our hearts Your kingdom, power, and glory. By Your Holy Spirit, help us to abide in Christ and His words to abide in us, so that we will desire what you desire and pray accordingly. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen."

Day 42: Looking Ahead: Suggestions for Practice

Recite or Read Aloud

(**Optional:** The Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed.)

The Promise: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (Romans 8:26).

Warm Your Heart

(**Optional:** Psalm 100:1–5)

Prepare for Fireteam Group Discussion Eight:

Pray: "Father, guide me in selecting the suggestions you desire me to do and show me how to follow through with what I have learned from the *Simple Way to Pray* Group Discussion."

Read: Suggestions for Practicing the Simple Way to Pray

Here are some suggestions for practicing what you have recently learned. They are organized according to the points used in the early part of this week's material. Prayerfully consider each suggestion and put a check mark by those you *might* do. When you finish reading the list, select a few to practice for the next ninety days:

I. Enemies

- 1. **The flesh:** Proactively each morning ask the Father to fill you with His Spirit and enable you to be dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.
- 2. **The Devil:** Proactively each morning resist the Devil by putting on the full armor of God.
- 3. **The wicked world:** Proactively schedule about fifteen minutes at the beginning of each day to strengthen your faith by reading the Bible.

II. Battlefields

Within you

- 4. **Your heart:** Begin prayerfully reading *On Keeping the Heart*. With your heart, pray for the *ability to pray* and the *leadership* of your Fireteam and yourself. Learn by heart Luther's "Lay Bible" and encourage each member of your household to learn it by heart.

Around you

- 5. **Your home:** Facilitate a *Simple Way to Pray* Group Discussion with your spouse and/or with your family.
- 6. **Your church:** Pray daily for your local church: pastor(s), their family members, the key lay leaders, workers, fellow church members, and yourself, that you will make your hearts, homes, and your local churches "houses of prayer for all nations."
- 7. **Your personal world:** Schedule daily time to pray the suggested Scripture passages for your "ungripped."
- 8. Pray daily for the president using the suggested prayer.

III. Targets

- 9. Analyze your lifestyle and the battlefields where you work or play for targets of opportunity. Each day ask the Lord to arrange "divine appointments" for you and your Fireteam members.
- 10. Update your prayer list by adding names, deleting names, prioritizing, and clustering the people on it.

IV. Miscellaneous

- 11. Schedule daily time to pray the Psalms (see page 54–65). The following schedule will help you read through the Psalms in thirty days in about fifteen minutes a day, depending on how long you meditate. **The day of the month is in bold type.** Psalms to be read are in regular type.
1. 1–7; **2.** 8–13; **3.** 14–18; **4.** 19–22; **5.** 23–28; **6.** 29–33; **7.** 34–38; **8.** 39–43; **9.** 44–49; **10.** 50–55; **11.** 56–60; **12.** 61–67; **13.** 68–69; **14.** 70–74; **15.** 75–78:31; **16.** 78:32–81:16; **17.** 82–88; **18.** 89–92; **19.** 93–100; **20.** 101–104; **21.** 105–106; **22.** 107–110; **23.** 111–118; **24.** 119:1–120; **25.** 119:121–123:4; **26.** 124–129; **27.** 130–135; **28.** 136–139; **29.** 140–144; **30.** 145–150
- 12. Meet face to face for one hour each month in a follow-through Fireteam. Whatever you believe the Lord wants you to do with the insights you received

from the *Simple Way to Pray* Group Discussion, it will be easier for you if you participate with others who are also seeking to practice what they learned in the *Simple Way to Pray* Group Discussion.

- 13. Join or start a *Simple Way to Pray* Facebook group.
 - 14. Read *Winning Life's Battles through Prayer*. This twenty-page PDF describes Kingdom Intercessors' Training and its benefits. This can be downloaded free from Serve International at www.kingdomprayer.org.
 - 15. Other ways I can use what I have learned from the *Simple Way to Pray* Group Discussion:
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-

Having seen that successful spiritual warfare requires understanding of your enemies, the battlefields on which they will attack, the targets they desire to destroy, and the weapon of prayer you need to defeat them, I urge you to select a workable number of these suggestions and, for the next ninety days, proactively practice using what you have selected to help you master *A Simple Way to Pray*.

