

Australian Lutheran College

Course Book

for

LUTHERAN SPIRITUALITY

PAS1020

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LUTHERAN SPIRITUALITY

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A. INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

1. READING

- “A Company of Beggars,” John W. Kleinig, *Grace Upon Grace*, 27-56

2. THE PARADOX OF CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

a. Introduction

- “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matt 5:3)
- Strength in weakness in 2 Cor 12:10^b: “when I am weak, then I am strong.”

b. The **Kyrie** and **Gloria** as the epitome of Christian spirituality

(1) The nature of the **Kyrie** (see Matt 9:27; 15:22; 17:15; 20:30-31; Mark 10:47-48; Luke 16:24; 17:13)

- Beggar's cry
- Our status as beggars in God's presence
 - ◆ Spiritual impoverishment (Matt 5:3)
 - ◆ Dependence on God's charity
 - ◆ Luther's last words: "We are beggars. That's for sure!"

(2) The nature of the **Gloria** (Luke 2:8-14)

- Song of praise sung by angels on earth at Christ's birth
 - ◆ Closure of gap between heaven and earth
 - ◆ Presence of God's glory in Jesus the incarnate Son
 - ◆ Beginning of heavenly worship on earth
- Our angelic status in God's presence through Jesus
 - ◆ Standing with angels in God's presence
 - ◆ Praising Triune God with angels
 - ◆ Our glorification by God's presence with us (Luke 2:9)

(3) Spirituality of cross rather than spirituality of glory (2 Cor 4:6-12)

- Divine presence and glory hidden in earthen vessels
- Dependence on God's power rather than our power
- Divine life manifested in our dying

c. The peril of Christian spirituality

(1) The example of the Pharisees

(a) Pharisees were the spiritual elite of Judaism

- Righteous people who were closest to Jesus
- Passion for Scripture
- Desire to do God's will in daily life
- Practised what they preached

- Lived as in God's presence
- Every meal as sacrificial banquet at temple
- Practice of priestly purity
- Extraordinary spiritual discipline with fasting, praying and tithing
- Quest for holiness as God's gift to the righteous
- Avoidance of sinners and sin

(b) The Pharisees were the only people condemned by Jesus.

- Called hypocrites (play-actors)
- Not damned for their sins but for their spirituality
- Refusal to acknowledge their dependence on God for their sanctity and virtue
- Guilty of self-promotion and condemnation of others (see Luke 18:9-14 with contrast between self-righteousness of Pharisee and humility of the tax collector)
- Self-delusion with disparagement of God's grace

(2) Our play acting at spirituality

(a) Spirituality as performance and achievement

- Self-promotion
- Spiritual ambition to achieve something for God
- Desire for glory
- Denial of God's grace

(b) Spirituality as self-deception

- Avoidance of self exposure with discovery of truth about self
- Avoidance of repentance
See the first of Luther's 95 theses: "When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, "Repent" (Matt 4:17), he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance."
- Avoidance of demolition and death.
See Bonhoeffer in *Cost of Discipleship* (79): "When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die."

(c) Avoidance of the cross with desire for spiritual gratification and intimacy

See Paul in Gal 6:14: "Far be it for me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world."

d. The basis for Christian spirituality

(1) Starting off where you are

- Honesty about self and spiritual state; eg. failure in prayer
- Learning to beg from Christ

(2) The plight of the theological student

- Desire for spiritual growth in holy environment
- Withdrawal from the world
- Expectation of progress in spiritual refuge and oasis
- Discovery of spiritual desert and battlefield
- Lack of apparent progress and temptation to quit

- (3) The case of the hermits in the Early Church
- Withdrawal into desert and monastic communities to be with God
 - Experience of disillusionment with apparent lack of progress and increasing temptation
 - Advice of the old monks: “Go sit in your cell, and your cell will teach you everything”
- (4) Paradoxical character of spiritual progress as symbolised by Exodus 20:21: “Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was.”
- Transition from independence to dependence on God
 - Transition from pride in achievements to awareness of failure as person and divine victory in us
 - Transition from self-sufficiency to emptiness of self and the sufficiency of God for us
 - Transition from self-importance to our insignificance and the glory of God in us
 - Transition from powerfulness to weakness and the power of God in us
 - Transition from self-righteousness to awareness of sin and of God's grace
- See St John of the Cross: "the dark night of the soul."
- (5) Our paradoxical existence
- Borrowed glory and life: 1 Cor 4:7
 - Access to God's presence and grace only as a beggar
 - Praise of God as we experience his mercy
 - No glory in ourselves but only in Christ
- See Abba Matoes (*The Sayings of the Desert Fathers*, 143): "When I was young, I would say to myself: Perhaps one day I shall do something good; but now that I am old, I see that there is nothing good about me."
- (6) Biblical mandate for spirituality in 1 Tim 4:7^b-8: *Train yourself for godliness, for, while physical training is of some value, godliness is valuable in every way, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.*

3. A PATTERN FOR PERSONAL DEVOTIONS

1. Basic Reading
 - “Spirituality for All the Wrong Reasons,” Eugene Peterson, *Reader 1*
 - “The Devotional Life of the Pastor,” Arthur A. Just, *Reader 2*
- b. Regular daily routine: habit
 - Same time
 - Morning as briefing for the day
 - Evening as debriefing from the day
 - Same place
 - Bodily relaxation
 - Bodily discipline
 - Bodily prayer
 - Same order
 - Set routine with flexible pattern
 - Link with public worship and yet suitable to your character

- c. Theologically and spiritually sound pattern of devotion
- (1) The problem of **performance** in meditation and prayer: self-justification and play-acting before God
 - (2) The practice of faith in Christ (living by God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit): **receiving** from God by resting from 'work', being with God, listening to God, and responding to God
 - (3) Combination of disciplined listening to God and his word with openness to the enlightenment and guidance of the Holy Spirit
- d. Threefold pattern of devotion
1. **Recollection**: becoming still before God's and waiting on him
 - Placement in God's presence by invoking Jesus or the Triune God by name
 - Physical relaxation and silence
 - Letting the mind go where it or the Holy Spirit pleases without attempting to control it (eg. daydreaming before God)
 - Refocus on Christ after each apparent distraction
 - Acceptance of any guidance as from the Holy Spirit
 - Culmination in a sense of stillness
 1. **Meditation**: listening for and to God's voice
 - Reading set passages from the Scriptures
 - Noting and dwelling on where God's word addresses you and your concerns
 1. **Prayer**: responding to God and speaking to him
 - Omit if you have no time or if you have already been led to pray
 - Pray as guided by your conscience and God's word
 - Expect prompting to prayer during the day: arrow prayers

B. SPIRITUALITY AND EXPERIENCE

1. READING

- “The Mystery of Godliness,” John W. Kleinig, *Grace Upon Grace*, 56-86

2. THE PLACE OF EXPERIENCE IN MODERN CULTURE

- a. Effect of television on our experience of life
 - Focus on visual participation: voyeurism
 - Desire for personal and emotional impact
 - Emphasis on the intimate, extraordinary and sensational
 - Extensive second-hand experience of life
- b. Dissatisfaction with immediate sensory experience
 - Ordinary and boring
 - Lust for novelties and excitement
- c. Marketing of ‘experiences’ as fourth level product
 - Advertising which links an experience with a product
 - Sale of experiences
 - Production of spiritual and worship experiences
- d. Problem for church in a consumer society
 - Hiddenness of God's presence and activity
 - Ordinarity of Christians and pastors
 - Lack of apparent appeal and impact

3. THE NATURE OF SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

- a. Spirituality involves our experience of the Triune God
 - Practice of faith which comes through hearing the word
 - Living by faith rather than sight: initiation and involvement in supernatural mystery
 - Objective basis for faith in God's word: focus on the ongoing reception of the Holy Spirit through means of grace in worship
 - Subjective appropriation of what is believed: living by faith, so that the Holy Spirit shapes my personality, consciousness and lifestyle
 - Danger of notional faith and practical atheism
 - Ongoing reception of the Holy Spirit
- b. Polarity of doctrine and piety in our Lutheran heritage
 - (1) Orthodoxy: see the use of *didaskalia* as instruction in the Pastoral Epistles (1 Tim 1:10; 4:1,6,13,16; 5:17; 6:1,3; 2 Tim 3:10,16; 4:3; Tit 1:9; 2:1,7,10
 - Right praise ► right teaching
 - Emphasis on theology, means of grace, objective justification, ordained ministry, preaching, education, liturgy, ritual, church

- Suspicion of enthusiasm, subjectivism, emotionalism, work's righteousness
- Problem: repression of emotion and imagination
- Neglect of the Holy Spirit

(2) Pietism: see the use of *eusebeia* as right devotion or piety in the Pastoral Epistles and 2 Peter (1 Tim 2:2; 3:16; 4:7,8; 6:3,5,6; 2 Tim 3:5; Tit 1:1; 2 Pet 1:3,6,7; 3:11

- Emphasis on life, personal faith, assurance of salvation via conversion, priesthood of all believers, Bible study, sharing, prayer from the heart, sanctification, small groups
- Rejection of 'dead' orthodoxy, 'empty' ritual, sacramentalism, intellectual faith, worldliness

(3) Triumph of orthodoxy after World War II.

- Objective authority of God's word as revelation
- Rejection of mysticism and subjectivism as work's righteousness

(4) Influence of charismatic movement

- Origin in Pentacostalism
- Emphasis on empowerment by the Holy Spirit in spirituality
- Revival of interest in some aspects of spirituality, such as the gifts of the Spirit, prayer, praise, fasting, holiness, spiritual warfare

4. THE PLACE OF SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

- a. Ambiguous experience of God as creator, lawgiver and judge by unregenerate people (Rom 2:14-15; 8:6-7)
 - Old Adam as legalist
 - Stained (1 Cor 8:7; Tit 1:15), bad conscience (Heb 10:22), or seared conscience (1 Tim 4:2)
- b. The creation of faith by the Holy Spirit through God's word
 - It is powerful and effectual.
 - It produces faith in God and experience of him.
 - It affects us in various ways according to our character and situation.
- c. Subjective experience as the consequence rather than the basis of faith
 - Personal assurance in conscience: peace
 - Enlightenment in mind: vision
 - Healing of emotions: peace
 - Physical energisation: zest
- d. Confirmation of faith in God's word by events in a person's life
 - Test by living, because it works and makes sense of life
 - Experience of suffering: strengthens faith (James 1:2-4; 1 Pet 1:6-7)
- e. The whole of life as the arena for spiritual experience

See O. Wyon, *The School of Prayer*, 38:

*God makes His will known to us through the things that happen every day.
God uses everything that takes place to lead us along the path of His will ...*

all we have to do is to accept the will of God as it is made known to us moment by moment, in the guise of a duty to be done, a trial to be borne, a joy to be received; in every experience of life, without exception, God comes to us; if we receive Him humbly we can and will do His will.

- God at work in all circumstances and events
- Discernment and acknowledgment of God's presence (see Prov 3:6)
- Life as pilgrimage with God

5. EXTRAORDINARY PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

a. The prescription of certain experiences

- Conversion as the experience of justification
 - By conviction of sin in the conscience: first awakening (Lutheran Pietists)
 - By the warming of heart to the Gospel (Wesley)
 - By a decision of the will for Christ in answer to an altar call (Billy Graham)
 - By slaying with the Spirit
- Speaking in tongues
 - Proof of entire sanctification
 - Proof of baptism by the Holy Spirit
- The 'Toronto blessing' as the work of the Holy Spirit
- Visions as a proof of superior spirituality and divine consciousness

b. Danger of normative personal experiences

- Diversity of human character and personality
- Subjectivity that leads to uncertainty and individualism
- Problem of miracles: warnings in Matt 7:21-27; 24:24; 2 Thess 2:9-10; Rev 13:13
- Uncertainty about the origin and meaning of visions, voices, tongues, healings, and ecstasy
- Ambiguity of experiences: Abba Poemen: *Abba Poemen said, 'If you see visions and hear voices do not tell your neighbour about it, for it is a delusion in the battle.'*

c. Value of spiritual experience

- Validity unless prohibited by the Scriptures or inconsistent with their clear teaching
- Personal value and purpose
- Testimonies to God's grace for new Christians rather than proof of personal distinction

6. TRADITION OF DAILY PRAYER

a. Basic Reading

- "The Triangular Shape of the Pastor's Devotional Life," John T Pless, *Reader 3*.
- Glenn Borreson, "Luther's Morning and Evening Prayers as Baptismal Spirituality," *Word & World 22/1* (2002): 55-63.

b. Biblical origins of daily prayer

(1) Old Testament

- Shema: twice daily at morning and evening: Deut 6:4-9; 11:13-21; Num 15:37-41
 - Nature
 - Confession of faith: most holy name and unity of God
 - Command to listen to the confession of faith and to love the Lord in three ways
 - ❖ With whole heart by memorising these words
 - ❖ With whole soul/throat by speaking them each day together with their children
 - ❖ With whole strength by placing them on their bodies and places of residence
 - Recital of words
 - Use for sanctification and reception of blessing from God
 - Substitute for charm and amulet with idol on it
 - Location in the heart rather than on it
 - Recital with children
 - Use before and after day's work
 - Placement on hands, forehead, doorposts and gates
 - Dress
 - Use of shawl with blue tassels: priestly status
 - Acceptance of Lord as personal God: his commitment
 - Holiness: sanctification by use of the most holy name
- Public prayer at the morning and evening sacrifice when the psalms were chanted by the Levitical choir during the presentation of the daily service (1 Chron 23:30,31; 2 Chron 29:25-30) ► 18 Benedictions
- Personal prayer of the Shema towards Jerusalem : thrice daily at times of sacrifice (Dan 6:10,13; cf. 1 Kgs 8:30)
- Praise : seven times a day (Ps 119:164)?

