



March 23, 2017
The Lord's Prayer, Introduction
"Our Father in heaven..."

[Read 1 John 3:1-2](#)

"With these words God wants to attract us, so that we come to believe he is truly our Father and we are truly his children, in order that we may ask him boldly and with complete confidence, just as loving children ask their loving father." (Martin Luther, *Small Catechism*)

It's now time for the daily "call to the pharmacy." That's how Luther understands the role of the Lord's Prayer in the Catechisms. In *Martin Luther's Catechisms*, Timothy Lull puts it this way.

This movement from diagnosis of the human condition (sin) through the law, to treatment through the announcement of God's mercy and grace, to the reception of medication through prayer, marked all of Luther's catechesis and even his private prayer.

The Holy Spirit creates in us the trust in Jesus that opens us to the heart of our dear heavenly Father. Living in that trust, we can then treat God as our God. Once again we return to the First Commandment—to fear, love and trust God above anything else. When we depend on God for everything good in our lives, we treat God as our God.

That's why, when it comes to prayer, Luther has not a bashful bone in his body. His prayers are aggressive, assertive, cajoling, begging, demanding, and even teasing at times. He notes that God commands us to pray. He proclaims that God promises to hear and answer our prayers. And God desires our prayers so much that God even gives us the words to use should our own words fail us.

Those words are the Lord's Prayer. "Thus," he writes in the *Large Catechism*, "there is no nobler prayer to be found on earth, for it has the excellent testimony that God loves to hear it. This," Luther concludes, "we should not trade for all the riches in the world."

Most of all, prayer is our chief weapon in the battle against sin, death and devil. When we pray we open our hearts to receive what God offers. The Holy Spirit creates in us the gift of faith so that we can dare to depend on God for all we need.

The Lord's Prayer is, in a very real sense, the daily school of faith. As we pray the prayer over and over, we practice the habit of confidently depending on God for all that we need. The more we "call the pharmacy," the more familiar we become with the number we need to call. The habit of prayer becomes then the readily available defense when we find ourselves under attack.

After all, an emergency is no time to memorize the number to call. So we practice this prayer daily.

Let's pray. Dear Heavenly Father, send your Holy Spirit into my heart today to create the gift of faith in Jesus that keeps me connected to you. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Do something: Send a thank you note or bring a snack or treat to the local fire station, police station or other first responders.

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