

New City Catechism Class Week Thirty-eight

Q38: What is prayer?

A38: Prayer is pouring out our hearts to God in praise, petition, confession of sin, and thanksgiving.

Psalm 62:8 Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us. (ESV)

Discuss the question:

- Why should we pray?
- What prevents us from praying?

Discuss the Scripture:

- What are psalms?
- What is the context of Ps 62?
- How does prayer help us to trust in the LORD at all times?
- Who does the psalmist call to prayer?
- What does it look like to pour out our hearts before God? (1 Sam 1:15; Ps 42:4; Lam 2:19)
- What is a refuge? How is God a refuge for us?
- What do verses 11-12 communicate to us about the character of God and how he relates to his people?

Discuss the answer in light of the Scripture:

- How might praise in prayer take shape? (Luke 1:46-55)
- How might petition in prayer take shape? (1 Sam 1:9-17)
- How might confession of sin in prayer take shape? (Ps 51)
- How might thanksgiving in prayer take shape? (Phil 4:4-6)
- With prayer as your frame of reference, how would you answer this question from last week: How can we, in an ongoing way, remain dependent upon and receive the help we need from the Holy Spirit?

Prayer is the way you walk by the Spirit. Prayer is the way you walk by faith. In other words, it's the breath of the Christian life all day long. Just breathe in, breathe out. It's the way you live. -John Piper