(2) New Testament

- Jesus: regular prayer (Luke 5:16; 9:18,28; 11:1) with early morning (Mark 1:35; Luke 4:42) and all night vigils (Luke 6:12)
- Command of Jesus to his disciples in Luke 18:1 to pray “regularly” (*pantote*)
- Prayer by apostles twice or thrice daily: see Luke 24:53; Acts 10:2 and Heb 13:15 where the word ‘continually’ (*dia pantos*) probably refers to these times of prayer
 - Mid morning (Acts 2:15; cf. 1:14): morning sacrifice
 - Midday (Acts 10:9)?
 - Mid afternoon (Acts 3:1; cf. 10:3,30): evening sacrifice
- Regular daily prayer by Paul: see the use of ‘always’ (*pantote*) in Rom 1:10; 1 Cor 1:4; Phil 1:4; Col 1:3; 4:12; 1 Thess 1:2; 5:16; 2 Thess 1:3,11; 2:13; Philemon 4, which probably refers to his regular times for prayer each morning and evening as in 1 Thess 3:10; 2 Tim 1:3; cf. 1 Tim 5:5
- The Didache VIII, 3 mentions the use of the Lord's Prayer three times a day: “Three times a day pray thus.”

c. Cathedral tradition: western liturgical Churches

(1) **Lutheran** (communal and voluntary for clergy)

- Matins and Vespers for schools and seminaries

- Morning, Evening, and General Responsive Prayer (LH 5, 55, 56, 81)
 - Compline
- (2) **Anglican** (obligatory on clergy)
- Matins
 - Vespers
- (3) **Catholic** (since Vatican 2)
- (a) Obligatory for priests
- Morning Prayer (Lauds, Prime)
 - Evening Prayer (Vespers)
- (b) Optional
- Office of Readings (any time)
 - The Middle Hour (noon)
 - Night Prayer (bedtime)
- d. The Divine Office : Western Monastic Tradition (Ps 119:164)
- Lauds (Matins, dawn)
 - Prime (6 am)
 - Terce (9 am)
 - Sext (12 am)
 - None (3 pm)
 - Vespers (dusk)
 - Compline (6-9 pm)
- e. Luther's Catechism: morning and evening prayer for the laity
- Invocation
 - Creed
 - Lord's Prayer with prayer of thanksgiving and petition for protection
 - Hymn or other devotional exercise (morning only)
 - Procedure to work or sleep
- f. Print resources for daily personal devotions
- Commission on Worship, **Everyday Prayer**, North Adelaide: LCA National Office, 2006
 - John W. Doberstein, **The Minister's Prayer Book**, London: Collins, 1986
 - Scott A. Kinneman, **Treasury of Daily Prayer**, Concordia: St Louis, 2008
 - George Kraus, **The Pastor at Prayer**, St Louis: Concordia, 1983
 - Herbert Lindemann (ed), **The Daily Office**, St Louis: Concordia, 1965
 - **Lutheran Worship**, St Louis: Concordia, 1982, 292-299
 - R.C. Sauer (ed), **Daily Prayer**, vol 1-2. St Louis: Concordia, 1986
 - F.J. Schumacher (ed), **For All the Saints. A Prayer Book for and by the Church**, vols 1-4, Dehli, NY: The American Lutheran Publicity Bureau, 1994-1996.

C.1. THE CORPORATE DISCIPLINES

a. THE CORPORATE NATURE OF CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

1. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE NEIGHBOUR

"Our life and death is with our neighbour. If we gain our brother, we have gained God, but if we scandalise our brother, we have sinned against Christ" (Anthony the Great).

2. THE TEACHING OF EPHESIANS 4:11-16 ON CORPORATE SPIRITUALITY

a. Our common life in Christ

- (1) Christ as head: source of common life and epitome of maturity

↓
gives pastors: to equip and to build up

- (2) Christ's body with the saints as its members

↓
grow
together
in faith
and
knowledge

Self ↔ Others

- build up the body
- love
- speak truth in love

b. Goal of our common life in Christ

- (1) Negative goals

- End of spiritual childishness and immaturity
- End of spiritual instability and gullibility

- (2) Positive goals

- Corporate **unity in** Christ by believing in him and knowing him
 - No private faith and knowledge
- Corporate **upbuilding under** Christ by mutual ministry in love
 - No private upbuilding as God's temple (edification)
- Corporate **growth from** Christ the head as members of his body by working together and speaking the truth to each other in love
 - No private growth
- Corporate **maturity** into Christ's fullness
 - No private maturity

3. THE CORPORATE NATURE OF LUTHERAN SPIRITUALITY

a. The Divine Service

See Smalcald Articles, 3.IV, on the **Gospel**:

We shall now return to the Gospel, which offers counsel and help against sin in more than one way, for God is surpassingly rich in his grace: First, through the spoken word, by which the forgiveness of sin (the peculiar function of the Gospel) is preached to the whole world; secondly, through Baptism; third, through the holy Sacrament of the Altar; fourth, through the power of keys; and finally, through the mutual conversation and consolation of brethren, Matt 18:20, 'Where two or three are gathered,' etc.

- Proclamation of the word
- Baptism
- Keys: confession and absolution
- Lord's supper
- Mutual consolation and strengthening: corporate spiritual care

b. The family altar: see Luther's Small Catechism

- Hymns: singing ► hymnbook
- Scripture: reading and meditation ► devotional literature
- Prayer: set and free ► prayer books
- Catechism: instruction in spirituality ► text book for education
- Vocation: duties according to station in the three divinely instituted holy orders rather than monastic seclusion ► table of duties in the catechism.

c. Luther on the communion of saints in *Fourteen Consolations*, LW 42, 161-162:

This is the communion of saints in which we glory. Whose heart will not be lifted up, even in the midst of great evils, when he believes the very truth, namely, that the blessings of all the saints are his blessings, and his evil is also theirs? That is the very pleasant picture the Apostle paints in his word to the Galatians, "Bear one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ" [Gal 6:2]. Is it not a blessing for us to be in a company where "if one member (as is said in I Corinthians 12 [:26] suffers, all members suffer together, and if one member is honoured, all members rejoice together?" Therefore, when I suffer, I do not suffer alone, but Christ and all Christians suffer with me, for Christ says, "He who touches you, touches the apple of my eye" [Zech 2:8]. Thus others bear my burden, and their strength is my strength. The faith of the church comes to the aid of my fearfulness; the chastity of others endures the temptation of my flesh; the fastings of others are my gain; the prayer of another pleads for me. In brief, such care do the members show one another that the more honorable members cover, serve, and honor the less respected members, as is so beautifully set forth in I Corinthians 12 [:22-26].

Consequently, I can actually glory in the blessings of others as though they were my very own. They are truly mine when I am grateful and joyful with the others. It may be that I am base and ugly, while those whom I love and admire are fair and beautiful. By my love I make not only their blessings but their very selves my own. By their honor my shame is now made honorable, my want is supplied by their abundance, and my sins are healed by their merits.

Who could then despair in his sins? Who would not rejoice in his sorrows? He no longer bears his sin and punishment – and if he does bear them he does not bear them alone – but is supported by so many holy children of God, yes,

by Christ himself. So great a thing is the communion of saints in the church of Christ.

d. Luther in *The Freedom of a Christian*, LW 31, 371:

We conclude, therefore, that a Christian lives not in himself, but in Christ and his neighbour. Otherwise he is not a Christian. He lives in Christ through faith, in his neighbour through love. By faith he is caught up beyond himself into God. By love he descends beneath himself to his neighbour. Yet he always remains in God and in his love, as Christ says in John 1:51, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.'

4. Three Measures of Spiritual Health

- Attitude to the divine service
- Attitude to authority and spiritual responsibility
- State of conscience: guilt and anger

<p style="text-align: center;">C.1. THE CORPORATE DISCIPLINES b. THE PRACTICE OF LITURGICAL PIETY</p>

1. READING

- a. Basic Reading
 - John W. Kleinig, “The Biblical View of Worship,” *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 58/4 (1994): 225-54. See also John W. Kleinig Resources: <http://www.johnkleinig.com/index.php/publications>
 - “Liturgy and Spiritual Awakening,” Bo Giertz, *Reader* 4
- b. Further Reading
 - Dietrich Bonhoeffer, “Community,” *Life Together*, San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1954, 17-39.
 - Robert Wilken, “Liturgical Piety and the Doctrine of the Trinity,” *Dialog* 18 (1970) 114-20.

2. LITURGICAL FELLOWSHIP

- a. In the Apostles Creed we confess our faith in “the communion of saints” (Latin: *communio sanctorum*; Greek: *koinonia hagion*).
 - (1) This phrase means both participation in holy things and communion with holy beings.
 - (2) It implies that through the holy things, such as the name of God and the body and blood of Christ, we have communion with the Triune God, the angels, and all believers in Christ.
- b. Through the gospel God the Father has called us to participate by faith in the fellowship of his Son with him (1 Cor 1:9).
 - (1) Our fellowship with each other is based on our common participation by faith in the life of the Son with the Father (1 John 1:3) through the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 13:14; Phil 2:1). This fellowship is created by our common participation in the gospel (Phil 1:5) and in the body and blood of Jesus (1 Cor 10:16-17).
 - (2) It is expressed most clearly in the contribution of offerings to needy fellow Christians (Acts 2:42; Rom 15:26; 2 Cor 8:4; 9:13; 1 Tim 6:18; Heb 13:16).
 - (3) Our fellowship with each other issues from our fellowship with God (1 John 1:6-7).
- c. This supernatural fellowship is the context for our spirituality as well as its goal.

2. CORPORATE WORSHIP AND CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

Questions for group discussion

- a. Worship is the centre of Christian spirituality. It is the basic spiritual discipline, for Christian spirituality has to do with learning how to worship the Triune God.

- (1) Why is worship so central to Christian spirituality?
- (2) What connection have you discovered between your attendance of worship and your spiritual health?

- b. Since we are all in Christ and therefore members of his body, we share a common life and have all spiritual things in common. There is then no such thing as private spirituality. My own spiritual life derives from and depends upon the worship of the Church and of Christ, which surrounds and supports, nourishes and includes me, like baby in its mother's womb. By being carried along by others and Christ, I myself learn to walk and talk and act as a Christian. Hence Luther gave the following advice to Master Peter, the barber, who wanted to learn how to pray:

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. (LW 43, 198).

- (1) In what ways do others carry us along in public worship?
- (2) Why have Christians traditionally based their devotional life on the liturgy of the Church, and how?
- (3) If our spirituality is derived from the worship of the Church, what implications does this have for us in times of spiritual trouble?

- c. Jesus praised those who expected and requested the most help from him in their need. So, after commending the Roman centurion for his great faith, he declared in Matt 8:13: 'be it done to you as you have believed'. The same applies for us when we come to Jesus in worship. The greater our faith in Jesus, the greater our requests for help; the greater our requests, the more Christ can do for us and through us. People receive so little, because they expect so little, or else the wrong things from Jesus, like a drink of beer from a chemist (cf. James 4:2^b-3).

- (1) Why do some people receive much spiritually, while others receive nothing from the same service?
- (2) What can we rightly expect from worship?
- (3) How can we prepare ourselves in our devotional life, so that we can receive more from our involvement in public worship? (See especially 1 Cor 2:12,14).
- (4) What can we do so that we discover and assimilate what we have received in public worship?

4. REST IN WORSHIP AND PRAYER

- a. Worship is much more a matter of rest than of activity. God instituted the Sabbath as a day of rest so that by resting with him from their work, his people could be blessed and sanctified by him (Exod 20:8-11). The writer to the Hebrews claims that whoever believes enters God's rest and ceases from his labours, as God did (Heb 4:1-10). Jesus offers that rest to those who come to him, no matter how burdened they are (Matt 11:28).
- b. We need to rest from our work in worship and prayer, so that we can receive from God and let him do his work in us:
 - By yielding to his Spirit in and among us
 - By listening to his Word which is spoken to us and acts upon us
 - By receiving Christ's body and blood which is given to transform us.
- c. We rest in a number of ways:
 - (1) Spiritually
 - By accepting God's judgment on us and giving up our efforts at self-justification
 - By receiving our justification and all we need from God
 - (2) Mentally and emotionally
 - By giving up our efforts to work things out for ourselves and to sort ourselves out by ourselves
 - By seeking and receiving instruction, enlightenment and help from God
 - (3) Physically
 - By withdrawing physically from our work and the stress from it
 - By receiving invigoration, healing and assistance from God
- d. Wider Reading
 - Martin Luther, "Third Commandment, Large Catechism," *The Book of Concord*, VII, 78-102.
 - Eugene H. Peterson, *Answering God*, Harper and Row: San Francisco, 1989, 59-67.
 - Eugene H. Peterson, *The Contemplative Pastor*, Word: Waco, 1989.

5. SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE IN WORSHIP

- a. Enlightenment from Participation in the Divine Service
 - Jesus as the light: John 3:19-21; Eph 5:8-14
 - Presence of Christ as light: exposure and disclosure
 - Christ's diagnosis of our spiritual condition
 - Avoidance for fear of disclosure
 - Elimination of darkness by its disclosure

- Revelation by the light of God's work in and through us: good works as God's works
 - Discovery of what pleases the Lord
 - Fruitfulness from walking in the light
 - Christ's agenda for our sanctification
 - Negative effect of the service on us
 - Critical attitude
 - Irritation and anger
 - Guilt or shame
 - Aversion to God's word
 - Emptiness
 - Tiredness
 - Positive effect of the service on us
 - Impact: reading, word, song, prayer
 - Assurance: good conscience
 - Sense of joy and delight
 - Encouragement
 - Guidance: prayer, work, relationships
- b. Guidance of the Spirit in the Service
- Divine service as the workshop of the Spirit
 - Application of God's word to us and our experience
 - Sasse on distractions: trains of meditation
 - Drift from the sermon: preaching by the Spirit
 - Intrusion of Biblical verse or insight
 - Memory of something good
 - Memory of person
 - Worry about people or work
 - Tiredness
 - Guilt about failure
 - Purpose
 - Spirit's ministry to us personally
 - Connection of our life with worship
 - Sensitisation to the guidance of the Spirit
 - Development of our personal spirituality
- c. Preparation for the Divine Service
- Meditation on Readings before the service
 - Preparation of prayer list for self and others
 - Spiritual self-appraisal
 - Vocational check: station with relationships
 - Use of Ten Commandments
 - Reconciliation: anger (Matt 5:21-26)

- Fasting before HC
- c. Connection of Devotions with the Divine Service
- Follow up from worship
 - Use of psalm for the week
 - Observance of church year with Readings
 - Use of Hymnal: meditation, prayer, praise

6. THE PRAISE OF GOD IN WORSHIP AND PRAYER

a. Praise and the presence of God

- (1) As his choir God's people exist to praise him to all the world (Eph 1:11-12).
- (2) Both the nations of the world (Ps 117) and God's people (Ps 113) are commanded to praise him.
- (3) Our readiness to praise ourselves and reluctance to praise God are the surest sign of our spiritual perversion (cf. Rom 1:18-25).
- (4) Praise is connected with God's gracious presence (Ps 100:2).
 - It is the by-product of his presence.
 - Lack of praise shows a lack of faith in it.
- (5) We do not address God but ourselves and the world in our praise.
 - By it we do not flatter God and pander to his megalomania.
 - It is not performed for God's benefit but for ours.
- (6) Jesus leads us in our praise (Heb 2:11-12), just as the Spirit empowers us in our praise (Eph 5:18-20).

b. Purpose of praise

- (1) Praise takes us out of ourselves and focuses us on God's goodness (Ps 100).
- (2) By it we absorb Christ's word and God's grace into our hearts (Col 3:16-17).
- (3) Praise expresses and so strengthens our faith in the Triune God (Rom 10:10).
- (4) Praise proclaims Christ's victory over Satan and celebrates our triumph with him over the powers of darkness (2 Chr 20:21-22).
See the letter of Ignatius to the Ephesians 13:1:
So be zealous to meet together more frequently to give thanks to God and glorify him. For when you meet together frequently, Satan's powers are destroyed and his destructiveness comes to nothing through the harmony of your faith.
- (5) Praise bridges the gap between our worship and our life (Eph 5:20; Col 3:17).

c. Conclusion

See 2 Chr 5:11-14 and 7:10.

