

New City Catechism Class
Week Forty

Q40: What should we pray?

A40: The whole Word of God directs and inspires us in what we should pray, including the prayer Jesus himself taught us.

Ephesians 3:14-21 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (ESV)

Discuss the question:

- What questions on prayer have we covered so far?
- For what things do we pray?

Discuss the Scripture:

- For what reason does Paul bow before the Father? (i.e. To what is he linking back to from earlier in the letter?)
- What three primary things does Paul pray for Christians and what do they mean? (hint: Look for the word that.)
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- In what ways is this prayer in humble submission to God's will?
- To whom is this prayer addressed and how is he described? (verses 20-21)
 - What are the implications of this description of God for our prayers?
- For whom is this prayer? (verses 20-21)
 - What are the implications of this for our prayers?

Discuss the answer in light of the Scripture:

- Why do we need to be directed and inspired in what we should pray?
- What are some of the patterns for prayer in the Word of God that direct and inspire our prayers?
- What are some ways in which the whole Word of God directs and inspires our prayers? (i.e. How does the whole Word of God direct and inspire our prayers and not just the parts with patterns for prayer?)
- To whom and to what does the whole Word of God point?
- How is biblical meditation an aid to us in our prayers?
- How is praying the Bible an aid to us in our prayers?

As we pray, we're really asking God to bring our lives and the lives of others into line with his purposes. And when we pray in that way, we're able to pray with confidence.

- Alistair Begg