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I wonder how many of you have noticed that often. When we pray the Lord's Prayer, or actually, Every time that we pray, the Lord's Prayer, we don't always do in the public worship. We pray through the Lord's Prayer first. Uh, covering all of the sections, making application of each part dwelling upon each of those things before, God and unto God, have you noticed that some of you?

Yes, maybe no. Something then, perhaps. Is especially helpful for you children, as you pray along because we, we most often. Do I think maybe two-thirds or three quarters of the time? We'll pray that way. Well, how many of you then know from? Uh, confessional standards why we do that?

The hint there was from our confessional standards. It's in the larger, catechism. Adults, don't memorize the larger catechism anymore. I think I've met one adult in my lifetime. Who has it was? Originally the larger catechism was for adults to memorize And the shorter catechism was. For children to memorize and for parents to use in teaching their children.

Uh, I have not memorized larger catechism so I'm not Speaking down to anybody there. Um, Just maybe amazed with you. How declined? I and we all are Uh, in in our season. In the history of the church. Uh, but If you've got your original teal book covered book, you can find larger catechism on page four, larger catechism, 187 on page 400.

How is the Lord's Prayer to be used? The Lord's Prayer is not only for direction as a pattern. According to, which we are to make other prayers. But may also be used as a prayer. So that it to be done with. Understanding. Reverence. And other Graces necessary to the right performance of the duty.

Of prayer. Understanding Faith reverence and the other Graces well we have come. If you're using your book, you turn back now to page 112. Uh, where we are in chapter 21 and we've come to the part in article, three. With understanding reverence humility. Fervency. And perseverance. Uh, so these, uh, these The characteristics, these Uh, parts of the manner in which we are to pray.

Prayer. Going back to the beginning of the article prayer, with Thanksgiving being one. Special part of religious worship is by God required of all men. And that it may be accepted, it is to be made in the name of the By the help of his. According to his will.

And that is what we have studied so far or thought through and applied so far. And now this section that we've read already with understanding, reverence humility. Fervency. Love. And perseverance. So, we are. Pray, with understanding one of the things that this means, Sorry. I don't know why this app likes to crash.

We use it at home all week long, then it doesn't crash. Um, Okay.

One of the difficulties that we Uh, that we have in prayer. Is that we rush into it? We have not considered. Uh what we are going to say, and we have not considered it from the word of God.

We thought of this already, a fair amount when he said in the name of the son, what does it mean to be in the name of the son?

It ought to be according to what the son desires, you can't come in someone else's name and ask for things that they haven't authorized. That it would be inappropriate to put their name on. Uh, by the help of his Spirit. Uh, well how Does the spirit help us to pray?

Well, according to his will. Uh, which especially is according to his word. Uh, we don't know how to pray. According to his secret will, it's secret. It's hidden from us. And we don't know how to pray. According to his revealed will very well if we don't know his word.

And so, Uh, prayer needs to be made with understanding, which means you need to know the Bible. And, Uh, you need to be exercising your understanding of the Bible while you pray. This is actually a skill that That takes a fair amount of effort to develop. It will not do for you to hear that.

And say, Well. I'm just not good at that. Well, none of us. Begin good at that. Even Jesus. Did not start out. Good at that. He started as a baby. He had to grow in wisdom. And from, where do you think? Baby Jesus toddler. Jesus Child. Jesus adolescent Jesus.

Even adult, Jesus was still learning how to pray. It was from. The Bible. Now, in order to be exercising, the understanding one of the things That we can do. It's not just with the Lord's Prayer or other form prayers. I'm sure. Every one of us has experienced the getting into a rut.

And how we pray for a meal. Uh, or getting into our rut, and how we pray at the beginning of family worship. Uh, for help and family worship, and we start using the same order in the same form and the same words. And when you do that over and over again, what happens?

Less and less you pray with understanding. But if we are praying from the Bible, And if we are continually reading and being refreshed in different parts of the Bible, Especially if you take the time to come and prepare for prayer. You can, you know, it's an open book test.