Material Available from Serve International

A Simple Way to Pray

The following materials are available in a free PDF format from www.kingdomprayer.org

Winning Life's Battles through Prayer

A Simple Way to Pray Participant's Guide

A Simple Way to Pray Facilitator's Guide

On Keeping the Heart, John Flavel

Participant's Course Evaluation
Complete this form and hand it in at the eighth session

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Course Purpose: To help believers participate more effectively with the Lord Jesus Christ in His ministry of intercession by discussing Martin Luther's example in prayer and advice on prayer so that their prayer becomes more biblical, bold, powerful, and proactive, resulting in blessing for them, their families, their churches, and the people in their circles of influence.

1. The purpose was achieved: Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5

Strongly agree

Comment: _____

Use the reverse side of this form If you need more space

Daily Exercises

2. Adequately coached me: Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

Comment: _____

Weekly Meetings

3. DVD presentations were helpful: Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5

Strongly agree

Comment: _____

4. Fireteam Group Discussions were helpful: Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5

Strongly agree

Comment: _____

5. Squad Discussion was helpful: Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly

agree

Comment: _____

6. Fireteam prayer was helpful: Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5

Strongly agree

Comment: _____

7. Follow-through Suggestions were helpful: Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly

agree

Comment: _____

Materials

8. A *Simple Way to Pray* book was helpful: Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly

agree

Comment: _____

9. Participant's Guide was helpful: Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5

Strongly agree

Comment: _____

10. I would recommend SWP Group Discussion to my friends. Yes No

11. SWP Group Discussion could be improved by the following:

12. The most significant thing God did for me through *SWP* Group Discussion was:

Endnotes

- ¹ William R. Russell, *Praying for Reform: Luther, Prayer, and the Christian Life* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2005).
- ² See John 1:14, 18; 3:16–18; 1 John 4:9.
- ³ Luke 11:1–13; Jude 1:20; Zechariah 12:10; Romans 8:26–27; 1 Corinthians 14:15; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 6:18.
- ⁴ Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2; 1 John 3:22; John 14:21.
- ⁵ Matthew 6:9; Romans 8:14–17; Galatians 4:6.
- ⁶ Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2.
- ⁷ John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18.
- ⁸ Romans 14:17.
- ⁹ Revelation 22:7, 12, 20.
- ¹⁰ Matthew 6:13; 1 John 5:18–19; John 17:15; Hebrews 2:14–15; 1 John 3:8.
- ¹¹ Hebrews 1:1–2.
- ¹² 2 Peter 3:18.
- ¹³ Romans 14:8; Ephesians 6:6; Colossians 3:23.
- ¹⁴ See 1 Timothy 2:8.
- ¹⁵ See Philippians 4:6.
- ¹⁶ See Luke 18:1; 21:36; Ephesians 6:18.
- ¹⁷ See Hebrews 2:17; Romans 8:15.
- ¹⁸ Proverbs 9:10.
- ¹⁹ Matthew 18:20
- ²⁰ Matthew 18:20; John 16:13.
- ²¹ See John 17:1.
- ²² Proverbs 4:23.
- ²³ Jeremiah 17:9.
- ²⁴ Psalm 139:23–24.
- ²⁵ Jeremiah 29:13.
- ²⁶ Romans 8:26.
- ²⁷ Luke 11:1.
- ²⁸ Prayer is conversation with God. Jesus was the God-man. Much can be learned about prayer from people's requests in the Gospels.
- ²⁹ Archie Parrish, *Ignite Your Leadership* (Marietta, GA: Serve International, 2002), 18.
- ³⁰ Ephesians 2:10.
- ³¹ The comments and prayer suggestions in all the following psalms are drawn from T. M. Moore, *The Psalms for Prayer* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2002).
- ³² Isaiah 14:14.
- ³³ Earnest DeWitt Burton, *Galatians*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1920).
- ³⁴ See 1 Peter 2:11.
- ³⁵ Colossians 3:5.
- ³⁶ Galatians 5:17–21.
- ³⁷ Romans 7:23.
- ³⁸ See 1 Peter 2:11.
- ³⁹ Colossians 3:5. The best single volume on dealing with the flesh is John Owen, *Mortification of Sin* (Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 1996). J. I. Packer's introduction begins with this observation: "I owe more, I think, to John Owen than any other theologian, ancient or modern, and I am sure I owe more to his little book on mortification than to anything else he wrote." A very helpful modernizing of Owen's work can be found in Kris Lundgaard, *The Enemy Within: Straight Talk About the Power and Defeat of Sin* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1998). Lundgaard distills John Owen's powerful books *Indwelling Sin* and *The Mortification of Sin* into easy-to-understand, bite-size chapters that edify and instruct without tripping your mental circuit breakers. If you find yourself living in Romans 7:14–25 and want to know how to slay sin, this book will furnish you with the needed know-how.
- ⁴⁰ 2 Samuel 11:2–4.
- ⁴¹ Question: How do you flee from an enemy that is already within you? Answer: 1. Seek to avoid whenever possible, everything that incites or rouses sinful thoughts and actions; for example, watch what you watch on TV. 2. Each time you yield to temptation, the experience is stored in your memory. This memory must be mortified by the power of the Spirit. Pray, "Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things; and give me life in your ways" (Psalm 119:37, ESV). When this is prayed from the heart, it asks for restraining grace that will keep you from that which would hinder you in the way of loving obedience. And it asks for enabling grace so that you can do God's good and acceptable and perfect will.
- ⁴² Galatians 5:24, ESV.

