

# The Disciple

MARCH 7, 2021

104 ELM AVENUE  
P.O. BOX 1344  
LOUISA, VA 23093

540-848-6441  
LOUISACHRISTIANCHURCH.ORG  
LCCPASTORV@GMAILCOM

## Why pray?

### What is the purpose of prayer?

Reprinted from [compellingtruth.org](http://compellingtruth.org)

In some ways prayer is one of the most mysterious aspects of the Christian walk. We wonder if God really hears our prayers, if our prayers have an effect on our lives, what is acceptable to pray about, how we should pray, and on and on. So why do we even do it? Several reasons.

We pray because it is a privilege. God is far above us, completely holy and only comprehensible inasmuch as He reveals Himself to us. Prayer is His invitation to get to know Him. God allows us to approach Him. In fact, He desires it. Prayer is our way of communing with God. Just as friends and family members spend time talking with one another to deepen their relationships, so prayer deepens our relationship with God.

We can exercise the privilege of prayer because Jesus has made a sacrifice for us – He bridges the gap between us and God. Hebrews 4:15-16 refers to Jesus as our High Priest: "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." Because of Jesus, we are free to pray, and to pray boldly.

We also pray because we are commanded to. Psalm 100:4 says, "Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name!" Thanking God, praising Him, and blessing Him are all aspects of prayer. Matthew 7:7-11 records Jesus' instructions to ask, seek, and knock. When we pray, this is what we are doing. Matthew 6:5-13 describes Jesus teaching the disciples how to pray. He begins the discourse by saying, "And when you pray." Prayer is assumed; it's something we will do. In 1 Thessalonians 5:17 Paul writes, "pray without ceasing." Philippians 4:6 says, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." Prayer is to be part of our lives.

Jesus set a great example of prayer for us. The Gospels mention several times that Jesus prayed. John 17 is perhaps one of the best examples. If Jesus – who is God – prayed to the Father, how much more should we?



Look to  
the LORD  
and his  
strength;  
seek his  
face  
always.

1 Chronicles  
16:11

Prayer draws us closer to God and is a means by which we praise Him, but it also has an effect in our lives. James 1:5 says, "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him." Prayer can lead us to wisdom. First Peter 5:6-7 says, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you." Prayer can relieve our anxiety. Matthew 7:7-8 says, "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened." When we approach God with the desires of our hearts, He answers us (see also Psalm 37:4; John 14:13-14; and 1 John 5:14-15).

Prayer is both an intimate interaction with God and a corporate event. It brings God glory, gives us insight into who He is, and has a tangible effect on our lives. Prayer is a privilege and a spiritual discipline well worth developing.



**This poem is over a hundred years old.** Whether you find the appropriate position or find yourself with "heels a-stikin' up", talk to the Lord. He looks on the inner man while too often we focus on the outer man.

### A Prayer of Cyrus Brown

"The proper way for a man to pray"  
said Deacon Lemuel Keyes,  
"and the only proper attitude  
is down upon his knees."

"Nay, I should say the way to pray,"  
said Reverend Dr. Wise  
"is standing straight with outstretched arms  
and rapt and upturned eyes."

"Oh, no, no, no." said Elder Snow  
"Such posture is too proud  
A man should pray with eyes fast closed  
and head contritely bowed."

"It seems to me his hands should be  
astutely clasped in front.  
With both thumbs a pointing toward the ground."  
Said Reverend Hunt.

"Las' year I fell in Hodgkins well  
head first," said Cyrus Brown,  
"With both my heels a-stikin' up,  
my head a-p'inting down,  
An' I made a prayer right there an' then;  
Best prayer I ever said;  
The prayingest prayer I ever prayed,  
A-standin on my head."



*I pray because I  
can't help  
myself.*

*I pray because  
I'm helpless.*

*I pray because  
the need flows  
out of me all the  
time —*

*waking, and  
sleeping.*

*It does not  
change God, it  
changes me.*

~ CS Lewis

# FORGIVENESS

## Fred Rogers on Forgiveness

So many people have asked me, "Do you ever get mad?"

Of course I answer, "Well yes! Everyone gets made sometimes."

The important thing is what we do with the mad that we feel in life. A few weeks ago, on my way home from a particularly tough day at work, I stopped to see my two grandsons. Their mom and dad weren't there, but the boys were there with the babysitter in the back yard, squirting water with hoses. I could see that they were really having fun — but I felt I needed to let them know that I didn't want to be squirted.

So I told them so.

And little by little, I could feel that the older boy, Alexander, was testing the limit, until finally his hose was squirting very close to where I was standing. I said to him in my harshest voice, "OK, that's it, Alexander. Turn off the water. You've had it."