It's not a quiz or exam from God. You bring bring the book to your friend and study review right there. Refresh yourself in something and as you wrestle with that, uh, not only will that prepare you to pray, but you'll start to find. I, I think Speaking a little bit experientially here.

Uh you'll start to to find that as you you wrestle with the word and with God in whatever the passage is, It will it will begin to form prayer. Uh, even before you come to a set time of intentionally praying, And so, We are to pray with understanding and uh, you can't do that if you don't store up.

Uh, understanding, and you can't do that if you don't Actively exercise and and prepare. Uh, to pray with understanding. I praise God. He's merciful. He's kind. Uh, prayer is an exercise in not being Uh, you come because he is God and you are not. And you come in weakness.

We'd already talked about that when we talked about the help of the spirit. Uh, if if any of us is in a situation where our circumstance, where we don't feel our weakness. Well enough, all we have to do is pray Because one of the places that we are weak, as a rule in this life is prayer.

The spirit helps us in our weakness because we do not know how to pray for what we ought. And Paul is using the first person plural. Paul, who writes all those great prayers. In Ephesians, especially All right, and other places. And so when you try to come with understanding and you find that you're understanding is small, Then now you at least understand that you don't understand.

And you can ask for help in the praying. And sometimes, sometimes you really know the the help of the Holy Spirit and you're praying, the scriptures just come rushing in and all fit together and he gives you uh what the old Scots Presbyterians is called Liberty uh in praying.

They would talk about Liberty and preaching and liberty and and praying. And Uh, you know, when you ask someone how they're doing They might say, oh, I'm blessed today. Uh, God gave me liberty this morning. And, Uh, that was, that would be all you had to to say between Christian Brothers, they would know what you meant.

Uh, that Although your ordinary experience as to labor and struggle and work and wrestle and that's good and that's that's right those those are actually words that scripture uses with regard to praying, you know? So It's not easy, don't be surprised. God doesn't use easy words. Uh, when he talks about it, Um, But sometimes he comes and he makes it feel easy.

Yes, some of you are. Are musicians or composers or speakers? And, Uh, you've had the experience of, you know, having to very regimentedly disa with discipline, Uh, perform or play or speak or do and then Weather through practice or just a moment of Providence sustaining you, you've also had those moments where it just came flowing up.

You Well, this is not just that, of course, this is, Uh, the the worship of God with the special help of the spirit. But we are to pray with understanding. We're to pray with, reverence.

This is especially hard for. Uh, The pharisaical. Type that Uh, the Lord was correcting in Matthew 6. Uh, several months ago. When they're praying before the eyes of men. We are not so much humbled. When we come before the eyes of men as we are when we come before the face of God, Uh, you know, as we Those who are in the midweek meetings and we The sections.

Matthew Henry's method for prayer and In the Adoration section whenever we've kind of rotated through all the parts of that section. And we come back and we're, we're starting a Sequence through adoration again. The first part is acknowledging. That it is the true, and living, the great God with whom we have to do in prayer.

If uh, If you're not praying in the secret place, And even when you pray in public, You have to pray on the secret place. I hope you remember that from Matthew 6, because he goes from saying, pray in secret. To saying pray then in this way, Our Father, And that's one of the catechism questions, right?

What does Now, what does the preface to the Lord's Prayer? Teach us. Well, one of the things of reference to the Lords for our teachers. Our Father is that you pray with others? But you still are supposed to be praying in the secret place of your heart, where God sees Your heart, your mind, your soul, engaging with God, individually, and personally, even in corporate prayer, This is one of the reasons why, you know, when we come to the corporate prayer times in the public Workshop, each each one of them.

You need to put forth the effort of your heart. Uh, to engage God and not just kind of tune out or or zone out. Uh, not only because you need to pray with understanding but you need to pray with reverence. And true. Reverence comes. From being aware that you are interacting with God himself, that you are engaged.

Uh, with the Living God. Well, in your praying. Um, So on the, on the point of understanding, Uh, the proof text they use is interesting. For us because we are not accustomed to thinking of

singing and praying as Uh, two sides of the same coin. But you'll notice that the book of songs in the Bible is also a book of prayers.