- (1) The praise of God proclaims his presence and so reveals it verbally to God's people and all the world.
- (2) By praise the church acknowledges his gracious presence with them.
- (3) By singing the song of praise the people took God and his goodness with them into their homes and daily lives.

C.1. THE CORPORATE DISCIPLINES
c. THE PRACTICE OF SUBORDINATION

1. READING

- a. Basic Reading
 - John W. Kleinig. "Ordered Community: Order and Subordination in the New Testament." *Lutheran Theological Journal* 39:2/3 (2005): 196-209.
 - See also John W. Kleinig Resources:
<http://www.johnkleinig.com/index.php/publications>
- b. Further Reading
 - Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "Ministry," *Life Together*, London: SCM, 1954, 69-85.
 - Richard Foster, "The Discipline of Submission," *Celebration of Discipline*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1988, 96-109.

2. SPIRITUAL ESCAPISM

- a. The danger of retreat from community into privacy and individual isolation
- b. The delusion of spiritual self-sufficiency with its denial of community
- c. The effect of the modern movements for liberation
- d. The modern aversion to the virtues of humility and duty, obedience and submission, self-denial and self-sacrifice
- e. Our perverse desire for spiritual glory, control and power
- f. The destruction of community by self-assertion and self-promotion

3. FREEDOM FROM SELF-PROMOTION THROUGH SUBORDINATION

- a. By placing us in community and by giving us our station in life (Eccl 5:18-20; 1 Cor 7:17-24), God uses community to deal with our self-promotion at the expense of others.
- b. Through the means of grace in corporate worship he serves us 'lordlings.'
 - (1) He brings us into submission to him and his will by his self-sacrificing service of us.
 - (2) Since he treats us so well and honours us so greatly, we are happy to hallow his name, acknowledge his kingship and do his will.
- c. In the church he puts us back in our proper places by making us subject to himself and other people.

- (1) Through other people he deals with our lust for self-gratification, dominance and importance.
- (2) Through other people he builds up our new self and ministers to our real needs.

4. THE TEACHING OF SUBORDINATION IN THE EPISTLES

See the **Tables of Domestic Duties** in Eph 5:21-6:9; Col 3:18 - 4:1; Tit 2:1-3:7; 1 Pet 2:11-3:22, and the Table of Duties in Luther's Small Catechism.

a. Subordination as the affirmation of community

- (1) While the Greek verb *tasso* means to **place** people in a **fixed position** or to appoint them to an office in a community, the compound verb *hupotasso* was used to place someone in their proper position, their **station** in the order of a community **under** the authority of its leader or leaders, like soldiers drawn up in order for battle. The middle form *hupotassomai* is used in the New Testament to stress that people do this **voluntarily** for themselves by fitting in to the divinely instituted order of a community.
- (2) Subordination goes beyond an external conformity to the directions of superiors, since a person can outwardly do what they say and yet be insubordinate.
- (3) By subordination we Christians willingly fit into those divinely established social orders, such as the home, the society and the congregation, which sustain us as people, and cooperate with those people who are responsible for their right operation. If we do not willingly submit to the authority of our leaders, they will either be unable to function properly or else have to exercise power to preserve the community.
- (4) Insubordinate people defy the order of a community. Paul therefore warns Christians against living **disorderly** (*ataktos*) by refusing to work for a living (1 Thess 5:14; 2 Thess 3:7,16). He also advises that fathers of **insubordinate** (*anhupotaktos*) children should not be appointed as presbyters/pastors, since they must deal appropriately with **insubordinate** people in the church.
- (5) By subordination we put the good of our community and those in it before our own good and so acknowledge our dependence upon our particular social context for our own well-being (cf. Rom 13:4).

b. The pattern of subordination in the Epistles

- (1) In the world: our station in **the political order**
 - Christian citizens to their government (Rom 13:1,5; Tit 3:1; 1 Pet 2:13)
 - The whole cosmos to Christ (1 Cor 15:25-27; Ephes 1:22; Phil 3:21)
- (2) In the home: our station in **the order of the family**
 - Christian husband to Christ as his head (1 Cor 11:3?)
 - Christian wife to her husband as her head (Eph 5:24; Col 3:18; Titus 2:5; 1 Pet 3:1,5)
 - Christian children to parents (1 Tim 3:4; Titus 1:6; cf. Luke 2:51)

- Christian slaves to owners (Titus 2:9; 1 Pet 2:18)

(3) In the church: our station in **the liturgical order**

- Members of the congregation Christ as its head (Eph 5:24) and to God the Father (Heb 12:9; James 4:7)
- Christians to God's law (Rom 8:7) and the gospel (2 Cor 9:13; cf. Rom 10:3-4)
- Christians to those who teach God's word (1 Cor 16:16; 1 Pet 5:5; cf. Heb 13:17)
- Christian women (and men) to male pastors (1 Cor 14:34; 1 Tim 2:11)

(4) Subordination in the Trinity: the station of Christ as Son in **the divine order** of godhead (1 Cor 15:28; Heb 2:5-9; cf. 1 Cor 11:3; Ephes 1: 19-23; Phil 2:5-7).

c. The nature of subordination: summary of teaching in the New Testament

Relationship	Order	Nature	Benefits
Wife ▶ husband	Family	Respect	Husband's love Husband's conversion
Child ▶ parents	Family	Respect Obedience	Prosperity Longevity
Slave ▶ master	Family	Respect Obedience Winsome behaviour Fidelity	Christ's approval Christ's reward
Citizen ▶ rulers	State	Taxation Duties Respect Honour	Temporal blessings Good conscience
Christian ▶ Gods word	Church	Obedient listening	Life from God
Christian ▶ Christ	Church	Faithful love	Salvation
Christians ▶ male pastors	Church	Silent listening	Learning as disciples
Universe ▶ Christ	Church in heaven	<i>Praise</i>	<i>Joy</i>
Angels ▶ Christ	Angelic order	<i>Adoration</i>	<i>Glory: vision of God</i>
Jesus the Son ▶ the Father	Trinity	<i>Loving self-giving</i>	<i>The Father's love</i>

d. The importance of subordination for Christians

- (1) The apostles did not advocate subordination to a particular divinely sanctioned social system or predetermined class in it. They taught that God had instituted the **order** (*taxis*) of the family, the state and the church. They therefore urged the subordination of Christians to their leaders in these orders, such as wives to

husbands, children to parents, slaves to masters, Christians to leaders, and people to government.

- (2) While they accepted the status and authority of those who are socially and legally superordinate, they felt free to criticise their abuses such as the harshness of husbands with wives (Col 3:19), the unfair behaviour of fathers with their children (Eph 6:4; Col 3:21), and violence of masters with their slaves (Eph 6:9; Col 4:1). But they never urged rebellion, nor did they sanction revolution.
 - (3) They therefore avoided the extremes of individualism and collectivism, of revolutionary innovation and reactionary conservatism.
- e. The revolutionary nature of the Apostles' call to subordination
- (1) In the *Tables of Domestic Duties* politically subordinate people without legal status were addressed as free agents with the capacity to make decisions for themselves and others. By becoming Christians they had royal status and worth as children of the heavenly King which freed them from bondage to the old order with its power structures.
 - (2) By willingly submitting to those in authority over them in their particular society, they bore witness in a very concrete and compelling way to the new order of community in Christ, which was not based on the exercise of power and dominance but on the renunciation of it in favour of service and love. More is therefore required of Christians leaders than of pagan leaders.
 - (3) The apostles called on the Christian leaders to act in ways which went beyond laws, customs and common morality. Hence, they urged husbands to give themselves in love to their wives (Eph 5:25-28) without treating them harshly (Col 3:19) and with due consideration for their needs (1 Pet 3:7); fathers to refrain from angering their children (Eph 6:4; Col 3:21), and masters to treat their slaves fairly (Col 4:1) to the point of serving them (Eph 6:9).
 - (4) They championed a complete reversal of social values. For them the ideal social role was no longer that of a **master** with legally assured wealth, status and power but of a **slave** free from the need for wealth, status and power. Paradoxically, a person was most free when he was a slave of God (1 Pet 2:16). All Christians were not just voluntary slaves of one Master; they were also totally dependent on each other, like parts of one body. They were urged to be subordinate to each other as to their Master, since they all shared the same honourable status as holy members of God's royal family (Eph 5:21).
 - (5) The apostles did not advocate universal subordination as the best human method for inaugurating a new social harmonious order in the world. They based their call for universal subordination on Christ's death and resurrection which has ushered in a new transcendent cosmic order within the old order of society. In this new order people were set free by Christ and his Spirit to submit to each other (1 Pet 2:9-16).
 - (6) We all naturally enough desire to be rulers, bosses, independent people, self-sufficient entities. But through Christ that ambition is subverted. We have a revolution downwards, in which all Christians have the status of dependants; we are all subjects, workers, women, children, dole bludgers.

- f. The reasons given for subordination
- (1) We are to be subordinate to others out of reverence for Christ (Eph 5:21, cf. Col 3:22; 1 Pet 3:15).
 - (a) Since we are united with Christ who submitted to his Father's will and to the needs of others in his life and death, we too are called to live in submission to each other (Phil 2:3-8; 1 Pet 2:18 - 3:6; cf. Mark 10:42-45; Eph 5:22-27; Tit 2:9-14; 3:1-7).
 - (b) We are to be subordinate to those set over us in our social context because of his example (1 Pet 2:21-24), by virtue of our union with him (Col 3:18, 20; Eph 6:1), for his sake (1 Pet 2:13) and in service of him (Eph 6:6; Col 3:23-24).
 - (c) When we submit to our fellow Christians we submit to our Lord Jesus in them (Eph. 5:22; 6:5).
 - (2) Willing subordination is a consequence of Christ's work of salvation for us (Tit 2:9-14; 3:1-7).
 - (a) By it a person who is free through faith in Christ uses his freedom for the benefit of others (1 Pet 2:13-16) and so overcomes evil with good (Rom 12:21).
 - (b) Since it meets with God's approval and is rewarded by him (Eph 6:3,8; Col 3:24), it makes for a good conscience (Rom 13:5; 1 Pet 2:19; 3:16) and that fearlessness which comes from a good conscience (Rom 13:3; 1 Pet 3:16).
 - (c) It serves as a witness to the Gospel (Titus 2:5,10) and as a testimony to others (1 Pet 2:12; 3:1-6, cf. 1 Cor 7:16).
 - (d) By it we combat our sinful desire for autonomy and status, supremacy and power that destroys our souls (1 Pet 2:11, cf. 4:1-2).

5. PRACTICE OF ACCEPTANCE AND SUBMISSION

- (1) Greeting others (Matt 5:47)
- (2) Honouring others (Rom 12:10; cf. Phil 2:3; Tit 3:2)
- (3) Acceptance and exercise of headship according to station

C.1. THE CORPORATE DISCIPLINES

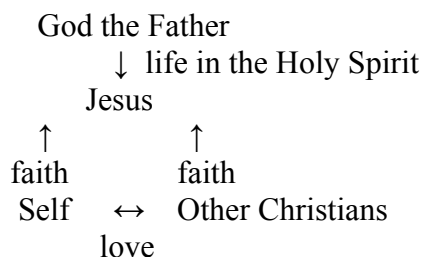
d. THE PRACTICE OF RECONCILIATION

1. READING

- a. Basic Reading
- David Schubert (ed), “Anger,” *Rites and Resources for Pastoral Care*, Adelaide: Openbook Publishers, 1998, 130-137.
 - *The Practice of Forgiveness in the LCA*. www.lca.org.au/biblical-and-theological-resources.html
- b. Wider Reading
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer, “Confession and Communion,” *Life Together*, San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1954, 110-22.
 - Richard Foster, “Confession,” *The Celebration of Discipline*, Harper and Row: San Francisco, 1988, 143-57.
 - Martin Luther, “Confession,” *Large Catechism*, Formula of Concord, 457-61.

2. SPIRITUAL SABOTAGE: THE DANGER OF ANGER AND GUILT

- a. Guilt and anger interfere with our worship and prayer.
See Matt 5:21-26; cf. Mark 11:22-25; 1 Tim 2:8.
- Anger at hurt as murder of the brother
 - Hostility ► local court
 - Verbal insult ► supreme court
 - Verbal condemnation ► God’s court
 - Onus on the guilty offender
 - Confrontation with angry person
 - Settlement outside the court
 - Reconciliation before participation in worship
- b. The importance of faith and love in the life of the Christian



- c. The effects of sin are used by Satan to break the circuit of divine life and to divide us from **each other** and from **God**.

- (1) Guilt from sin isolates me from God by undermining my **faith** in Jesus:
accusation ► condemnation ► despair ► avoidance of God.

- (2) Anger at the sins of others against me isolates me from them by negating my **love** for them: hurt ► withdrawal ► rejection ► hatred ► avoidance of them.
 - (3) While unforgiven guilt threatens our faith in God, unforgiving **anger** threatens our love for those who have hurt us.
 - (4) Both damage us physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually.
- d. Besides urging repentance and reconciliation, the New Testament encourages us to avoid hatred and to pursue peace.
- (1) St John takes the absence of hatred as the proof of faith and eternal life in a person (1 John 3:11-15; cf. 2:7-11; 4:20-21).
 - (2) We are called to live at peace with each other and all people.
See Matt 5:9; cf. Mark 9:50; Rom 12:18; 14:19; 2 Cor 13:11; Eph 4:3; 1 Thess 5:13^b; 2 Tim 2:22; Heb 12:14; 1 Pet 3:9-12; 2 Pet 3:14.

3. LIBERATION FROM ANGER

a. Abuse of anger

- (1) Anger in itself is not evil, since God himself gets angry at the injustice and evil which damages and destroys the world that he loves.
- (2) As an aspect of love it becomes perverted from righteous indignation to bitterness and hostility, when that love becomes perverted by sin from self-giving to self-seeking (cf. James 1:19-20).
- (3) Since anger registers and identifies hurt it is, in itself, a good from God. It becomes evil as soon as it seeks to retaliate and hurt another to relieve itself.
- (4) Like a bad conscience, anger short-circuits our life with God and so damages our souls (Matt 5:21-24). Anger is one of the works of the flesh (Gal 5:20).
- (5) By arousing anger, Satan does much destructive work in the church.
- (6) Note all the observations and warnings about anger and hatred in the book of Proverbs: 10:12,18; 11:23; 14:17,29; 15:1,17,18; 16:32; 19:2,12,19; 20:2; 21:19; 22:24-25; 25:23; 26:21; 27:4; 29:8,9,11,22.
- (7) Abba Nilus says in *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers* (Oxford: Mowbray, 1981), 153: "Prayer is the seed of gentleness and the absence of anger."

b. Two ways of dealing with anger

(1) Internalisation

- Concealment and denial
 - Conscious repression of anger as something evil
 - Denial of anger by denial of emotions
- Introversion of our anger in thoughts and feelings
 - Anger against ourselves for our lack of achievement
 - Anger against ourselves for failure in relationships
 - Anger against ourselves for being as we are

- (2) Externalisation
- Extroversion of our anger in words and actions
 - Rage against the world
 - Rage against people, authorities, and enemies
 - Rage against God (Prov 19:3)
 - Harbours of anger.
 - Brooding over hurt which justifies anger and resentment
 - Nursing of resentment which justifies obsessive hatred and secret desire for revenge
 - Expression of anger
 - Verbalisation of anger
 - Losing temper with another person
 - Projection of anger and vicarious relief through activity or symbolic action

c. Constructive use of anger

See Eph 4:26-27, 29-5:2: note the use of the passive imperative *arthētō* in 4:31 for God's activity.

