

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments 9

Permissions 11

Introduction: A Journey to Vital Prayers 13

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING: Day 1, 11, 21, 31, 41, 51, 61, 71, 81, 91, 101,
111, 121, 131, 141, 151, 161, 171, 181, 191, 201, 211, 221, 231, 241, 251

PRAYERS OF CONFESSION: Day 2, 12, 22, 32, 42, 52, 62, 72, 82, 92, 102,
112, 122, 132, 142, 152, 162, 172, 182, 192, 202, 212, 222, 232, 242, 252

PRAYERS OF AFFIRMATION: Day 3, 13, 23, 33, 43, 53, 63, 73, 83, 93, 103,
113, 123, 133, 143, 153, 163, 173, 183, 193, 203, 213, 223, 233, 243, 253

PRAYERS OF PETITION: Day 4, 14, 24, 34, 44, 54, 64, 74, 84, 94, 104, 114,
124, 134, 144, 154, 164, 174, 184, 194, 204, 214, 224, 234, 244, 254

PRAYERS FOR RENEWAL: Day 5, 15, 25, 35, 45, 55, 65, 75, 85, 95, 105,
115, 125, 135, 145, 155, 165, 175, 185, 195, 205, 215, 225, 235, 245, 255

PRAYERS OF PRAISE/ADORATION: Day 6, 16, 26, 36, 46, 56, 66, 76, 86, 96,
106, 116, 126, 136, 146, 156, 166, 176, 186, 196, 206, 216, 226, 236, 246, 256

PRAYERS FOR CHRISTLIKE CHARACTER: Day 7, 17, 27, 37, 47, 57, 67, 77, 87, 97,
107, 117, 127, 137, 147, 157, 167, 177, 187, 197, 207, 217, 227, 237, 247, 257

PRAYERS FOR WISDOM/GUIDANCE: Day 8, 18, 28, 38, 48, 58, 68, 78, 88, 98,
108, 118, 128, 138, 148, 158, 168, 178, 188, 198, 208, 218, 228, 238, 248, 258

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION: Day 9, 19, 29, 39, 49, 59, 69, 79, 89, 99, 109,
119, 129, 139, 149, 159, 169, 179, 189, 199, 209, 219, 229, 239, 249, 259

PRAYERS OF SURRENDER: Day 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100, 110,
120, 130, 140, 150, 160, 170, 180, 190, 200, 210, 220, 230, 240, 250, 260

Works Cited 279

PRAYERS *of* THANKSGIVING

Day 1

- ☘ Hear my cry, O God: Give heed to my prayer.
From the ends of the earth I will call to Thee, when my heart is faint;
Lead me to the rock that is higher than I. PSALM 61:1-2
- ☘ By trusting in You, I will be empowered to do greater things than have been done. Whatever I request along the lines of who You are and what You are doing, You will do. JOHN 14:12-14
- ☘ Eternal Father of my soul, let my first thought today be of Thee . . .
let my first action be to kneel before Thee in prayer.
For Thy perfect wisdom and perfect goodness:
For the love wherewith Thou lovest *humanity*:
For the love wherewith Thou lovest me: . . .
For the *many wonderful* gifts of Thy Spirit:
I praise and worship Thee, O Lord.
JOHN BAILLIE, *Scottish theologian (1886-1960) [DPP, 9]*
- ☘ Lord of all creation, You made us for Yourself, and You always take pleasure in granting us every good and perfect gift. Your Word is trustworthy and Your promises are sure. In spite of this, . . . I often succumb to my own devices and desires, foolishly hoping that I can successfully order my life without conscious dependence on You. . . . Give me the grace to believe that You really do know what is best for me and that I do not. May I cling to Your character and rejoice in Your pursuit of me.
KENNETH BOA, JOHN ALAN TURNER, *American authors (twenty-first century) [GSB, 31]*
- ☘ Merciful Father, thank You for being a prayer-hearing God. . . .
It is an overwhelming thought that *You* the Creator and Sustainer of all things gives heed to our prayers and meets our needs. . . .
Increase our faith in the truth that by prayer we have an influence in the world all out of proportion with how small we are. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.
JOHN PIPER, *American pastor (1946-present day) [PBW, 53]*

A PRAYER FOR TODAY

Thank You that I am not alone in this world and for hearing my prayers.
Thank You that You promise to not only hear my prayers, but to work in response to my prayer. You will not simply give me what I want, but You will give me what is best and most needed. Today I bring the following prayers to You . . .