Uh, Psalm 72. Uh giving the the final or final not as like the last numerically in our in our Bibles but the ultimate prayer for the Everlasting Kingdom and kingship of Jesus. That's Psalm 72. Do you remember how it concludes? It's not the songs of David, the son of Jesse or ended.

It's the prayers of David. The son of Jesse are ended. So They give us for understanding and they do when we get to if vocal in a known tongue give what I think. Uh, is the the plainest. You know. The straight arrow for you should pray with understanding and that's First Corinthians 14.

Verse 14, if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth but my understanding is unfruitful So, There's that. But the proof text that they chose is Psalm 47 verse 7. For God, is king of all the Earth, sing praises with. Understanding. Uh, They're not the the confession is not going to give us.

How to sing Beyond singing with Grace in the heart, singing, Psalms with Grace in the heart is what we're going to see in a couple articles for for how to sing. But here Psalm 47 7 says, sing with understanding That's one of the main points of the whole of First Corinthians 14.

All of our worship is to be offered to God with understanding. We're supposed to be exercising, our minds. Uh, I remember when The. And the core group in Iowa, first called me to come plant the church. And even though They had had pulpit Supply from G.I, Williamson for six months.

They were still very Uh, young and early on the way to reforming. And so, a number of things changed in in the worship, when I got there, One of the leading men in the courtroom. Comes to me after a month or two. And he says, Pastor.

Difficulty with these changes to the worship and it's okay Perry. I have to think so much now. When I come to worship, I just want to come to God and be

We don't subscribe. As a church culture. Generally speaking To sing praises. With understanding. In fact. We almost have a value in the broader Church culture. Sing Praises with so much emotion that you don't need to exercise any understanding. And we think of, Praises, or the singing that is good.

Uh, not that which has exercised, our thoughts and our Wills before. God So that we are stirred up to obey and submit to the king. That's what Psalm 47 is Psalm 47, is another one of these Psalms of the great king. Where it says, To, to pray. Uh, with understanding Uh, but we Uh we focus almost exclusively on affection in the singing.

Well, it's not just singing. Of course, that is to be done with understanding. And that's why they they use that proof text as far as Reverence goes. One of the ways that we pray with, reverence, Is by praying with more, of God's words than ours. We have our requests.

We are told by God encouraged. Yes, even commanded by God, to make our requests known to him. You know. Uh, children, if whenever you were troubled by something, you know, you asked if you could call An aunt or an uncle. And whenever you were happy about something you asked and if you could call and answer an uncle, whenever you wanted to know something, you asked if you could call and answer enough well, okay.

Fine. You you love your aunt or Uncle but if uh if you're going there Before you Um, Before you come to your. Parents. Now, I forgot what the point was because the illustration was too long. Um,

I can't even hear you. Just you were saying about in reverence and prayer, using more of God's word. Yes. Using more of God, more of God's words than your own God commands you to come to him. Wants you to come to him first. Wouldn't it be offensive to your parents?

Wouldn't they think something is wrong between you and them? If they were not opening their heart to you? If you did not, uh, come to them to share the joy, come to them to share the grief, come to them to get the counsel. Well, how much more your heavenly father?

When nothing is ever wrong from his end. And where whenever there's a difficulty between you and him there is immediate and full and free, forgiveness and Reconciliation. There's absolutely zero reason. Ever be reluctant to come to God. And he commands us to come to him with our requests. And yet.

The scripture also teaches us and They use, I think, what is The clearest text on this, the opening of opening couple verses of Ecclesiastes 5. No, just read it from the KJ KJV that's in. Uh, confession of Faith here. Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God.

And be more ready to hear. Then to give the sacrifice of fools. For they consider not. That they do evil. And there's, you know, lacking understanding, but then verse two, Be not rash with thy mouth. Do not speak quickly. Do not just open your mouth and say, whatever it occurs to you or to say, whatever it feels like saying.

One of the ways you respect others well in relationships and conversations is by learning the rule. That just because you thought of something to say Doesn't mean that you should. Because some of us, And I'm I'm using first person there, as first person plural, I know some of you too.