- Unresolved anger: foothold for the devil
 - Anger ► criticism ► bitterness ► hatred ► rejection ► violence ► murder
 - Anger ► self-pity ► lack of self-esteem (shame) ► self-contempt ► depression ► despair ► suicide
- Father's release from sin through Jesus to free us from anger (Eph 4:31-5:1)
- Work of the Spirit who rid us of anger and renew us (Eph 4: 30; cf. Titus 3:3-7)
- Daily debriefing: admission of anger, its true cause and responsibility for it (Eph 4:26-27)
- Use of constructive rather than rotten speech (Eph 4:29)
- Unloading of hurt and anger onto Jesus
- Using the complaints in the psalms of lament (6; 13; 22; 35; 40; 55; 56; 59; 64; 69; 86; 88; 140; 142; 143) and Job's complaints against God (Job 7:12-21; 9:28-31; 10:2-22; 14:2-22; 30:20-23)
- Appealing to God for justice (eg. Ps 35:1-3, 17, 22-24; 27) with the abdication of the right to seek revenge (Luke 18:1-8; Rev 6:9-10). See also the psalms of innocence and purification, such as 17, 26, 109, 139, as well as the imprecations against enemies in individual laments (eg. Ps 6:10)
- Deliberate surrender of anger in prayer as part of the old self and petition for divine deliverance from it (Eph 4:20-24,31; cf. Col 3:8; Titus 2:11-12)
- Forgiveness of offender before God in prayer (Mark 11:25) as we do in the Lord's Prayer (Matt 6:12). Note that in Luke 11:4 the second part of the fifth petition is to be understood as an enactment: "as we also hereby forgive everyone who sins against us."
- Prayer for enemies (Matt 5:43-48)
- Positive retaliation (Rom 12:17-21)
- Practice of reconciliation (Eph 4:26-27; Matt 5:21-26)
 - Confrontation with wrongdoer (Matt 18:10-17; cf. Luke 17:3-4)
 - Forgiveness of the wrongdoer (Eph 4:32-5:2; cf. Matt 18:21-35)

4. LIBERATION FROM GUILT

- a. The Office of the Keys
 - (1) It belongs to Jesus (Matt 9:8).
 - (2) He delegated it to Peter (Matt 16:16-19) and to the apostles together with their successors in the apostolic ministry (John 20:21-23) for use in the church (Matt 18:18-20).
 - (a) Pastors exercise that office by baptising people, absolving the penitent, proclaiming forgiveness and admitting people to the Lord's table.
 - (b) The congregation exercises it by praying for the pardon of those who have sinned (Matt 18:18-20).
 - (2) It was delegated to Peter (Matt 16:16-19), the apostles (John 20:21-23) and the whole church (Matt 18:18-20).
- b. Types of Confession
 - (1) General confession (1 John 1:5-10)
 - (2) Private confession (James 5:13-16)
- c. The value of verbal confession and absolution
 - (1) The power of speech and the spoken Gospel as a performative utterance
 - (2) The extroversion of confession in contrast to sin's introversion
 - Break through to community
 - Break through to the cross
 - Break through to life
 - Break through to certainty
 - Break through to healing
 - Break through to joy
- d. Practice of self-examination
 - (1) Preparation for Holy Communion
See Matt 5:23-24; 1 Cor 11:27-32.
 - (2) Use of 10 commandments: Luther's Small Catechism in Section V on Confession and Absolution

C.2. THE PERSONAL DISCIPLINES

a. THE PRACTICE OF MEDITATION

1. READING

c. Basic Reading

- John W. Kleinig. "Meditation," *Logia* 10/2 (2001): 45-50. See also John W. Kleinig Resources: <http://www.johnkleinig.com/index.php/publications>
- "The Mystery of Meditation," *Grace Upon Grace*, John W Kleinig, 87-150.
- "Christian Meditation: Approaches via History," M Seitz, *Reader* 8
- John W. Kleinig. "The Kindled Heart: Luther on Meditation," *Lutheran Theological Journal* 20/2&3 (1986): 142-54. See also John W. Kleinig Resources: <http://www.johnkleinig.com/index.php/publications>
- "Martin Luther on Meditation: Christmas Sermon from 1519," *Reader* 5
- "Meditation on the Body," Kurt Thomas, *Reader* 6

d. Wider Reading

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "The Day Alone," *Life Together*, San Francisco: Harper and Row, 76-89.
- Richard Foster, "Meditation", *Celebration of Discipline*, Harper and Row: San Fransisco, 1988, 15-32.

2. INTRODUCTION

- a. Solomon's request in 1 Kings 3:9: "Give your servant an hearing heart to distinguish what is good from what is evil."
- b. Jean Baptiste Vianney: "I look to him, and he looks at me, and we are happy just to be together."
- c. The case of a solar torch

3. WHAT IS MEDITATION?

- a. Meditation is not in itself something spiritual, but is a natural activity which is practised in some way by every human being.
 - Day dreaming: relaxed reception
 - Worrying by a mother: emotional stimulus and love
 - Tune in your head: subconscious activity
 - Reading a love letter: personal engagement
 - Advertisement on TV: appeal to desire for action

- b. It is a **relaxed form of concentration** that involves the whole of a person physically and mentally.
- c. In meditation a person shifts from active thought to a **receptive** way of thinking
 - Shift from thinking to receiving thoughts
 - Shift from visualisation to imaginative and visionary experience
 - Shift from giving out to taking in
 - Shift from doing to being
- d. Different people meditate differently, according to whether they have an imaginative, verbal or practical personality.
- e. The nature and results of meditation are not determined by its method, but by its object and our attitude to it.
 - (1) We meditate quite naturally on what we like, desire and love as well as what we dislike, fear and hate.

See Luther, *LW*, 10,17:

But one does not meditate on the law of the Lord unless his delight was first fixed in it. For what we want and love, on that we reflect inwardly and diligently ...Therefore let delight (desire) be first sent into the heart as the root, and then meditation will come of its own accord. It is for this reason that the ungodly do not meditate on the law of the Lord, ...Yet they meditate on other things, namely, on things in which their delight (desire) is rooted, things they themselves desire and love, such as gold, honor, and flesh.

- (2) Meditation involves the heart and its desires (cf. Matt 6:21).

See Luther, *LW* 14, 297:

Wherever love goes, there the heart and body follow... the desire comes first, for love itself will teach meditation.

- f. By meditation we observe of the third commandment: see Luther's *Large Catechism*

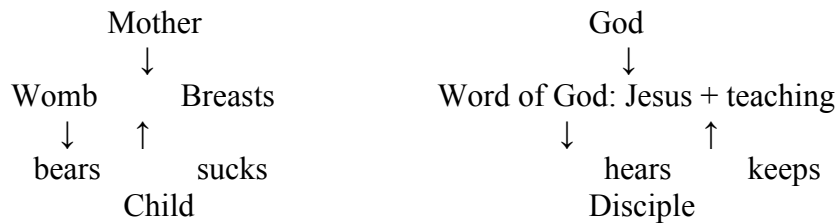
4. WHAT IS CHRISTIAN MEDITATION?

- a. Christian meditation is determined by its object which is **Jesus** and his **word** (Luke 10:38-42).
- b. A Christian who meditates, **listens** to Jesus and **looks** at him in what he says and does.
- c. Christian meditation presupposes **three** spiritual realities
 - The presence of the risen Lord with his disciples
See Matt 28:20: "I am with you always to the close of the age."
 - The life-giving power of his word by which he gives his Holy Spirit and acts upon his disciples
See the words of Jesus in John 6:63: "The words I have spoken to you bring God's lifegiving Spirit."

- Access to God's grace for the justified through faith in Jesus (Rom 5:1-2)

d. God's word both gives us divine life and nurtures that life.

See Luke 11:27-28



- (1) The word of God, proclaimed by Jesus, **creates** and **nourishes** spiritual life in the disciple.
 - (2) Just as a people receive faith by **hearing** the gospel, so they nourish their faith by **meditating** on God's word and **keeping** it.
 - (3) Just as Mary conceived and bore God's Son by receiving and pondering on God's word, so disciples **receive** him, and he is **born** in them, as they hear and keep his word in their hearts.
 - (4) The disciple who does this is even **more blessed** than Mary was as the mother of Jesus.
 - (5) Christian meditation then is **keeping** God's lifegiving word in our hearts, so that it can nourish and bless us.
- e. Like the sacraments, the words of Jesus enact what they say in the believer who meditates on them.

See Luther, *WA*, 9, 439, 442:

*All the words and stories of the gospels are **sacraments** of a kind, ie sacred signs, by which God works in believers what the histories signify. Just as baptism is the **sacrament**, through which God restores a man; just as absolution is the **sacrament** by which God forgives sins, so the words of Christ are sacraments, through which he works our salvation. Hence the gospel is to be taken **sacramentally**, ie the words of Christ need to be meditated on as symbols, through which that righteousness, virtue and salvation is given which these words themselves display. You can now understand the difference between the gospel and human histories. The histories of Livy depict and portray those virtues which they themselves are unable to reproduce in other people. The gospel indeed portrays virtues so that it may become the instrument, by which God changes us, remakes us, etc. We meditate properly on the gospel, when we do so **sacramentally**, for through faith the words produce in us what they portray. Christ was born; believe that he was born for you, and you will be born again. Christ conquered death and sin; believe that he conquered them for you, and you will conquer them. With that you have the distinctive characteristic of the gospel. The histories of men cannot produce that effect in you.*

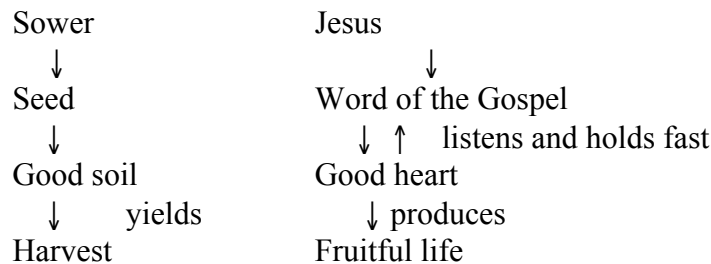
- f. The following is a simple way of meditating on a story from the gospels as explained by Martin Luther (*LW* 35, 121):

When you open the book containing the gospels and read or hear how Christ comes here or there, or how someone is brought to him, you should therein perceive the sermon or the gospel through which he is coming to you, or you are being brought to him. For the preaching of the gospel is nothing else than Christ coming to us, or we being brought to him. When you see how he works, however, and how he helps everyone to whom he comes or who is brought to him, then rest assured that faith is accomplishing this in you and that he is offering your soul exactly the same sort of help and favour through the gospel. If you pause here and let him do you good, that is, if you believe that he benefits and helps you, then you really have it. The Christ is yours, presented to you as a gift.

5. THE PURPOSE OF CHRISTIAN MEDITATION

- a. The purpose of Christian meditation is not to make us feel good about ourselves, to solve our personal problems, to tap our latent spiritual power, or to raise us to a higher level of spiritual consciousness.
- b. Meditation is meant to exercise and increase **our faith** in Christ.

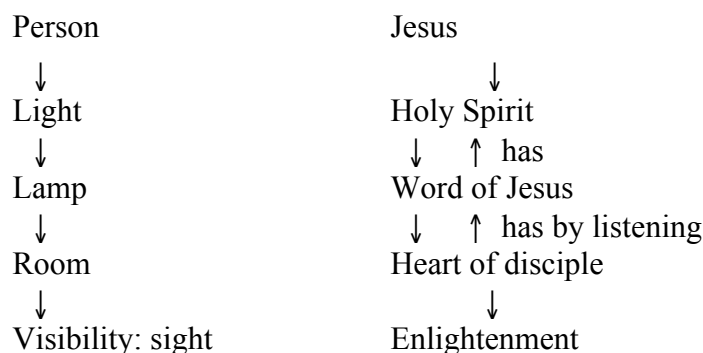
- (1) By meditation we allow God's word to grow and produce its harvest in us.
See Luke 8:4-15.



- (a) Meditation is listening and holding fast to the Gospel.

- (b) In meditation we let God's word produce its harvest in and through us.

- (2) By meditation on God's word we receive enlightenment in our souls, minds, hearts and bodies.
See Luke 8:16-18.



- (a) Just as a lamp is meant to light up a room, so Christ's teaching is meant to bring enlightenment to its hearer.

- (b) Through faithful, patient listening in meditation those who have Christ's word receive light and enlightenment from him.
- (c) Like the light of the sun, God's word gives **life** to the soul, **sight** to the mind, **warmth** to the heart and **energy** to the body.

Enlightenment from Christ's Word

Soul (life)	Mind (sight)	Heart (warmth)	Body (energy)
Guilt and uncertainty	Ignorance and confusion	Passions and frustration	Weakness and stress
↓	↓	↓	↓
Peace and confidence	Understanding and vision	Good desires and joy	Energy and health

[1] The purpose of meditation is to bring the light of Christ to bear on our whole being (cf. Eph 5:8-14).

[2] Just as light brings life, sight, energy, and warmth, so Christ's Spirit-filled word brings **life** to our dark souls, **sight** to our dark minds, **warmth** to our dark hearts, and **energy** to our dark bodies.

6. THE PSALMS AS A HANDBOOK FOR MEDITATION

a. Meditation on God's Torah in Psalm 1

- (1) The psalms arise from meditation on **God's torah**: his instruction, direction and teaching through his word in the experience of life.
- (2) Those who are **righteous** meditate on God's instruction rather than on the advice of the wicked because they are right with him and desire what he wills.
- (3) The righteous person whom God has planted by the waters meditates on God's teaching because he **delights** in it.

See *LW* 14, 297-8:

Wherever love goes, there the heart and the body follow. Love itself will teach meditation. It is the mode and nature of all who love, to chatter, sing, think, compose, and frolic freely about what they love and to enjoy hearing about it. Therefore this lover, this blessed man, has his love, the law of God, always in his mouth, always in his heart and, if possible, always in his ear.

- (4) The verb in Hebrew for meditate which means to 'groan', 'mutter', or 'hum' shows that meditation is a verbal activity, **saying** God's word to one's self.

See *LW* 14, 315:

'meditation' ... is continual talking and conversation with the mouth ... For just as the lover willingly talks at length about his beloved, so the hater keeps on talking and babbling the worst things about him whom he hates.

