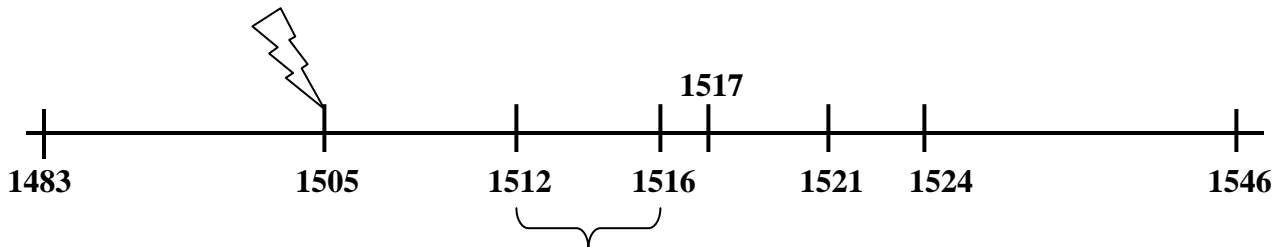


Lessons from Martin Luther's Prayer Life

Prayer Conference 2015

Michael Garreau

I. Synopsis of Luther's Life



II. Why we should listen to Martin Luther

A. He understood the _____ of _____ praying.

1. Looking back Luther wrote, "Prayer under the papacy was pure _____ of the poor conscience and only blabbering and making words; no praying but a work of obedience."
2. ...From this great torment we are now delivered by the _____."

B. He felt the pressures of _____, _____, finances, & _____.

1. _____ professor at University of Wittenburg.
2. Preaching on weekends: _____ sermons in _____ years.
3. _____ children _____ of whom died before reaching adulthood.
4. _____ & _____ difficulties.

C. He kept prayer _____ to his _____ and _____.

1. Luther both _____ and _____ much on prayer.
2. Luther lived constantly aware of his need of the prayers of others. Hardly a letter can be found in which Luther does not write, "_____."
3. Luther was _____ by close friends as a man of prayer.

D. He experienced _____ in his prayer life.

1. The reality of his own struggles and failures preserved him from teaching others in a condescending or idealistic manner. His approach to prayer is characterized by _____ and _____ insights.

III. Martin Luther's Teaching on Prayer

A. Prayer finds its _____ and _____ by faith in the _____ of God's Word.

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1. In a sermon on prayer, Luther said, "...if you wish to be well prepared [for prayer], take the promise and lay hold of God with it. ... Without faith in the promise, there is then, neither _____ nor _____ to pray, but mere uncertain delusion and a melancholy spirit; there is, therefore, no hearing of prayers, and both prayer and labor are lost."
2. You are fit to pray when "you proceed with bold courage, trusting in the _____ and certain _____ of your gracious God."

B. *Prayer is the means to _____ of Scripture and spiritual*

1. "That the Holy Scriptures cannot be penetrated by study and talent is most certain. Therefore your first _____ is to begin to pray, and to pray to this effect that if it please God to accomplish something for His glory—not for yours or any other person's—He very graciously grant you a true understanding of His words. For no master of the divine words exists except the Author of these words, as He says: 'They shall be all taught of God' (John 6:45). You must, therefore, completely _____ of your own industry and ability and _____ solely on the inspiration of the Spirit."

C. *Prayer is the most _____ and yet the most _____ work of the Christian.*

1. "As a shoe maker makes a shoe, or a tailor makes a coat, so ought a Christian to pray. Prayer is the daily _____ of a Christian."
2. "There is no work like prayer. Mumbling with the mouth is easy... but with earnestness of heart to follow the words in deep devotion, that is, with desire and faith, so that one earnestly desires what the words say, and not to doubt that it will be heard: that is a great deed in God's eyes."
3. "...So then, as there is nothing that Christians must do more frequently than praying, so there is also nothing that requires more _____ and effort and, for this reason, is more _____ and more fruitful."

D. *Prayer should be _____, _____, and _____.*

1. "It is of great importance that the heart be made _____ and _____ for prayer. As the Preacher says, "Prepare your heart for prayer, and do not tempt God" [Eccles. 18:23]. What else is it but tempting God when your mouth babbles and the mind wanders to other thoughts?"
2. "...if anything is to be done well, it requires the full attention of all one's senses and members, as the proverb says, "He who thinks of many things, thinks of nothing and does nothing right." How much more does prayer call for _____ and singleness of heart if it is to be a good prayer!"

E. *Prayer is the chief _____ in the _____ against the _____.*

1. "We know that our _____ lies in prayer. We are too weak to resist the devil and his vassals. Let us hold fast to the weapons of the Christian; they enable us to combat the devil... 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."

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2. The devil attempts to hinder praying in several ways:

- a) Satan attempts to sow seeds of doubt into our hearts by reminding us of our great _____.
- b) Satan suggests that this is ____ a _____ time.
- c) Satan attempts to convince us of the _____ of prayer.

3. Luther encouraged Christians to counter the devil's attacks in the following ways:

- a) Never let your sense of _____ keep you from prayer. He urged believers to let their sin and need drive them to God, not away from him.
- b) "It is a good thing to let prayer be the first business of the morning and the last at night. In another place, Luther encourages a _____ of prayer saying that we "should form the habit of praying daily for our needs, whenever we are aware of anything that affects us or other people around us."
- c) "Behold, you could repulse the devil and all his false suggestions by basing your prayer on these three things: God's _____, His _____, and the _____ and words Christ Himself taught. These things the devil cannot deny or annul."

F. Prayer should be _____ after the _____ Prayer.

1. "A Christian has prayed _____ who has rightly prayed the Lord's Prayer."
2. **Caution:** "You should also know that I do not want you to recite all these words in your prayer. That would make it nothing but idle chatter and prattle... Rather do I want your heart to be stirred and _____ concerning the _____ which ought to be comprehended in the Lord's Prayer. These thoughts may be expressed, if your heart is rightly warmed and inclined toward prayer, in many different ways and with more words or fewer."

G. Prayer should be _____ and not overly _____.

1. "Look to it that you do not try to do all of it, do not try to do too much, lest your spirit grow weary. Besides, a good prayer mustn't be too long. Do not draw it out. Prayer ought to be _____ and _____."
2. "Brief prayers...pregnant with the Spirit, strongly fortified by faith...the fewer the words, the better the prayer. The more the words, the worse the prayer. Few words and much meaning is _____. Many words and little meaning is _____."

H. Prayer should _____ with a firm "_____".

1. "Finally, mark this, that you must always speak the Amen firmly. Never _____ that God in his mercy will surely hear you and say "yes" to your prayers. Never think that you are kneeling or standing alone, rather think that the whole of Christendom, all devout Christians, are standing there beside you and you are standing among them in a common, united petition which God cannot disdain. Do not leave your prayer without having said or thought, "Very well, God has heard my prayer; this I know as a _____ and a _____." That is what Amen means."