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- ⁴³ Mark 15:24, 25.
- ⁴⁴ Romans 6:6; Galatians 5:24; 2:20.
- ⁴⁵ Philippians 3:10, ESV.
- ⁴⁶ Ezekiel 36:25-27.
- ⁴⁷ See John 3:3, 5–6; Titus 3:4–7.
- ⁴⁸ 1 Corinthians 3:16; Galatians 4:6; 2 Timothy 1:14.
- ⁴⁹ Romans 8:9.
- ⁵⁰ 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15.
- ⁵¹ 1 Corinthians 12:3; compare Matthew 16:17.
- ⁵² Zechariah 12:10, NKJ.
- ⁵³ Romans 8:26–27.
- ⁵⁴ See Luke 11:13; Galatians 5:16–25; Romans 8:4.
- ⁵⁵ Ephesians 5:18.
- ⁵⁶ *The Amplified Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1958).
- ⁵⁷ Ephesians 5:18–20, *Message*.
- ⁵⁸ Acts 2:4; 4:8; 4:31; 6:3, 5; 7:55.
- ⁵⁹ See Luke 11:13.
- ⁶⁰ 2 Timothy 2:22.
- ⁶¹ 1 Peter 2:11.
- ⁶² Romans 8:13.
- ⁶³ Other names given to the Devil give insight to his malevolent nature. “Satan” means “the adversary of God’s people” (Matthew 4:10; 12:26; Mark 1:13; 3:23, 26; 4:15; Luke 10:18; 11:18; 13:16; 22:3, 31; John 13:27; Acts 5:3; 26:18; Romans 16:20; 1 Corinthians 5:5; 7:5; 2 Corinthians 2:11; 11:14; 12:7; 1 Thessalonians 2:18; 2 Thessalonians 2:9; 1 Timothy 1:20; 5:15; Revelation 2:9, 13, 24; 3:9; 12:9; 20:2, 7). He is the enemy of God and His people. He is also called “Abaddon” (Revelation 9:11), “accuser” (Revelation 12:10), “adversary” (1 Peter 5:8), “angel of the bottomless pit” (Revelation 9:11), “Apollyon” (Revelation 9:11), “Belial” (2 Corinthians 6:15), “Beelzebub” (Matthew 12:24), “Devil,” i.e. “the slanderer” (Matthew 4:1, 5, 8, 11; John 13:2; Acts 13:10; Ephesians 4:27; 1 Timothy 3:7; 1 Peter 5:8), “God of this world” (2 Corinthians 4:4), “murderer” (John 8:44), “prince of devils” (Matthew 12:24), “prince of the power of the air” (Ephesians 2:2), “prince of this world” (John 14:30), “ruler of darkness” (Ephesians 6:12), “ruler of this world” (John 14:30), “Serpent” (Genesis 3:4), “tempter” (Matthew 4:3), “unclean spirit” (Matthew 12:43), and “wicked one” (Matthew 13:19). In Matthew 16:23 and Mark 8:33, Peter is called Satan by Jesus because he is tempting the Master to abandon His role as Savior.
- ⁶⁴ Revelation 12:9, ESV.
- ⁶⁵ Genesis 1:26.
- ⁶⁶ Genesis 3:6.
- ⁶⁷ 1 John 5:19, ESV.
- ⁶⁸ Colossians 3:10, ESV.
- ⁶⁹ Acts 17:28.
- ⁷⁰ See 2 Corinthians 12:9–10, ESV.
- ⁷¹ Matthew 6:13, NKJ.
- ⁷² See Matthew 4:1–11; Luke 4:1–13.
- ⁷³ See Psalm 24:1.
- ⁷⁴ See John 3:16.
- ⁷⁵ See 1 John 2:15, 16.
- ⁷⁶ See Ephesians 2:2; John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; Ephesians 6:12; 1 John 5:19.
- ⁷⁷ See 2 Corinthians 6:17.
- ⁷⁸ See John 17:15.
- ⁷⁹ 1 John 5:4. The paraphrase of *The Message* is helpful: “Every God-begotten person conquers the world’s ways. The conquering power that brings the world to its knees is our faith.”
- ⁸⁰ John 14:21.
- ⁸¹ Romans 12:1–2, *Message*.
- ⁸² Galatians 6:14, ESV.
- ⁸³ See John Bunyan, *The Holy War, Made by King Shaddai upon Diabolos to regain the Metropolis of the World or, The Losing and Taking Again of the town of Mansoul*. Though this classic on spiritual warfare was first published in 1682, it is still relevant. It has been published in many editions; the edition by Wilbur M. Smith is one of the most helpful. It contains a biographical sketch of the author, introduction, and notes by Smith (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1948).
- ⁸⁴ See Ephesians 4:26–27.
- ⁸⁵ See 1 Corinthians 7:5.
- ⁸⁶ 1 Peter 5:8.
- ⁸⁷ James 4:7–8.