- (5) Meditation is a **constant activity** which occupies the whole conscious and unconscious life.
See *LW* 14, 297:
the righteous man loves the law of the Lord and thinks on it even when he sleeps.
- (6) It opens up all parts of a person's life to **intimacy** with God and makes God's hidden way known to the believer who lives the hidden life of faith.
See *LW* 14, 309:
God alone knows the way of the righteous. It is hidden even to the righteous; for his right hand leads them in such a wonderful way that it is not the way of the senses or of reason, but of faith alone, which is able to see even in darkness and behold the invisible.
- (7) By meditation a person is irrigated with **heavenly water** through God's word in the droughts of life, so that he prospers in his work and **bears fruit** in all seasons of his life cycle.
See *LW* 14, 300 and 301:
To bring forth fruit indicates that this blessed man, through love...serves not himself but his neighbours. It is not a tree which bears fruit for himself but his neighbours...his fruit has no name, nor his time, nor he himself, nor his streams of water. Neither does he, as one individual, serve one person, at one time, in one place, or in one work; but he serves everyone, everywhere, and always. He is in truth the man for all seasons, all works, all persons, and in the image of his Father, all in all and above all.
- (8) The book of psalms is therefore **teaches** God's people to meditate on his *torah* by providing meditations for them to follow.

b. Process of meditation in Psalm 77

- (1) The process of meditation begins with complaint (1-10) and ends in praise (11-20).
- (2) The same three verbs are used to describe both these aspects of meditation.
- (a) *Hagah* : meditation as speaking
- Groaning about trouble (77:6)
 - Muttering about God's grace (77:12)
- (b) *Siach* : meditation as preoccupation
- With self abandoned by God (77:3,6)
 - With God's past deeds (77:12)
- (c) *Zakar* : meditation as remembrance
- Of God's past judgments (77:3,5)
 - Of God's wonderful acts of salvation (77:11)
- (3) In his complaint the psalmist meditates on his own present **experience** of abandonment in the light of God's past deliverance of his people.
- (4) His complaint leads him to the point of **despair** (77:10).
- (5) In his praise he meditates on God's **deliverance of Israel** at the Exodus in the light of his present trouble.

- (a) God led his people **through the waters of destruction** to save them from destruction.
 - (b) He was **invisibly present** with his people in their trouble.
 - (6) By meditating on **his trouble** in the light of God's word, God's word spoke to him and revealed his grace to him in his trouble.
 - (7) So paradoxically, his complaint about the **lack of God's grace** with him in his trouble led to renewed praise with all God's people for the **experience of his grace in troubles**.
 - (8) Through meditation we come to experience God's grace even in our troubles.
- c. Meditation in the individual laments.
See Psalm 35.
- (1) Address of God in trouble (35:1, 17, 22)
 - (2) Complaint to God about trouble as meditation (35:11-16, 17a, 20-21)
 - Description of trouble
 - Description of enemies and hurt from them
 - Complaint against God for indifference and inactivity
 - (3) Confession of faith as meditation (35:10, 23, 24)
 - Confidence in God's grace
 - Confidence in help from him
 - (4) Prayer to God in trouble
 - Prayer against enemies (35:4-8, 19, 24^b-26)
 - ◆ Surrender of the injury to God
 - ◆ Recognition of God as the just avenger
 - Intercession for God's people (35:27)
 - Pleas for help (35:1-3, 17, 22-24)
 - (5) Praise of God (35:9-10, 18, 28)
 - Promise of thankoffering or praise
 - Praise for anticipated help as meditation
- d. Meditation on the Divine Service in Psalm 63
- (1) This psalm arises from the experience of God's presence and grace in **sacrificial worship** at the temple (63:2).
 - (2) This leads to the **longing for his presence**, when the psalmist is far from the temple (63:1).
 - (3) On his bed at night he meditates on his **past involvement in worship** at the temple (63:6).
 - (4) First, he **remembers** God's gracious presence at the temple together with the songs, prayers and sacrifices there.

- (5) Secondly, he acts as if he were there and **re-enacts** the service in his imagination.
 - He invokes God's name (63:4).
 - He feasts on God's bounty and praises him (63:5).
 - He approaches God for security and help (63:7-8).
 - (6) By meditation at night the psalmist **appropriates** the reality and benefits of public worship, so that God's presence for him becomes God's presence within him.
 - (7) So this meditation which arose out of the internalisation of worship in daily life is now used in the psalter to help others meditate on their **whole life as worship of God**.
- e. Meditation as Rest with God in Psalm 131
- (1) This psalmist does not try to plum the mysteries of the heavenly world in his meditation (131:1).
 - (2) Instead he rests in God's arms and enjoys his presence like a child at his mother's breast (131:2).
 - (3) In stillness and quiet and relaxation he lets himself be carried along passively by God.
 - (4) He relies on God and waits for him to act for him and all God's people (131: 3).

6. LUTHER'S TEACHING ON MEDITATION

- a. The classical problem of meditation
- (1) The basic question is how a human being can experience fellowship with the living God.
 - (2) The classical answer is that, since like knows like, we must become **like Christ** to know him and his heavenly Father.
- b. The classical pattern of meditation
- (1) Generally speaking, Christian meditation has always followed a **fourfold pattern**.
 - The **reading** of the Scriptures (*lectio*)
 - **Meditation** on them (*meditatio*), ie mental concentration of the heart on the heart of the matter
 - **Prayer** for God's grace (*oratio*)
 - **Contemplation** (*contemplatio*): the enjoyment of the mystical union with Christ
 - (2) While the first three stages depended on **human performance**, the last was a **divine gift** to those who had rightly prepared themselves to receive it.

- (3) The medieval theologians spoke of **five kinds** of mystical union which were achieved by five different methods of meditation
- **Intellectual union:** the union of mind with mind
 - **Emotional union:** the union of heart with heart
 - **Visionary union:** the union of imagination with imagination
 - **Voluntary union:** the union of desiring will with desiring will
 - **Moral union:** the union of life with life.
- c. Luther's problem with this pattern
- Onus on **human preparation and performance**
 - Demand to **love God** and to **desire to do his will** which Luther lacked with his guilty conscience
 - Confusion of **sanctification** with justification.
- d. Luther's pattern of meditation
- (1) After his evangelical breakthrough a **fourfold** shift occurred in Luther's teaching and practice of meditation
- From mental concentration to **listening** to God's word
 - From the need for a right disposition to the need for **faith** in Jesus Christ as the presupposition for reception of him and his gifts
 - From self contemplation to **contemplation of Christ** through his word
 - From active preparation for God's activity to **passive reception** of his activity through the Holy Spirit in the Word
- (2) In his **Preface to the Wittenberg Edition** of his writings in 1539 he summarised his subsequent method of meditation with its **three correlative aspects**.
- **Oratio:** prayer to God the Father through his Son for the reception of the life-giving, enlightening Holy Spirit
 - **Meditatio:** meditation on the external word as vehicle of the Holy Spirit in the divine service and in personal devotions
 - **Tentatio:** trial as the experience of trouble that drives a person to God's word and prayer and so leads to fellowship with Christ crucified.

See *LW* 34, 285-287:

I will show you a right way to study theology, which I myself have practiced, and, if you adhere to it, you too shall be so learned that, if need should arise, you will be able to write books that are as good as those of the fathers and councils. It is the way that King David teaches in Psalm 119 and which was without a doubt adhered to by all the patriarchs and prophets. There you will find three rules which are abundantly set forth in the whole psalm: oratio, meditatio, tentatio.

First, you must know that the Holy Scriptures is a book that makes foolishness of the wisdom of all other books, because none of them teaches eternal life, only this one alone. Therefore you must straightway despair of your own mind and reason, for you will not attain it by these. On the contrary, with such presumption you will cast yourself, and others with you, from heaven into the abyss of hell, as did Lucifer. Rather kneel down in your closet and pray to God in true humility and earnestness, that through his dear Son he may grant you his Holy Spirit to enlighten, guide,

and give you understanding. You see how David in the above-mentioned psalm prays again and again: Teach me! O Lord, instruct me! Show me! and many other expressions like them. Even though he knew well the text of Moses and other books and heard and read them daily, he still desires the real Master of the Scriptures himself in order that he may not tackle them with his reason and make himself the master. For this produces those sectarians who allow themselves to think that the Scriptures are subject to them and easily mastered with their own reason, as if they were the fables of Markolf or Aesop, which require neither the Holy Spirit nor prayer.

Secondly, you should meditate, not only in your heart but also outwardly, repeating aloud and rubbing at the written word (like a herb), reading and rereading them with careful attention and thought as to what the Holy Spirit means by them. And guard against being satiated or thinking that when you have read, heard, or said it once or twice, you understand it fully; for this will never make an excellent theologian; it will be like immature fruit that falls before it is half ripe. This is why in the psalm you see David constantly exulting that he would do nothing else, day and night and always, but speak, write, utter, sing, hear, and read God's Word and commandments. For God will not give you his Spirit apart from the external word. Be guided accordingly, for it was not for nothing that he commanded that his Word should be outwardly written, preached, read, sung, and spoken.

Thirdly, there is trial (tentatio). This is the touchstone that teaches you not only to know and understand but also to experience how right, how true, how sweet, how lovely, how mighty, how comforting is God's Word, wisdom above all wisdom. So you see why it is that David so often in this psalm laments concerning all the enemies, the wicked princes and tyrants, the lying and godless spirits, which he must suffer by reason of the very fact that he meditates, that he applies himself to God's Word, as we have said. For as soon as God's Word goes forth through you the devil will afflict you and make you a real doctor [of theology] and teach you by his temptations to seek and to love God's Word.

- (3) Luther's theology of the cross, with its emphasis on **fellowship with Christ crucified and mortification** with him in the experience of earthly trouble and trial, replaced the medieval doctrine of self-mortification for mystical union with the divine Christ in his heavenly glory.

See Luther in *TWA I*, 147:

I did not learn my theology all at once, but had to search constantly deeper and deeper for it. My trials impelled me to do this, since no-one can understand Holy Scripture without practice and trial. This is what the enthusiasts and sects lack. They don't have the right opponent, the devil, who is the best teacher of theology ... If we don't have that kind of devil, we have nothing but speculative theologians who do nothing but meander around in their own ideas and speculate with their reason alone as to whether things should be like this or like that.

- (4) In all this, Luther presupposed the **power** of the Holy Spirit in God's word which through faith in Christ unites us with him and conforms us to him, so that we can receive him and all his blessings.

(5) Since faith is so necessary for meditation and prayer, Luther meditated most frequently on the **Catechism** with the Decalogue, Creed, and Lord's Prayer. See *A Simple Way to Pray*, LW 43, 187-211.

(a) He used each part in turn for **teaching** on God's will, **thanksgiving** for his gifts, **confession** of sin, and **petition** for his help.

(b) By the application of law and gospel to himself he came to experience what he called "the preaching of the Holy Spirit."

See LW 43, 198:

If such an abundance of good thoughts comes to us, we ought to make room for such thoughts, listen in silence, and under no circumstances obstruct them. The Holy Spirit himself preaches here, and one word of his sermon is far better than a thousand of our prayers. Many times I have learned more from one prayer than I might have learned from much reading and speculation.

(6) For Luther, meditation was closely connected with preaching and prayer.

(a) It arose from prayer and led to prayer.

(b) It provided the material for preaching.

(c) Preaching in turn produced meditation in the hearts of its hearers.

7. TEN KINDS OF MEDITATION

- Identification with a person in a gospel story (see Luther's teaching)
- Continuous reading out aloud from the Bible (see hand out in reader)
- Memorisation of Bible verse as watchword for the day or week or as your 'mantra'
- Use of Bible verse as a nightcap before going asleep (see Ps 119:54,172)
- Singing of a verse from a hymn (see Ps 119:54,172)
- Reliving some part of the liturgy
- Visualisation of Christ's presence with you
- Meditation on an icon or a holy picture
- Meditative relaxation of the body by entrustment of its parts to God (see the handout in reader by Kurt Thomas)
- Reviewing your day or week with God to discover his hand in what had happened

C.2. THE PERSONAL DISCIPLINES

b. THE PRACTICE OF PRAYER

1. READING

- a. Basic Reading
 - John W. Kleinig, "The Mystery of Prayer," *Grace Upon Grace*, 151-217.
 - "Why Won't I Pray," Louis McBurney, *Reader 7*.
- b. Wider reading
 - Olaf Hallesby, *Prayer*, Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1994.
 - John Kleinig, *Prayer: We Speak to God*, Concordia: St Louis, 2006.
 - Martin Luther, "The Our Father," *Luther's Large Catechism*, Book of Concord vii, 3, Kolb Wengert, 440-456
 - Eugene H. Peterson, *Working the Angles*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987, 21-145.

2. INTRODUCTION

- a. Friends of Christ the King
See John 15:14-16
 - Difference between a king's servants and his friends
 - Friend of king in ancient world: confidant and advisor (2 Sam 15:37; 16:16; 1 Kgs 4:5)
 - Abraham as God's friend (2 Chron 20:7; Isa 41:8; James 2:23; cf. Gen 18:16-33)
 - Jesus as the royal deputy of his Father
 - Tells his disciples what his Father says and does
 - Does his Father's work on earth
 - Appointment of disciples as his friends
 - Knowing what the Father is saying and doing
 - Receiving what ask from the Father
 - Doing Father's work together with Jesus and at his command
- b. Acting as royal priests: reigning with Jesus in prayer and praise
See Rev 5:10; cf. 1 Pet 2:4-6, 9-10; Rev 1:5^b-6.

3. THE PRAYING OF JESUS FOR US

- a. The work of Jesus in prayer
See Luke 5:15-16; 6:12-19; Heb 5:7; cf. Matt 14:23; 26:36-44; Mark 1:35; 6:46; Luke 3:21; 9:18, 28-29; 11:1.
 - (1) The hidden foundation for the ministry of Jesus lay in his constant exercise of prayer.

- (2) Through prayer he received the guidance of his Father as well as power for his work.
- b. The co-operation of Jesus with his Father through meditation and prayer.
See John 5:19-20; 8:38; cf. 3:11, 32; 5:30; 7:16-18; 8:26, 28-29; 12:49-50; 15:15.
- (1) In prayer Jesus listened to the voice of his Father and discovered what he was doing.
 - (2) As a result he worked with his Father in all that he did.
- c. The intercession of Jesus for us as our Priest.
See Heb 7:25; cf. Luke 22:31; John 17:1-26.
- (1) As our priest Jesus represents us and intercedes for us with his heavenly Father.
 - (2) We can therefore approach God the Father through him and his prayers for us.

4. THE GIFT OF PRAYER

- a. Praying with Jesus to the Father.
See Luke 11:1-13.
- Gift by Jesus of his own prayer for the world
 - Prayer with him by our participation in his sonship
 - Prayer as borrowing from God
 - Reception of gifts and of God himself
 - Gift of the Holy Spirit to prompt and direct us (cf. Zech 12:10)
- b. Praying with each other as with Jesus.
See Matt 18:18-20.
- (1) Jesus is with us when we gather together and pray together in his name.
 - (2) If we "agree" in what we ask, we can be sure that our heavenly Father will hear our prayers.
 - (3) We therefore support each other by praying together for our common concerns.
 - (4) Corporate prayer is the basic, normal form of prayer for the Christian (eg. Acts 1:14; 4:24).
- c. Praying with faith in Jesus
- (1) For ourselves
See Mark 10:46-52.
 - (a) In the Gospels people used their faith in Jesus to 'pray' to him by asking him for help.
 - (b) When Jesus granted their requests, he commended them for their faith.

