Church History

- Augustine: “Prayer is the protection of holy souls…, the preserver of spiritual health. [It is] the column of all virtues, a ladder to God…[and] the foundation of faith.”
- Luther: “As it is the business of tailors to make clothes and of cobblers to mend shoes, so it is the business of Christians to pray.
- Calvin: “[Prayer is] the chief exercise of faith…by which we daily receive God’s benefits.”

The Real Reasons We Don’t Pray

1. A Lack of Humility
2. A Lack of Faith
3. A Lack of Obedience

The Lord’s Prayer

- Two Versions
  - Mt. 6:9-13
  - Lk. 11:1-4
- Not Parallel Passages
  - Mt. 6 - summer of 29 AD
  - Lk. 11 - fall of 29AD

The Lord’s Prayer

Lk. 11:1-13

- **1** – A disciple’s request for instruction on prayer
- **2-4** – A pattern of prayer (*The Lord’s Prayer*)
- **5-8** – A parable contrasting a reluctant friend with God’s eagerness
- **9-10** – A direct affirmation that God hears & answers prayer
- **11-13** – An illustration from family life

Jesus' Example of Personal Prayer
Luke 11:1

I. Prayer Is a Spiritual Priority that Requires Great Commitment (1a).

As the perfect man, Jesus *often* prayed.

- He began His public ministry, praying (Lk. 3:21-22).
- His regular practice was to pray (Lk. 5:16).
- Before strategic decisions, He prayed all night (Lk. 6:12-13).
- While praying, He was transfigured before the disciples (Lk. 9:28-29).
- He prayed in Gethsemane (Lk. 22:39, 41).
- He died praying (Lk. 23:46).

Jesus’ typical day was filled with prayer.

- He prayed early in the morning after a late night (Mk. 1:35).
- He prayed in the evening after a long day’s work (Mk. 6:46-48).

His Disciples' Prayer

He expects us to pray.

- Lk. 11:2 - "When you pray…"
- Mt. 6:5, 6, 7 - "When you pray…"

He commands us to pray.

- Eph. 6:18 - "With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints."
- Col. 4:2 - "Devote yourselves to prayer."

Prayer is how we win the battle with temptation & sin

- Lk. 22:40, 46 - "Watch and pray that you do not enter into temptation."
- Lk. 11:4 - "Lead us not into temptation."
- Calvin: "We conclude from this petition that we have no strength for living a holy life, except so far as we obtain it from God. Whoever implores the assistance of God to overcome temptations, acknowledges that, unless God deliver him, he will be constantly falling."
- J.C. Ryle: "What is the reason that some believers are so much…holier than others? …The difference, in nineteen cases out of twenty, arises from different habits about private prayer. …Those who are not eminently holy pray little, and those who are eminently holy pray much."

John Owen, *On Sin and Temptation*

"A man finds [a] lust…[that] is powerful, strong…, leads captive, vexes, disquiets, takes away peace; he is not able to bear it; wherefore he sets himself against it, prays against it, groans under it, sighs to be delivered: but in the meantime, …in reading, prayer, and meditation…he is loose and negligent. Let not that man think that ever he shall arrive to the mortification of the lust he is perplexed with."

"Do you think [God] will ease you of that which perplexes you that you may be at liberty to do that which no less grieves him? No. God says, 'Here is one, if he could be rid of this lust I should never hear of him more; let him wrestle with this, or he is lost.' Let not any man think to do his own work that will not do God's. God's work consists in universal obedience; to be freed of the present perplexity is their own only. … The rage and predominancy of a particular lust is commonly the fruit and issue of a careless, negligent course in general…."

Jesus' Example of Personal Prayer
Luke 11:1

I. Prayer Is a Spiritual Priority that Requires Great Commitment (1a).

II. Prayer Is an Intentional Practice that Requires Deliberate Time (1b).

Set Times Daily for Prayer

- Ps. 55:17 - “Evening and morning and at noon…He will hear my voice.“
- Dan. 6:10 - “When Daniel knew that the document was signed… he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously.”
- Acts 3:1 - “Peter and John went to the temple at the ninth hour, the hour of prayer.”
- Acts 10:9 - “Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray.”

John Calvin, *The Institutes*

“Although…we ought always to raise our minds upwards towards God and pray without ceasing, yet such is our weakness, …that it is requisite for us to appoint special hours for this exercise, hours that are not to pass away without prayer, and during which the whole affections of our minds are to be completely occupied; namely, when we rise in the morning, before we commence our daily work, when we sit down to food, when by the blessing of God we have taken it, and when we retire to rest.”

Jesus' Example of Personal Prayer
Luke 11:1

I. Prayer Is a Spiritual Priority that Requires Great Commitment (1a).

II. Prayer Is an Intentional Practice that Requires Deliberate Time (1b).

III. Prayer Is a Practical Skill that Requires Careful Instruction (1c).