He did as I told him, said he was sorry, and looked very sad. The more I thought about it, the sadder I got. I realized that Alexander had not squirted me, and that I had stepped into his and his brother's play, with a lot of feelings left over from work.

So when I got home, I just called Alexander on the phone. I told him I felt awful about my visit with him. And the more I thought about it, the more I realized that I was taking out my anger from work on him. I told him I was really sorry.

Do you know how he answered me? He said, "Oh Bubba (he calls me Bubba), Oh Bubba, everybody makes mistakes sometimes."

I nearly cried. I was so touched by his naturally generous heart. And I realized that if I hadn't called him, I might not have ever received that wonderful gift of Alexander's sweet forgiveness.

+ Fred Rogers



## Praying

By Mary Oliver

It doesn't have to be  
the blue iris,  
it could be weeds  
in a vacant lot,  
or a few small  
stones;

Just pay  
attention,  
then patch a few  
words together  
and don't try  
to make them  
elaborate,  
this isn't  
a contest  
but the doorway  
into thanks,  
and a silence  
in which  
another voice  
may speak.



It's time to order  
Easter Lilies.  
Lilies are \$9.

To order yours,  
contact Sharon  
Duke at  
434-981-3115 or  
[louisalandlady@gmail.com](mailto:louisalandlady@gmail.com).

Orders must be in  
by March 28th.



# Lenten Activities

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday (February 17, 2021) and continues until Easter Sunday.

These are illustrated cards for some thought provoking activities during Lent. The Cards for Sunday outlines a simple candlelight service, including a Lenten confession, words from scripture, a bite-sized meditation, and a little blessing; and the other cards feature simple, engaging practices to try as we travel the road to the empty tomb. Each newsletter will give sets of cards until Easter.



## WEEK THREE PRACTICE

### "DIG DEEPER" TEA CEREMONY QUESTIONS:

Make a pot of tea, invite your beloveds to sit at a table or on the floor in a circle, and ask everyone these questions:

- If you could change one thing in the world, what would you change?
- What's the biggest way you've changed over the years?
- The disciples remembered and believed in Jesus' teachings all the more after his death and resurrection. Have you ever lost someone you loved? If so, what's one thing you remember them telling you before they died?



## THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

LIGHT: 8 Tealights + Christ Candle

CONFESS: God of new life, here's the truth: too often, we're angry when we shouldn't be, and not angry enough when we should be. Give us your passion and gentleness – and the wisdom to know the difference. Amen.

EXTINGUISH: 4 Tealights

READ: John 2:13-22

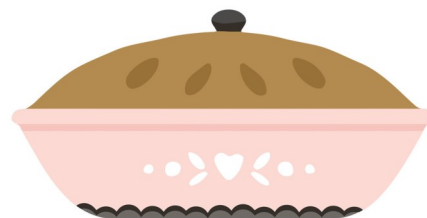
MEDITATE: After Jesus was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered what he had said; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

BLESS: May God bless you and keep you! May the radiant face of God shine upon you as you see and name both the injustices and blessings of this broken, beautiful world. Amen.

## WEEK FOUR PRACTICE

### PICK ONE (OR TWO!):

- Pick up trash in the neighborhood.
- Put out bird seed for the birds.
- Give outgrown clothing to a smaller friend.
- Draw a picture for your librarian or mail carrier, with a note saying "Thank You!"
- Write "Bless this mess!" in chalk on a sidewalk near your church or home.



## WEEK FOUR PRACTICE

From the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, food is at the center of community in many cultures – and therefore a great way to introduce your family to customs and traditions different from your own. This week, try three new dishes from a variety of cultures, and open your family's hearts and palates to the beauty of God's diversity.



## WEEK FOUR PRACTICE

### "DIG DEEPER" TEA CEREMONY QUESTIONS:

Make a pot of tea, invite your beloveds to sit at a table or on the floor in a circle, and ask everyone these questions:

- The passage this week from the Psalms recommends singing "songs of joy." What songs make you feel joyful?
- How do you show someone you love them?
- What makes you feel loved? (Be specific!)



## FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

LIGHT: 8 Tealights + Christ Candle

CONFESS: Forgiver of our souls, our hearts are hard; soften them. Our hands are fists; open them, and continue to breathe into us your spring-smelling newness of life. Amen.

EXTINGUISH: 5 Tealights

READ: Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22

MEDITATE: O give thanks to God, for God is good; God's steadfast love endures forever.

BLESS: May God bless you and keep you! May the radiant face of God shine upon you as you learn to serve your neighbor with God's steadfast love. Amen.