- (c) We too use our faith when we pray, and are assured of a favourable treatment by him.
- (2) For others
See Matt 15:21-28; Luke 7:1-10.
 - (a) Through prayer we bring other people and their needs to Jesus.
 - (b) We use our faith in him and our access to him on their behalf when we pray for them.
- (3) So prayer is enacted faith in Jesus and his Father's grace.
- d. Praying to the Father in the name of Jesus
See John 16:22-28; cf. 14:14; 15:16.
 - (1) By praying in the name of Jesus we approach God the Father in the 'shoes' of Jesus.
 - (2) Since we are in Jesus he includes us in his prayers.
 - (3) Since he is in us, our prayers are received by his Father as from him.
See M. Luther, *LW* 24, 407:
Christ prayed for me, and for this reason my prayers are acceptable through His. Accordingly, we must weave our praying into His. He is forever the Mediator for all men. Through Him we come to God. In Him we must incorporate and envelop all our prayers and all that we do. As St. Paul declares (Rom 13:14), we must put on Christ; and everything must be done in Him (1 Cor. 10:31) if it is to be pleasing to God. But all this is said to Christians for the purpose of giving them the boldness and the confidence to rely on this Man and to pray with complete assurance; for we hear that in this way He unites us with Himself, really puts us on a par with Him, and merges our praying into his and His into ours. Christians can glory in this great distinction. For if our prayers are included in His, then he says (Ps 22:22): 'I will tell of your name to My brothers' and (Rom. 8:16-17) 'It is the Spirit Himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ'. What greater honor could be paid us than this, that our faith in Christ entitles us to be called His brothers and coheirs, that our prayer is to be like His, that there is really no difference except that our prayers must originate in Him and be spoken in His name if they are to be acceptable and if He is to bestow this inheritance and glory on us. Aside from this, He makes us equal to Himself in all things; His and our prayer must be one, just as His body is ours and His members are ours.
- e. Praying according to God's word which reveals his will
See John 15:1-8; cf. 1 John 5:13-15.
 - (1) Through meditation, God's word abides in us (Col 3:16).
 - (2) In prayer the word which has been spoken to us 'speaks' within us and governs our praying, so that it is in accord with God's will.
- f. Praying by the power of the Holy Spirit

See Rom 8:12-16, 26-28; cf. Eph 6:18; Jude 20.

- (1) We do not know how to pray and for what.
- (2) The Holy Spirit intercedes within us and prompts us in our prayers with sighs, groans and tears.

5. The Ministry of Prayer

a. The divine work of prayer.

See John 14:12-14.

- (1) Through prayer, we join Jesus in his work and 'perform' even greater miracles than he did before his death and resurrection.
- (2) Since Jesus promises to do whatever we ask in his name, our involvement in his work depends on believing in him and praying in his name.

- (3) By answering our prayers which are addressed to the Father in his name, the Son glorifies the Father as his Father and our Father.

See Luther's remarks on John 14:13-14, *LW* 24, 87:

With these and the following words Christ also demonstrates what constitutes a Christian's true office and function, and how necessary the exercise of this is in Christendom. The prophet Zechariah refers to this when he says (12:10) that Christ will pour out and grant the Spirit which is called 'a Spirit of compassion and supplication'. For in all Christians He will effect and produce these two things: First, He will convince and assure their hearts that they have a compassionate God; secondly, He will enable them to help others by their supplication. The result of the first is that they are reconciled to God and have all they need for themselves. Then, when they have this, they will become gods and will be saviors of the world by their supplication. Through the spirit of compassion they themselves will become children of God; and then, as children of God, they will mediate between God and their neighbour, and will serve others and help them attain this estate too. For once a Christian begins to know Christ as his Lord and saviour, through whom he is redeemed from death and brought into His dominion and inheritance, God completely permeates his heart. Now he is eager to help everyone acquire the same benefits. For his greatest delight is in his treasure, the knowledge of Christ.

b. The use of prayer in ministry

See Acts 6:4.

- Forgiving sins and healing the sick: James 5:13-18; cf. Matt 18:15-20
- Casting out demons: Mark 9:29; cf. Matt 17:19-21
- Performing miracles through proclamation in Christ's name: Mark 11:20-25

c. The ministry of intercession

- (1) Bringing people and their needs to Jesus.
See Matt 9:1-8; cf. Matt 8:5-13; 9:18-25; 15:21-28; 17:14-21; Mark 7:31-37; 8:22-26; Luke 4:40; 7:1-10; John 4:46-53.
- (2) Standing in the breach for others before God to protect them from his wrath.
See Ps 106:23; Ezek 13:5; 22:30.

(3) Using God's grace for us in Jesus for others

- Borrowing for someone else from God
See Luke 11:5-8.
 - We have nothing in ourselves to offer anybody in spiritual need.
 - Since God our Father is our friend who has all that anybody needs, we may borrow from him for others in prayer.
- Owning the needs, sins and blessings of others and representing them before God
See 1 Tim 2:1-5; note the use of *huper* in Rom 10:1;15:30; 2 Cor 1:11; 9:14; Eph 6:19; Phil 1:4; Col 1:9; 4:12; James 5:16.
 - Our first task as a congregation, in response to God's service of us in our worship, is to pray on behalf of all people and especially those in positions of responsibility.
 - Since God wants all people to be saved and Christ has died to ransom all, we are called to represent them before him in corporate prayer
 - By our **prayers** for them we use our access to God's grace for their benefit.
 - By our **petitions** for them we pray for help as if their needs were our needs.
 - By our **intercessions** for them we act as if we had committed their sins and to plead for God's pardon for them just as he has pardoned us.
 - By our **thanksgivings** for them we thank God for his goodness to them as if their blessings were given to us by God.
- Saving others from sin
See 1 John 5:13-17.
 - It is God's will that his children should turn from their sins and have eternal life.
 - We are therefore called to 'save' our fellow Christians from their sins by praying for them (cf. James 5:14-20).

(4) Doing good to others and even our enemies.

- Fulfilling the golden rule.
See Matt 7:1-12; cf. John 15:12-17.
 - When we sin, we do not want our fellow Christians to condemn or justify us but rather to pray for us.
 - When we pray for others, we best fulfil the golden rule.
- Loving our enemies.
See Matt 5:43-48.
 - Like sunshine and rain, God's grace is not just meant for his friends but also for his enemies.
 - As children of God, we are called to love our enemies by praying for them and to claim God's grace for them as if they were his friends and ours (cf. Luke 6:27-36).

(5) Calling people into ministry.

See Matt 9:35-38.

- (a) We are not called to volunteer to evangelise the world and so bring in God's harvest, as if it were our business to do so.
 - (b) Wherever we see spiritual opportunities and needs, we are called to pray for God to call and send out workers into his harvest.
- (6) Supporting and protecting a pastor or missionary in his work.
See 2 Thess 3:1-2.
- We 'open' the door for the Gospel (Col 4:2-4; cf. Eph 6:19-20).
 - We 'secure help' for them with the Holy Spirit (Phil 1:19).
 - We 'work' (*synypourgein*) with them (2 Cor 1:11).
 - We 'fight' (*synayonizein*) with them (Rom 15:30; cf. Col 4:12).

6. TEN WAYS OF PRAYING

1. Prayer list

- Your circle according to your station in life
- Your 'enemies'
- Your leaders
- The members of your congregation

2. Prayerful attendance of church and the Lord's Supper

- List of your own needs for the week ahead
- List of intercessions for the needs of people discovered over the past week

3. Preview of the day with God in the morning

- Briefing from him
- Planning with him

4. Review of the day with spouse

- Thanksgiving
- Debriefing with God: handing over to him
- Intercession for each other and the people associated with your spouse

5. Prayer for your extended family

- Prayer once a week for your extended family
- Your leadership at a meal as the spiritual 'head' of the house

6. Arrow prayers

- Sentence prayers offered at any time of the day
- Thanksgiving, petition, or intercession as moved by the Holy Spirit and determined by circumstances and events

7. Prayer circle

- Family or small group
- See handout on this

8. Vigil

- Use of sleepless times for prayer
- Standing in the breach to defend someone under threat from the evil one

9. Act of Thanksgiving

- Beginning prayer with thanksgiving (see Phil 4:6; Col 4:2; I Thess 5:16-17)
- Regular review of your life for thanksgiving to God with an accent on God's gift of people to you (see Paul's practice in Rom 1:18; 1 Cor 1:4; Phil 1:3; Col 1:3; 1 Thess 1:2; 2:13; 3:9; 2 Thess 1:3; 2 Tim 1:3)

10. Praying the Scriptures

- Reading a passage from the Bible to guidance in prayer.
- Turning the word spoken to you into your word spoken to God.

7. CONCLUSION

- a. S. Kierkegaard. *Christian Discourses*, Oxford:Oxford University Press, 1940, 324:
A man prayed and at first he thought that prayer was talking. But he became more and more quiet until in the end he realized that prayer was listening.
- b. Abba Agathon in *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers*, B. Ward (ed), Oxford: Mowbray, 1981, 21f:
The brethren also asked him, 'Amongst all good works, which is the virtue which requires the greatest effort?' He answered, 'Forgive me, but I think there is no labour greater than that of prayer to God. For every time a man wants to pray, his enemies, the demons, want to prevent him, for they know that it is only by turning him from prayer that they can hinder his journey. Whatever good work a man undertakes, if he perseveres in it he will attain rest. But prayer is warfare to the last breath.'

C.2. THE PERSONAL DISCIPLINES

c. THE PRACTICE OF VIGILANCE IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE

1. READING

1. Basic Reading

- John W. Kleinig. "The Hidden Battle," *Grace Upon Grace*, 218-70.
- David Schubert (ed), *Rites and Resources for Pastoral Care*, Openbook: Adelaide, 1998, 138-45.

2. Wider Reading

- Neil T. Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, Monarch: Crowborough UK, 1990.
- Heiko A. Oberman, "Martin Luther: Between the Middle Ages and Modern Times," *The Reformation. Roots and Ramifications*, T & T Clark: Edinburgh, 1994, 53-75.
- C. S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters*, Collins: London and Glasgow, 1942.

2. THE CALL TO SPIRITUAL WARFARE

- a. *Abba Poemen often said, 'We do not need anything except a vigilant spirit' (The Sayings of the Desert Fathers, 186)*
- b. We who have been delivered by Christ from the dominion of darkness (Col 1:13), are called to wage good warfare (1 Tim 1:18,19; cf. 1 Tim 6:12; 2 Tim 2:3-4; 4-7).
- c. Our spiritual enemy is no human being, but rather **Satan**, 'the ruler of this world', who, though judged and cast out by Christ's death and resurrection (John 12:31; 16:11), still exercises power in the **world** and through our **flesh**, ie our old nature (1 John 5:19).
- d. As Christ began his battle against Satan only after his baptism (Mark 1:9-13), so baptised Christians are led by the Holy Spirit in warfare against Satan who in turn seeks to annul their baptism.
- e. We have been given Christ's own authority to combat the powers of darkness (Luke 10:19).
- f. Only through Jesus can we win the victory in spiritual warfare (Rom 8:31-39).

3. OUR SITUATION

- a. Involvement in hidden warfare
See Mark 1:21-28
 - The hiddenness of Satan and the unclean spirits
 - Our involvement in a secret cosmic conflict
 - Holy Spirit v Satan

- Son of God v unclean spirits
 - Jesus v opponents
 - The attraction of the evil spirits to Jesus and to the church
 - Disclosure of evil spirits by the teaching of Jesus
 - Recognition of Jesus by the evil spirits
 - Deliverance from the power of darkness by the use of God's word
- b. Recognition of Satan's strategy
See the vision of the hidden cosmic battle in Revelation 12
- (1) Vision of the woman and the dragon
- Woman: Mary and the Church
 - Dragon: Satan
 - Male child: Jesus
 - Woman's offspring: Christians
- (2) Hidden cosmic warfare
- Victory: Michael and the angels in heaven (12:7-10)
 - Present battlefield: earth (12:9,12)
 - Enemy: the devil with his angels (12:7)
 - Attack: the church with its faithful members (12:13,17)
 - Tactic: temptation to sin . accusation of conscience of sinner (12:10)
 - Goal: destruction of faith, hope and love by condemnation of the faithful
 - Weapons: the blood of Jesus and the confession of faith in Christ (12:11)

4. STRATEGY OF SATAN IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE

- a. Since Satan concentrates his attack on the saints and not on unbelievers, he seldom shows his true face, but comes disguised as an 'angel of light' (2 Cor 11:14-15, cf. Matt 7:15).
- b. He attacks the **conscience** of the believer by undermining **faith** in Christ through guilt and despair as well as by undermining **love** for each other through anger and hatred (1 Tim 1:18-19; cf 1:5).
- (1) As the **murderer** of human souls he tempts Christians to disobey God's double commandment to believe in Jesus as God's Son and to love one another (1 John 3:23; cf. John 8:31-47; 1 John 3:7-10).
- (2) As the **liar** and **father of lies** (John 8:44; 2 Cor 11:14; Rev 12:9), he encourages:
- Denial of Christ (Mark 8:31-33; 1 John 2:22) and his teaching (1 Tim 4:1-5)
 - Denial of sin (1 John 1:10) and of brotherly love (1 John 4:20-21)
- (3) As the **adversary** and **accuser** of God's faithful people, he attacks faith in Christ by accusing them of sin (1 Pet 5:8; Rev 12:10) and destroys their love by reminding them of the offences committed against them (Eph 4:26-27).
- c. If he cannot arouse a bad conscience, he attacks their **ministry**, as he did the ministry of Christ, by suggesting ungodly means and goals (Matt 4:1-10 // Luke 4:1-12):
- Physical life and satisfaction rather than spiritual life through God's

Word.

- Spectacular persuasion and miraculous proof rather than the exercise of faith in God by prayer.
- Spiritual power and glory rather than worship and service of God.

5. OUR SECURITY IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE

- a. Christ's defeat of Satan and all evil powers by his death and resurrection (John 12:31; Col 2:15; Heb 2:14-15; 1 John 3:8).
- b. The intercession of Jesus for us (John 17:15; cf. Luke 22:31-32).
- c. Our union with Christ (1 John 4:4) and our protection by him (1 John 5:18-19; cf. John 10:27-29).
- d. The testimony of the Holy Spirit who convicts us of sin and of Christ's judgment of Satan (John 16:11) as well as of our sonship and Christ's victory over the world (1 John 5:4-5).
- e. Our share in Christ's authority over evil spirits and powers (Luke 10:17-20; cf. Matt 10:1,8; Mark 3:15; 6:7; Luke 9:1).
- f. Satan has no power over us apart from the darkness in us, ie our guilt, anger, hatred, fear, worry, envy, lust and the like.