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- ⁸⁸ Ephesians 6:11.
- ⁸⁹ Matthew 6:10; Ephesians 6:10–20.
- ⁹⁰ See 1 Samuel 23:1–6.
- ⁹¹ Proverbs 4:23.
- ⁹² Gustav Oehler, “The Notion of the Heart, and its Relation to the Soul,” *Theology of the Old Testament, Vol. 1* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1882), 221–227.
- ⁹³ Psalm 51:10, ESV.
- ⁹⁴ 1 John 3:21–22.
- ⁹⁵ Luke 11:1.
- ⁹⁶ Prayer is conversation with God. Jesus was the God-man. Much can be learned about prayer from people’s requests in the Gospels.
- ⁹⁷ James 1:2.
- ⁹⁸ Romans 8:26.
- ⁹⁹ See 1 Samuel 16:7; 1 Kings 8:39; 1 Chronicles 28:9; 28:9; 2 Chronicles 6:30; John 2:25; 21:17; Acts 1:24; Hebrews 4:12.
- ¹⁰⁰ Zechariah 12:10; Romans 8:26.
- ¹⁰¹ Parrish, *Ignite Your Leadership*, 18.
- ¹⁰² Ephesians 2:10.
- ¹⁰³ John 17:4, ESV.
- ¹⁰⁴ John 14:13; 15:7, 16; Psalm 37:4; Galatians 5:16; 1 John 3:22.
- ¹⁰⁵ Deuteronomy 6:6–9.
- ¹⁰⁶ See Revelation 2:9; 3:9.
- ¹⁰⁷ See Luke 22:31–32; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12; 1 Timothy 5:17.
- ¹⁰⁸ See John. 6:44–45; Matthew 16:15–18.
- ¹⁰⁹ 2 Timothy 2:25–26.
- ¹¹⁰ Ephesians 2:2; 1 John 5:19.
- ¹¹¹ 2 Timothy 2:25–26.
- ¹¹² 2 Corinthians 4:3–4.
- ¹¹³ 1 John 3:8.
- ¹¹⁴ Ephesians 1:20–21; Hebrews 2:14–15.
- ¹¹⁵ 1 Timothy 2:2.
- ¹¹⁶ Use Google to get this information.
- ¹¹⁷ Colossians 1:10.
- ¹¹⁸ 2 Corinthians 10:3–5, ESV.
- ¹¹⁹ *Luther’s Large Catechism*, “On Prayer.” Project Wittenberg, Walther Library at Concordia Theological Seminary.
- ¹²⁰ 1 Samuel 17:38–40.
- ¹²¹ Galatians 5:16.
- ¹²² Romans 12:1–2.