I am confident that You will hear and act.

Pause to add your own prayers of thankfulness for who God is and what He has done . . .

Day 2

PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

☛ From within, out of my heart proceed
evil, sexual immorality, thefts, murders, adulteries,
greed, wickedness, deceit, lewdness,
envy, slander, arrogance, and folly.
All these evil things come from within my heart and defile me.
MARK 7:21–23

☛ Father—the truth about me is that often I choose sin:
Sometimes I choose hatred. Sometimes I choose slander.
Sometimes I choose envy. Sometimes I choose greed.
Sometimes I choose pettiness. Sometimes I choose lust.
Sometimes I choose gossip. Sometimes I choose pride.
Sometimes I choose self-reliance.
Sometimes I choose self-righteousness.
Sometimes I choose self-aggrandizement.
Sometimes I choose dishonesty.
Sometimes I choose unkind words.
Sometimes I choose to ignore the obvious needs around me.
Sometimes I choose to hoard my resources.
Sometimes I choose to neglect Your command to share the gospel.
The list of things I wrongly choose could go on and on. And sometimes
I act on these things in ways that are darker than I even care to state.
Each time I make such a choice, I choose death (Romans 6:23).
Today, I ask that You would breathe life into my soul afresh
And enable me to choose life—to choose You and Your ways.
KURT BJORKLUND, *American minister (1968–present day)*

☛ For You, my Lord God, have proclaimed:
“I, even I, am the one who blots out your transgressions—for my own sake.
And I will remember your sins no more.” ISAIAH 43:25

A PRAYER FOR TODAY

Father I confess these sins to You . . .
Today I identify the following areas that I have not surrendered to You . . .
And I confess them—and turn from them.
I accept Your blotting out of my transgressions.
I thank You that You will remember them no more. Amen
*You may want to write down some of these things and then symbolically burn, shred, or
throw away the paper to represent those sins being blotted out.*

PRAYERS *of* AFFIRMATION

Day 3

☘ What then shall I say? If You, O God, are for me, who can be against me? You who did not spare Your own Son, but gave Him up for us all—how will You not also graciously give us all things? Who will bring a charge against those whom You, O God, have chosen? You alone declare us justified. Who can condemn? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at Your right hand, O God, and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate me from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? . . . No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. **ROMANS 8:31–35, 37**

☘ *O God*, I believe that You are, and that You are the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, Your only Son, my Lord;
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
Born of the Virgin Mary,
Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, dead, and buried, . . .
And bore the punishment for sin.
The third day he rose again from the dead,
Ascended into heaven,
And now sits at Your right hand, You the Almighty Father. And from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit.
The holy catholic (*universal*) church,
The communion of saints,
The forgiveness of sins,
The resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.
THE APOSTLES' CREED (*first appeared around 390*) [PD]

A PRAYER FOR TODAY

Consider the time-honored words of the Apostles' Creed, carefully affirming the truth of every line. . . .

Then reread Romans 8:31–37, pausing for any words or phrases that affirm God's love for you. . . .

Sit in silence and let the facts of the Christian faith and the affirmation of God's love settle into the depths of your soul. If your mind wanders, say aloud the words, "Nothing can separate me from the love of Christ."