6. WEAPONS IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE: CHRIST'S AUTHORITY AND POWER

- a. The name of Jesus (Luke 10:17; Acts 16:18).
Note the practice of invocation and declaration, blessing and absolution, rebuke and exorcism in the name of Jesus.
- b. The power of the Holy Spirit in God's word (Matt 8:16; Mark 3:14; Eph 6:17; 1 John 2:14; cf. Matt. 4:1-10; Mark 1:21-28; Luke 8:12).
Note the power of the word in proclamation, meditation and prayer.
- c. Individual and corporate prayer (Rom 15:30-31; Eph 6:17-18; 1 Peter 5:8-9)
 - with abstinence from sleep (Matt 26:41; cf. Col 4:2).
 - with fasting (Mark 9:29 alternative text).
- d. Confession of faith (Eph 6:16; 1 Pet 5:9; Rev 12:11).
Note Luther's use of the creed and affirmation of baptism in spiritual conflict.
- e. The blood of Jesus (Rev 12:11).
Note the use of the Lord's Supper and the practice of covering people with Christ's blood.

7. VIGILANCE IN SPIRIT WARFARE

- a. Jesus warns us that we are defiled from within our hearts by **evil thoughts** which produce evil deeds and states of being (Mark 7:20-23).
- b. From the heart come those **fleshly desires** which war against our souls (1 Pet 2:11).

- c. Satan perverts our natural desires to tempt us into self-destructive disobedience against God (James 1:13-15; 4:1-10; Eph 2:1-3).
- d. St. John groups these perverted worldly desires into three classes (1 John 2:15-17).
 - The lust of the flesh
 - The lust of the eyes
 - The pride of life
- e. Beginning with the desert fathers, Christians have traditionally practised vigilance by self-examination to discover their point of vulnerability to the seven or eight deadly sins.
 - Gluttony
 - Lust/unchastity
 - Greed/covetousness
 - Envy/jealousy
 - Anger/hatred
 - Sloth/boredom or dejection/depression
 - Self-esteem/vain-glory
 - Pride/superiority
- f. In our Lutheran tradition we have rather used the decalogue as a divinely given mirror for self-examination to assess our conscience before God and so break the hold of Satan upon us.
- g. The purpose of spiritual self-examination which may be coupled with fasting, is to call in Christ to combat Satan within our hearts and to let his light drive out the darkness within us (John 3:19-21; Eph 5:8-14).
- h. Our hearts then are the battle-front where we are called to withstand Satan with the strength and armour of Christ.

8. DOING SENTRY DUTY

See Eph 6:10-20.

- a. As members of God's holy, priestly people we are soldiers of Christ engaged in spiritual warfare with him on planet earth (cf. 1 Tim 1:19; 6:12; 2 Tim 2:3-4, 4-7).
- b. As soldiers of Christ we are not called to attack Satan by going on a spiritual crusade against unbelievers but to protect ourselves and others by doing sentry duty.
- c. We guard the holy territory which has been conquered by Christ.
- d. Our enemy is Satan and the spiritual powers of darkness under his control.
- e. As sentries, our basic task is stand on guard where he has placed us and to stay awake as we watch against surprise attacks from the enemy.
- f. Through praying for ourselves and others we take our turn in doing sentry duty.
- g. We borrow Christ's priestly armour, weapon, and power to do sentry duty.

- h. God's word is our only offensive weapon against Satan in spiritual warfare.
- i. Through the use of God's word in meditation and prayer we draw on the power of the Holy Spirit and wield that power against Satan and the powers of darkness.
- j. We defend the holy people of God against attack from Satan by praying for them and calling on Christ to save them.
 - (1) By standing between them and Satan we shield them from attack (note the image of standing in the breach in Ps 106:23; Ezek 13:5; 20:30).
 - (2) By pleading for their forgiveness we protect them from the accusation and condemnation of Satan (cf. Rev 12:10-13).
 - (3) We call upon Christ to cover and deliver them, when they are under attack.
 - (4) We draw on the power of the Holy Spirit to strengthen them against temptation.
- k. Pastors are responsible to God for keeping watch 'on behalf of' their people by praying for them (cf. Heb 13:17).
- l. By intercession for pastors and missionaries we counteract the spiritual hold of Satan on unbelievers and so open the door for the reception of the Gospel.

9. CONCLUSION

- a. Evagrius in *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers*, 64:
Take away temptations and none will be saved.
- b. Anthony the Great in *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers*, 185:
The greatest thing a man can do is to throw his faults before the Lord and expect temptation to the last breath.
- c. Martin Luther:
The worst temptation is no temptation.

C.2. THE PERSONAL DISCIPLINES

d. FASTING

1. READING

- a. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, SCM: London, 1959, 151-53
- b. Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, Harper and Row: San Francisco, 1988, 47-61

2. FALSE ASCETICISM

- a. Paul criticises that asceticism which believes that some physical things which God has created, like sexuality and food, are evil and spiritually dangerous (1 Tim 4:1-5).
- b. Meat, alcohol and sexual intercourse are therefore not forbidden as if they defile us and impair our spirituality (Mark 7:14-19; Rom 14:1-23; 1 Cor 7:1-40).
- c. Legalistic and spiritualistic asceticism apart from Christ serve only to puff up the ego and promote self-promotion (Col 2:16-23).

3. GENERAL ASCETICISM

- a. Christian asceticism is meant to reduce our personal dependence on those physical things which can easily become idols for us (Eph 5:5; Col 3:5; Phil 3:19) and so enslave us (1 Cor 6:12; cf. 2 Pet 2:17-22).
- b. Together with prayer, it is part of our vigilance on sentry duty in spiritual warfare (Matt 26:41; Luke 12:27; Col 4:2; 1 Pet 5:8; cf. Eph 6:10-20).
- c. As physical training (1 Tim 4:8 in the context of 4:1-8), it increases our fitness as athletes in the race of life and as soldiers in the service of Christ (1 Cor 9:24-27; cf. 2 Tim 2:3-4).

4. OLD TESTAMENT TEACHING ON FASTING

- a. Occasions : obligatory fast on the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:29-31; Num 29:7) and extraordinary fast for calamities like a drought (Joel).
- b. Custom : personal mourning as for a dead person coupled with a service of national lamentation with the confession of sins and prayers for grace.
- c. Purpose : self abasement to atone for sins, plead for grace, and avert God's wrath. Since fasting was connected with repentance from sin, it was not used to achieve higher spiritual consciousness as in paganism (2 Sam 12:22; Joel 2:12-17; Isa 58:1-9).

5. NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING ON FASTING

- a. The Fasting of Jesus (Matt 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13).
 - (1) Just as Jesus was led by the Spirit to confront Satan in this fast, so we can be led by the same Spirit to confront Satan and have his hold loosened on us and others (Mark 9:29).
 - (2) Just as Jesus was prepared for his ministry by this fast, which exposed the basic issues in it, so by fasting we can confront the basic temptations in our ministry – the desire for physical satisfaction, the craving for personal popularity and the lust for spiritual power (cf. Acts 13:1-3; 14:23).
 - (3) Like Jesus, we do not overcome Satan by fasting but by reliance on God's word which shows us where we stand with God and delivers us from Satan.
 - (4) By fasting we discover that we do not live by bread alone but by God's word which nourishes us in our worship and supports us in our ministry.
- b. Christian fasting (Matt 6:16-18)
 - (1) Jesus connects fasting with giving to the needy (Matt 6:2-4) and praying (6:5-14) as three inter-related aspects of the life of righteousness for the child of God (6:1).
 - (2) As with giving and praying, his disciples don't fast in order to be accepted but because they have been accepted by their heavenly Father as members of his royal family (Matt 6:1).
 - (3) Fasting for the disciples of Jesus differs from the Old Testament in three ways
 - Their fasts are to be marked by joy rather than sorrow (6:16).
 - They are to dress as if for a feast rather than a funeral (6:17).
 - They are to fast in secret rather than as part of a public ritual (6:18).
 - (4) As their reward they will be **seen** by their heavenly Father, ie. recognised, regarded and approved by him. This contrasts with the desire of Jewish and pagan mystics to **see** God, ie gain a vision of him by fasting (6:18).
- c. Nature of Christian fasting (Mark 2:18-22; cf. Matt 9:14-17; Luke 5:33-38)
 - (1) The Pharisees fasted on Mondays and Thursdays as an act of repentance in order to win God's grace and hasten the coming of the Messiah (2:18).
 - (2) The disciples of Jesus **could** not fast, because they had the heavenly Bridegroom with them and so were already celebrating the Messianic feast (2:19).
 - (3) After his death his disciples would fast, because even though they were still 'married' to him, they would be separated from their bridegroom and lack his visible presence (20).
 - (4) Jesus did not just give new content to the old custom of fasting to acknowledge the divine sentence of death on the sinner, but created a new custom of **festive**

fasting to prepare his disciples for eternal life and perfect intimacy with him (2:21-22).

- (5) He therefore changed the custom of fasting from ostentatious mourning over sin to hidden celebration of grace, from preparation for the judgment of God to preparation for the Messianic feast in the new age (cf. Zech 8:18-19).
- d. Hazards of fasting (Luke 18:9-14)
- (1) Fasting can stem from the desire for self-justification with God.
 - (2) Such fasting promotes a false sense of security and spiritual arrogance. It leads to the contempt of others.
 - (3) This kind of fasting is condemned by God as self worship (cf. the notion of self-devised religion in Col 2:23).

6. THE LUTHERAN THEOLOGY AND PRACTICE OF FASTING

- a. Fasting has to do with our sanctification rather than our justification (AC XXVI, 33).
- b. Although it is one of the three good works encouraged by Jesus (Apol XII, 139, 143), it is a voluntary matter of response to the Gospel and obedience to the direction of the Holy Spirit (AC XXVI, 33-39; Apol XV, 46-48).
- c. As part of our bodily worship, it has been traditionally associated with the reception of the Lord's Supper (SC VI, 10; LC V, 37).
 - (1) It is linked with the use of the ten commandments and prayer in self-examination and preparation for the Lord's Supper.
 - (2) Fasting is connected with feasting and coloured by it.
- d. To forestall arbitrary individualism and ignorant excess, it is regulated liturgically by the Church Year, with the minor fast in Advent to prepare for the Festival of Christmas, and the major fast in Lent based on Christ's period in the wilderness to prepare for the great Festival of Easter. The manner of the fast has, however, never been prescribed.
- e. As part of our spiritual training, its purpose is to combat sin, restrain the sinful nature, and prepare us for better service of our Lord (1 Cor 9:24-27; AC XXVI, 33, 38; Apol XII, 143; XV, 24; XV, 46-47).
- c. God uses it, together with meditation on his word and prayer, to liberate us from those idols which disrupt our worship of him and so threaten to enslave us (Matt 6:19-24).

D. PARTICIPATION IN GOD'S HOLINESS

1. BASIC READING

- John W. Kleinig. "Sharing in God's Holiness." *Lutheran Theological Review* 8:1/2 (1995): 105-118. See also John W. Kleinig Resources: <http://www.johnkleinig.com/index.php/publications>
- John W. Kleinig. "Luther on the Reception of God's Holiness." *Pro Ecclesia* 17/1 (2008): 76-91. John W. Kleinig. "Sharing in God's Holiness." *Lutheran Theological Review* 8:1/2 (1995): 105-118. See also John W. Kleinig Resources: <http://www.johnkleinig.com/index.php/publications>
- John W. Kleinig. "Hidden Holiness," *Grace Upon Grace*, , 271-287.

2. POWER OF HOLINESS

- a. Our attitude to God's holiness
 - Fear of exposure by it: unclean, unworthy, ugly
 - Longing for its beauty: clean, radiant, nothing to hide
- b. The effect of holiness: analogy of the sun as a power
 - Lifegiving, energising, beneficial power
 - Life-threatening, destructive, dangerous power
- c. Its opposition to evil spiritual powers
 - Darkness from delusion: power over conscience and mind
 - Impurity from sin: power over bodies
 - Unclean spirits: power over spirits

3. THE CALL TO HOLINESS

- (a) See 1 Thess 4:7.
 - (1) We have a 'holy calling' (2 Tim 1:9; cf. Heb 3:1).
 - (2) We are 'called to be saints' and 'called saints' by God (Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:2).
- (b) See 1 Thess 5:23-24.
 - (1) God not only calls us to be holy but also makes us holy.
 - (2) He promises to make us completely holy for eternal life with him.
 - (3) Even though God's holiness is not a physical power, it affects us physically.
- (c) See Heb 12:10.

- (1) God educates us for holiness in the school of life.
- (2) He wants us to share in his own holiness.
- (3) He teaches us through our experiences and disciplines us through our troubles, so that we can share more fully in his holiness.

4. THE SOURCE OF HOLINESS

See the angels' song in Rev 4:8.

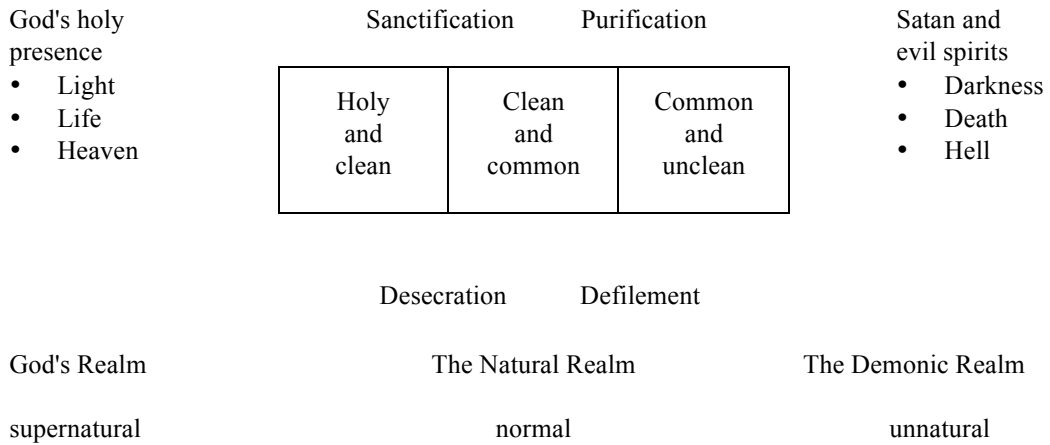
- a. The living God is the only being who is inherently and permanently holy (cf. 1 Sam 2:2; Rev 15:4).
- b. In the Old Testament he reveals himself and his nature by saying: *I am holy* (Lev 11:44, 45; 19:2; 20:7,26; 21:8) and declares that he sanctifies his people (Exod 31:13; Lev 20:8; 21:8,15,23; 22:9,16,32; Ezek 20:12; 37:28).
- c. All three persons of the Holy Trinity are equally holy.
 - God the Holy Father (John 17:11)
 - God the Holy Son (Luke 1:35), the Holy One (Rev 3:7; cf. John 6:69)
 - God the Holy Spirit (John 14:25)
- d. Since God's holiness has to do with the **mystery** and **power** of his being, it cannot be understood and defined abstractly, but can only be adequately expressed and proclaimed in adoration and praise (Isa 6:3; Ps 99; Rev 4:9).
- e. His holiness is inseparable from him and his presence. See Exod 29:43-44.
 - (1) People and things borrow holiness from contact with him.
 - (2) Apart from God, no-one is ever holy.
- f. Since God makes himself accessible in divine worship, his holiness is available to his people in worship.
 - (1) Holy people receive their holiness from being in God's presence and participating with the angels in divine worship in the heavenly sanctuary. As saints they therefore have angelic status (cf. 1 Thess 3:13; 2 Thess 1:10; Jude 14).
 - (2) Holy things are set apart for use in worship.
 - In the Old Testament the most holy things make people and things holy.
 - The holy things are made and kept holy by the most holy things.

3. NATURE OF HOLINESS, PURITY AND IMPURITY

See God's words to the priests in Lev 10:10:

"You are to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean."

(a) The meaning of these terms: holy and common, clean and unclean:



b. People and things exist in one of **three states**

- Holy and clean, eg. baptised believer, bread in Lord's Supper
- Clean and common, eg. faithful husband, roast beef
- Common and unclean, eg. murderer, food offered to an idol.

c. Like light, God's holiness is a life-giving power which creates a holy, heavenly state of being.

- (1) Contact with God makes people holy and enlivens them spiritually.
- (2) The closer they are to God, the holier they are.
- (3) They remain holy as long as they do not desecrate their holiness by doing something unclean.
- (4) They must be purified before they can be made holy.
- (5) They are protected by God's holiness from impurity and unclean spirits.

d. Purity is the natural healthy state of being for people in the world.

- (1) People who live according to God's law in the order of creation are clean.
- (2) Purity results from being in a right relationship with other people and the natural world.
- (3) It results in a good conscience and physical well-being.
- (4) Cleansing is associated with justification in the New Testament.

e. The source of impurity.

See the words of Jesus about eating unclean foods in Mark 7:20-23:

'He went on: "What comes out of a man is what makes him 'unclean'. For from within, out of human hearts, come evil thoughts: fornication, theft, murder,

adultery; greed, malice, deceit, lewdness; envy, slander, arrogance, folly (unbelief). All these evils come from inside and make a person 'unclean'."

- (1) Like darkness, impurity is a destructive power which establishes an evil, diabolic state of being (note the reference to unclean spirits in the NT).
- (2) It is the opposite to holiness and belongs to the realm of Satan and the unclean spirits.
- (3) People become unclean by the sins which they commit as well as by the sins committed against them.
- (4) People are defiled by their evil thoughts and desires which lead to evil deeds.
- (5) Impurity is as incompatible with holiness as darkness is with light.
- (6) If unclean people come into God's presence, they are destroyed by God's wrath, like petrol by fire.

6. THE DANGER OF HOLINESS

See Isaiah 6:1-7.

- a. An unclean person cannot remain unscathed in God's heavenly presence.
- b. An unclean person desecrates God's holiness and so comes under God's judgment.
- c. God's holiness is deadly and destructive to an unclean person and any unclean thing.
- d. Unclean people must be purified from the stain of sin, before they can stand in the presence of a holy God and serve him by speaking his holy word (Rev 1:5^b-6).
 - Renunciation of Satan and confession of faith
 - Confession of sin and reception of absolution (1 John 1:5-10)
 - Confession of hurt, its surrender to God, and forgiveness of the evil doer (Eph 4:31,32).
- e. People who are in a state of spiritual purity receive blessing from their contact with him (cf Ps 24:3-6).

7. THE GIFT OF HOLINESS

- a. The Mission of Jesus as our High Priest
See the prayer of Jesus for his disciples in John 17:17-19 (NIV).
 - (1) God the Father sent Jesus into the world to call us to be his disciples and make us holy (cf. John 10:36).
 - (2) He sanctified himself as our high priest by his holy life and sacrificial death for us (cf. Heb 2:10-18).
 - (a) He took upon himself our impurity and suffered God's wrath for us.
 - (b) He gives us his purity and holiness as God's Son.

- (c) He intercedes for us with his Father to sanctify us through his word, so that we can be as he is and work with him.

b. Our Sanctification in Jesus

See Eph 1:3-7^a, 13-14.

- (1) We don't make ourselves holy, but God makes us holy as a gift of grace to us.
- (2) Before we were created, God the Father planned to make us holy in and through his Son.
- (3) This plan involved three things
 - Our redemption and purification through the blood of Jesus
 - Our union with Jesus through faith in him
 - Our adoption with Jesus as God's children with the same holy status as Jesus
- (4) Our justification is therefore the basis for our sanctification (cf. Rom 6:19,22).
 - (a) Through Jesus we have been forgiven and accepted by God the Father.
 - (b) Since we are right with God the Father through Jesus, we are also holy in him.
- (5) We borrow our holiness from Jesus and are not holy apart from him.
 - He is our sanctification (1 Cor 1:30).
 - We are made holy in him (1 Cor 1:2) and his name (1 Cor 6:11).
 - We are made holy by faith in him (Acts 26:18; cf. Jude 20).
 - We are therefore holy in him (Phil 1:1; 4:21).
 - Since we are holy in Christ we may pray for all the spiritual blessings belonging to Jesus as God's Son and heir (Eph 1:3-6).
- (6) Through Christ we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 - (a) He puts his mark on us as God's holy property.
 - (b) He is the first instalment of our full inheritance and guarantee of our full sanctification.
 - (c) He makes and keeps us holy (cf. Rom 15:16; 1 Cor 6:11; 2 Thess 2:13; 1 Pet 1:2).

c. God's means for sanctification

- (1) See John 17:17
 - (a) God's word is most holy.
 - (b) Through our hearing God's word and trusting in it as the truth, we become holy (cf. 2 Thess 2:13).
- (2) See 1 Tim 4:5

- (a) Like God's word God's name is most holy.
 - (b) The use of God's name in prayer makes people and things holy (cf. 1 Cor 1:2; 6:11).
- (3) See Eph 5:25^b-27
- (a) Christ cleanses and sanctifies us through baptism.
 - (b) The word and name of the Triune God make baptism a means of sanctification (1 Cor 6:11).
- (4) See Heb 10:10
- (a) The blood of Jesus is most holy (cf. Heb 10:14).
 - (b) We are kept holy by eating his body in the Lord's Supper (cf. 1 Cor 11:27-32).
- (5) See Heb 13:12
- (a) The blood of Jesus is most holy (cf. Heb 10:29).
 - (b) We are kept holy by drinking the blood of Jesus in the Lord's Supper (cf. the sprinkling of our hearts in Heb 10:22; 12:24; 1 Pet 1:2).

8. THE CONNECTION BETWEEN HOLINESS AND SEXUALITY

a. Holiness and Christian Marriage See 1 Thess 4:3-8; cf. Heb 13:4.

- (1) For Christians, sex is not just a moral but also a spiritual matter.
- (2) In Christ God has made us and our bodies holy through his Holy Spirit.
- (3) He therefore calls us to be holy and live holy lives in our sexual behaviour.
- (4) He requires sexual purity of us holy people, so that we do not desecrate his holiness.
- (5) We can escape sexual pollution in **three** ways:
 - By avoiding fornication: sex before and outside marriage
 - By exercising sexual self-control in marriage: focus of the imagination and sexual desires on what is given by God for our enjoyment and not using our partners merely for sexual self-gratification
 - By refusing to commit adultery: avoidance of sexual activity with a person married to someone else
- (6) If we sin sexually, we don't just abuse another person, but we spurn God the Father and his Holy Spirit.
- (7) He punishes sexual sins in **two** ways:
 - By withdrawing his Holy Spirit
 - By handing us over to our sins: unsatisfied lust, sense of physical

impurity, desire for kinky sex, broken relationships, bad conscience, disgust, loss of interest in sex, disintegrated souls

- (8) If a married couple avoids sexual impurity and respects God's holiness in their marriage, the Holy Spirit will unite them spiritually, just as they are united physically by cohabitation and sexual intercourse.
 - (a) They will experience spiritual intimacy.
 - (b) Each will represent Christ to each other.
 - (c) Their marriage will mirror the union between Christ the heavenly bridegroom and his bride the Church (cf. Eph 5:21-33).
6. Preservation of sexual purity.
See Eph. 5:3-14
- (1) We are saints who are meant to live in the light of God's holy presence.
 - (a) The risen Christ has shone into our hearts and raised us from spiritual death for eternal life with God.
 - (b) He has awoken us from sleep in the darkness of disobedience.
 - (c) In him we have light and are children of the light.
 - (d) Through him we can bear the fruit of light also in the area of sexuality.
 - (2) Sexual immorality, sexual greed and obscene talk are improper for us.
 - They are a kind of idolatry which turns sex into our 'god'.
 - They make us unclean.
 - They result in God's wrath.
 - (3) We are called to do **three** things as children of the light.
 - To thank God for our sexuality and its blessings.
 - To seek to do what pleases him in our sexual behaviour.
 - To expose our secret sexual misbehaviour to him by confessing it, seeking forgiveness, and praying for his help.
 - (4) Pastors and leaders in a congregation cannot condone public sexual sins but must bring the light of Christ's judgement and grace to bear on it.
- c. Call to sexual chastity
See 1 Cor 6:12-20
- (1) The case in Corinth: sexual intercourse with prostitutes
 - (2) Justification given by Christians in Corinth
 - I am free from having to keep God's law, since I am justified by grace.
 - Sexual intercourse is a natural activity like eating.
 - It involves my body rather than my soul.

- My body is doomed to rot in the grave.

(3) Paul's counter-arguments

- (a) Our bodies are important spiritually.
- They have been redeemed by Christ.
 - They belong to him and are part of his body.
 - They will be raised from the dead for eternal life.
 - They are the temple of the Holy Spirit who unites a couple spiritually as they are united physically through sexual intercourse.
- (b) Sexual immorality is not beneficial but dangerous for us.
- We lose our Christian freedom and become enslaved to evil desires which Satan uses to defile and manipulate us.
 - We unite our bodies, which are spiritually part of Christ, to a prostitute.
 - We sin against our own bodies and desecrate them as God's temple.
- (c) We are called to honour God in and with our bodies and offer them to him.
- Sexual immorality involves us in idolatry, for by it we make sex an idol and worship it.
 - Like all idols, it promises happiness but ends up destroying it.
 - When we worship God with our bodies, sex ceases to be a destructive idol and so can become a blessing to us.

9. AGENTS FOR HOLINESS

a. Introduction

- (1) All people who believe in Jesus as Lord and worship the Triune God are saints.
- (2) Their holiness is borrowed from God through their association with Jesus.
- (3) Question: What's the purpose of being holy?

b. Our holy vocation as priests.

See 1 Pet 2:9.

- (1) In the Old Testament the priests acted as mediators between God and his people.
- (2) Through Christ all believers mediate between God the Father and those who don't yet believe in him and worship him.
- (3) As priests they represent **others** before God the Father by interceding for their forgiveness and by praying for their needs (cf. 1 Tim 2:1-6).
- (4) As priests they represent **God the Father** to others by bringing him and his grace to them through their daily contacts with them (cf. Matt 5:14-16; 10:40).

- (5) As priests we are to offer our bodies (Rom 12:1; cf. 6:12-13,19-23), our confession of allegiance in songs of praise (Heb 13:15), and our possessions (Heb 13:16) as acceptable offerings to God.
- (3) Our bodies as temples of the living God
See Eph. 2:19-22; 1 Cor. 3:16-17; 6:20; 2 Cor 6:14–7:2; 1 Pet. 2:4-10.
- (1) The Triune God dwells in the church and in our bodies.
- (2) God reveals himself and his grace in and through us as his temple (cf. John 14:22-24).
- (3) We are to avoid desecrating God's holy temple by acts of impurity.
- (4) Our involvement with the angels in the heavenly liturgy.
See Heb 10:19-22.
- (1) In the Old Testament the high priest alone had restricted access to God's presence in his earthly temple.
- (2) Through Christ our high priest and liturgist in God's heavenly temple, all believers have unrestricted access to God's heavenly presence.
- (3) In worship and prayer we can approach him unafraid together with Jesus, since our bodies have been washed by the waters of baptism and our consciences are cleansed by the blood of Jesus.
- (4) Since we rely on Christ's purity and holiness we can approach God the Father with the assurance that he will welcome us and treat us exactly as he welcomes and treats his Son.
- (5) In our worship we stand together with Jesus, all angels, all departed saints, and all Christians everywhere in the presence of our holy heavenly Father (cf. Heb 12:22-24).
- (6) Through our worship we receive a preview of heaven here on earth.
- e. Our vocation as saints: Col 3:12-17.
- (1) As God's holy children we can borrow God's own qualities and virtues from him in prayer.
- (2) We can therefore represent him in our daily lives:
- By tolerating and forgiving others as God forgives us
 - By loving others as we are loved by him
 - By making peace as we are ruled by Christ's peace
 - By giving thanks to him for his grace
- (3) Christian morality is based on our holiness which bears witness to God's holiness.

10. THE PURPOSE OF HOLINESS

- a. See Rom 6:19-23

- (1) We are called to yield the members of our bodies to God for sanctification by him.
 - (2) The fruit of sanctification is participation in the eternal life of God.
- b. See 2 Tim 2:20-21.
- (1) We do not make ourselves holy by living holy lives, but rather live holy lives because we have been made holy in Christ.
 - (2) Christ makes us holy, so that we can work with him as our master.
 - (3) We are challenged to give up our impure activities and become more holy, so that we can be more useful to our Lord and be better equipped to serve him.
- c. See Heb 12:14.
- (1) Our Lord shares his own holiness with us, so that we will be able to see him face to face in heaven.
 - (2) Only those who are at peace with God and each other share in Christ's holiness.
 - (3) We therefore pursue holiness as a gift from God through his Holy Spirit, so that we will be drawn into deeper intimacy with him until we see him face to face, holy and perfect and lovely to him.
- d. Conclusion: 1 Pet 1:14-16.
- (1) God calls us to share in his own holiness (cf. Lev 11:44, 45; 19:2; 20:7).
 - (2) God's statement: *You shall be holy* is meant to be taken in three ways
 - As a promise about what he will do to us
 - As a statement about what we will be as his children
 - As a command about how we are to live.
 - (3) Since we are holy, we are to preserve our holiness in our way of living.
 - (4) By making us holy God qualifies us for eternal life with him.
See J.C.Ryle. *Holiness*. Evangelical Press: Welwyn, 1984, 23:
No man can possibly be happy in a place where he is not in his element, and where all around him is not congenial to his tastes, habits and character. When an eagle is happy in an iron cage, when a sheep is happy in the water, when an owl is happy in the blaze of the morning sun, when a fish is happy on dry land – then, and only then, will I admit that the unsanctified man could be happy in heaven.