Day 4

PRAYERS OF PETITION

☘ Hear, O Lord, and be merciful to me;
O Lord, be my helper. (Heb.=*azar*: to help, support, give military assistance)
You turn my mourning into dancing;
You remove my sackcloth and clothe me with gladness,
That my heart may sing praise to You and not be silent.
O Lord my God, I will give thanks to You forever. **PSALM 30:10–12**

☘ O God, early in the morning do I cry unto Thee.
Help me to pray, and to think only of Thee.
I cannot pray alone. In me there is darkness. But with Thee there is light.
I am lonely, but Thou leavest me not.
I am feeble in heart, but Thou leavest me not.
I am restless, but with Thee there is peace.
In me there is bitterness, but with Thee there is patience.
Thy ways are past understanding, but Thou knowest the way for me.
Lord Jesus, Thou was poor and in misery, a captive and forsaken as I am.
Thou knowest all man's distress;
Thou abidest with me when all others have deserted me.

I would remember before Thee all my loved ones, my fellow prisoners,
And all who in this house perform their hard service.
Lord, have mercy.
Restore my liberty and enable me so to live that I may answer before Thee
and before the World.

Lord, whatsoever this day may bring, Thy name be praised.
Be gracious unto me and help me.
Grant me strength to bear whatsoever Thou dost send,
And let not fear overrule me.
I trust Thy grace, and commit my life wholly into Thy Hands.
Whether I live or whether I die, I am with Thee and Thou are with me. . . .
Lord, I wait for Thy salvation, and for the coming of Thy Kingdom. Amen.
DIETRICH BONHOEFFER, *German pastor (1906–1945) [BHE, 253–54]*
Written on Christmas Day 1943 while in a Nazi concentration camp

PRAYER FOR TODAY

Lord, here are my concerns for this week . . .
I ask that You would work in all of the activities that I am engaged in by . . .
I ask that You would grant me the perspective that desires character over
comfort. Amen.

PRAYERS *for* RENEWAL

Day 5

☘ When I rest, dwell in Your shelter, Most High God,
then I will rest in Your shadow, Almighty God.
(Hebrew for *dwell* is *seter*: a hidden safe place, a place of refuge)

PSALM 91:1

☘ Your name, Lord, is a strong tower,
the righteous run into it and they are safe. PROVERBS 18:10

☘ O God, I will put on Your full armor so that I am able to withstand the evil
schemes of the devil. EPHESIANS 6:11

☘ Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art;
Thou my best thought, by day or by night, waking or sleeping, Thy
presence my light.

Be Thou my wisdom, and Thou my true Word; I ever with Thee and Thou
with me, Lord;

Thou my great Father, I Thy true son; Thou in me dwelling, and I with
Thee one.

Be Thou my battle shield, sword for the fight;

Be Thou my dignity, Thou my delight; Thou my soul's shelter, Thou my
high tower: Raise Thou me heavenward, O power of my power. . . .

Thou and Thou only, first in my heart; High King of Heaven, my Treasure
Thou art.

“BE THOU MY VISION,” *Traditional Irish hymn* [PD]

A PRAYER FOR TODAY

Father, may I see Your vision for my life.

(What unique leading is God stirring in me today?) . . .

May I see where evil is intended and run to Your shelter.

(Where is evil showing itself in my circumstances?) . . .

May I see where I have been seduced by riches.

(Am I looking for fulfillment through the acquisition of things?) . . .

May I see where I have sought people's approval.

(From where have I longed for approval other than from God?) . . .

Lord, seeing the places that I need renewal, become my vision once again.

Amen.

Day 6

PRAYERS OF PRAISE/ADORATION

☘ You are great, Lord, and most worthy of my praise;
You are to be revered above all gods.
For all the gods of the nations are but idols, but You made the heavens.
Splendor and majesty are before You;
Strength and beauty are in Your sanctuary.
I will ascribe to You, O Lord, glory and strength.
I will ascribe to You the glory due Your name and worship You in the
beauty of Your holiness. **PSALM 96:4–9**

☘ We give *praise* to you, O God of holiness, and truth, wisdom and goodness, justice and mercy, purity and lovingkindness, for with goodness and wisdom unmatched you revealed yourself to us, sending your Son into the world, destined to assume human nature and to become a sacrifice for us.
PHILIP MELANCHTHON, German reformer (1497–1560) [EPP, 57 PD]

☘ Lord, I know Who You are and I am so grateful that Your majesty is displayed in heaven and in the entire universe.
I know that You see from Your vantage point all of the issues in my life and all of the matters of this world.
You have a view that no one here has.
You see the beginning of the parade and the end of it all at the same time.
Lord, You are in heaven and I am on earth.
I worship Your majesty this day.
And yet at the same time, God, You are my Father. I cannot completely understand all of that, and I know that I never will. But to know that You are my Father is such a comfort to me. . . .
You are gracious and kind. You remember that we are dust. You forgive and You encourage, and I want that to be true of me as well.
Dear God, thank You for being my Father.
DAVID JEREMIAH, American pastor (1946–present day) [PGA, 89]

A PRAYER FOR TODAY

Lord, sometimes I see things more from my perspective than Yours.
Help me today to see beyond my natural perspective and adopt Your perspective.

I praise You for Your greatness and power seen in these ways . . .

I praise You for Your nearness and tenderness seen in these ways . . .

I pause to meditate on the following quality noted above . . .

and how that quality of Yours encourages me. . . .

I give You all my worship and praise today. Amen.

PRAYERS *for* CHRISTLIKE CHARACTER

☛ May I live as an obedient child, not conforming myself to the former desires that drove me when I lived in ignorance, but as You who called me are holy, may I also be holy in all my conduct, because it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.” 1 PETER 1:14–16

☛ Lord, help me to do great things as though they were little since I do them with your power;
and little things as though they were great since I do them in your name.
BLAISE PASCAL, *French philosopher (1623–1662)* [PD]

☛ Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace,
That where there is hatred, may I bring love;
That where there is wrong, may I bring a spirit of forgiveness;
That where there is discord, may I bring harmony;
That where there is error, may I bring truth;
That where there is doubt, may I bring faith;
That where there is despair, may I bring hope;
That where there are shadows, may I bring light;
That where there is sadness, may I bring joy.
Lord, grant that I may seek to comfort, rather than to be comforted;
To understand rather than to be understood;
To love rather than to be loved;
For it is in giving that we are received;
It is by forgiving that we are forgiven,
And it is by dying that we awaken to eternal life.
Attributed to FRANCIS OF ASSISI, *Italian monk (1181–1226), and others* [PD]

A PRAYER FOR TODAY

Consider the things that seem too difficult in your life today—ask God for power. . . .

Consider the things that seem menial in your life today—ask God for perspective. . . .

Consider the opportunities to bring restoration in your sphere of influence—ask God for courage. . . .

Consider the alternatives to serving God—affirm your desire to serve Him above all other gods. . . .

Reread the prayer by Francis of Assisi thinking about each situation in your life where you can live out the reality of the prayer.

Lord, please develop in me the kind of character that You order. Amen.

Day 8

PRAYERS *for* WISDOM/GUIDANCE

☘ Whoever drinks of the water that You give will never thirst again. Your water will become a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.

JOHN 4:14

☘ You are the bread of life. Whoever comes to You will never hunger again.

JOHN 6:35

☘ Most merciful God, order my day so that I may know what you want me to do, and then help me to do it. Let me not be elated by success or depressed by failure. I want only to take pleasure in what pleases you, and only to grieve at what displeases you.

For the sake of your love I would willingly forgo all temporal comforts.

May all the joys in which you have no part weary me.

May all the work which you do not prompt be tedious to me.

Let my thoughts frequently turn to you, that I may be obedient to you without complaint,

patient without grumbling,

cheerful without self-indulgence,

contrite without dejections,

and serious without solemnity.

Let me hold you in awe without feeling terrified of you, and let me be an example to others without any trace of pride.

THOMAS AQUINAS, *Italian theologian (1225–1274)* [BHE, 72 PD]

☘ Lord, help me now to unclutter my life, to organize myself in the direction of simplicity. Lord, teach me to . . . welcome change, instead of fearing it.

Lord, I give You these stirrings inside me,

I give You my discontent, I give You my restlessness,

I give You my doubt, I give You my despair,

I give You all the longings I hold inside.

Help me to listen to these signs of change, of growth;

To listen seriously and follow where they lead.

ANONYMOUS [CDP, 220–21]

A PRAYER FOR TODAY

Father, I give You the places of my life where I am not satisfied. . . .

I ask to be fully satisfied in You and the direction You are leading my life.

Show me what changes I could make in my life that would be most pleasing to You. . . . Amen.

PRAYERS *of* INTERCESSION

- ☛ I am blessed when I consider (Heb.=*sakal*: regard, careful thought, not a perfunctory glance) the weak; for then You will deliver me in times of trouble.

PSALM 41:1

- ☛ O Lord, baptize our hearts into a sense of the needs and conditions of all.

GEORGE FOX, founder of the Quakers (1624–1691) [OBP, 134 PD]

- ☛ O God, our Father,

We ask you to bless those for whom there will be no sleep tonight;
those who must work throughout the night to maintain the public
services,

doctors who must wake to usher new life into the world,

to close the eyes of those for whom this life is passing away,

to ease the sufferer's pain;

nurses and all who watch by the bedside of those who are ill;

those who this night will not sleep because of the pain of their body or the
distress of their mind;

those in misfortune, who will lie down in hunger and in cold;

those who are far from home and far from friends,

and who are lonely as the shadows fall.

Grant that in our own happiness and comfort we may never forget the sor-
row and the pain, the loneliness and the need of others in the slow, dark
hours. This we ask for your love's sake.

WILLIAM BARCLAY, Scottish Bible professor (1907–1978) [CPB, 162]

- ☛ Lord Jesus Christ, in everything I do, I want to be like Paul, who showed by his hard work a calling to help the weak, remembering Your words, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." ACTS 20:35

A PRAYER FOR TODAY

Think about the plight of those who are struggling with the bare essentials of life. . . .

If possible, go and see someone or an area where this struggle is evident; allow yourself to feel it and "regard" it.

Lord, I ask You to provide for and care for those whose lives I have thought about today. . . .

I ask what You would direct me to do to "regard" those who are in these struggles. . . .

If you are already regularly doing something for those in need, what can you do to help others "regard" their situation? . . . Amen.

Day 10

PRAYERS OF SURRENDER

☘ I will not seek to commend myself in other people's eyes;
You, O God, know my heart, and what is highly esteemed among people is
detestable in Your sight. LUKE 16:15

☘ My Father, I commend myself to You;
I give myself to You; I leave myself in Your hands.
My Father, do with me as You wish.
Whatever You do with me, I thank You. I accept everything.
I am ready for anything. I thank You always.
So long as Your will is done in me and in all creatures,
I have no other wish, my God.
I put my soul into Your hands . . .
Without reserve, with utter confidence, for are You not my Father?
CELTIC PRAYER [CDP, 650–51 PD]

☘ Lord, I will provide bags for myself that will not wear out, a treasure in
heaven that will not be exhausted, where . . . no moth destroys. For where
my treasure is there my heart will be also. LUKE 12:33–34

☘ Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend myself, my spirit, soul and body:
Thou didst make, and didst redeem them:
O Lord, Thou God of truth.
And together with me, all my friends and all that belongs to me.
Thou hast secured them to me Lord, in Thy goodness.
Guard my lying down and my rising up, from this time forth and even
forevermore. . . .
I will lay me down in peace, and take my rest:
for it is Thou, Lord, only, that makest me dwell in safety.
LANCELOT ANDREWES, *English minister, translator of KJV (1555–1626)*
[PDL, 20–21 PD]

A PRAYER FOR TODAY

Father, I commend myself and my life to You. To commend means to entrust
to someone or something. So I entrust myself to You.

At this moment that means . . .

“Do with me whatever You wish” can be prayed only when I am confident in
Your power and goodness. So based on my belief in Your power and
goodness, I entrust _____ to You. (*Name your reservations and
give them to God.*) Amen.