Um, Some of us are still learning. That you can select five percent two percent. Of what you could have said. And if you're always reserving and selecting only the best,

Then you will be more helpful, more edifying. Uh, you will be wiser or at least thought. Wiser even the fool is thought wise when uh, when he keeps his mouth shut, The proverb says, John, you just Only, you know that that tiny sliver it's like when When someone invites you to come preach a conference, And you get to, you get to preach all of.

The best stuff that you're that, God has most exercised you in. And, And that your own congregation has probably heard. A thousand times. But Uh, you know, you're you're selecting the cream off the top. Well, if in our conversations with others, That is a wise and judicious and good way.

Uh, to treat others. Well, how much more When you are coming to the Living God. So, when you pray, One of the things that, One of the ways that you exercise reverence and humility. Is by using more of God's words. Than you do of your own. And again. You need to know your Bible and always be in your Bible.

And refreshing it. Uh, reading it devotionally so that it turns over well into prayer. So that you are not using the same form or the same pattern over and over again and shutting down the understanding, that's not reverent. Uh, it may feel Uh, kind of religious. Uh, in a spooky quasi, Eastern Orthodox, sort of way.

Uh, but if it's shutting down. Uh, understanding Uh, it's not reverence. Humility. Abraham. Is our example here. Uh, Genesis 18, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord. I who am but dust and ashes. And there he's not just recognizing that he's a creature. Right. We're made from the dirt.

Uh, and It's marvelous that God made image bearers. Out of the dirt, so that we can engage him. That's what being an image Bearer. Especially is, you're an image Bearer unto God before. You're an image Bearer unto the world. Uh, you you image him by having fellowship with him, by living in relationship, with him by adoring and receiving his His pleasure by interacting.

Uh, with him. Uh, but when Abraham says I whom but dust and ashes, He's not just referring to being a creature. What else is he referring to?

If I start the verse, all of you are going to know it, aren't you? Dust you are. And to dust you shall return. Right? He is recognizing not just that he's a preacher but he's a death deserving creature. That he's a hell deserving creature. That's a huge exercise of Faith, isn't it?

To know that you're a hell deserving creature. But to approach the Living God anyway. Now, you're taking him at his word. That he has made you right with him. In his son and his sons atoning for your sin and his son's righteousness, being your righteousness. His son himself being your righteousness.

So you come with the humility. And, And therefore also the faith. Uh you come with the humility of someone who knows. That you deserve death and hell. This is one of the ways that the gospel I hope. Comes into every family worship. Because as soon as you start praying and you start approaching God and you start praying with understanding you start praying with reverence, one of the things you do is you pray with humility You confess your sins?

Uh, I don't know how many of you get that daily email. Um, there's actually two of them. One is daily Westminster and it gives you yeah, either something from the confession or the larger or the shorter. Every day and then there's one that's daily, confessions And, Uh, today's was Uh, Heidelberg fifth petition, uh, forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And I noticed that in the middle of the 16th century, when it explained, Forgive us our debts and said, not only not only asking that we would be forgiven for Uh, our sins but for that remaining depravity, that clings to us. And I thought, huh? Just recently again, uh, one of the famous, Performs celebrity types.

Uh, has been saying that. If you have, Um, Tendencies. Uh, towards perversion or Tendencies towards lust. And you. Um, You don't indulge the tendency, you don't have to repent of that and you don't have to ask for forgiveness for that as long as you're kind of battling, uh, against it.

Well, that's not what the Bible teaches. We're guilty of and we need forgiveness for not just our actual sins, but our original sins. Uh and so that's one of the ways that you are going to help establish for your family. Set an example for them as your children, especially pray along with you.

F and children, you have to do your part because your dad can do it and if you're just Sleeping through the prayers or tuning out through the prayers. You're not going to be helped. Uh, but if Dad is leading you in confessing, Unworthiness and admitting before God, what you actually are worthy of and asking that he would receive you upon Christ's worthiness, that Jesus would be your worthiness.

And that he would be pleased now to, uh, to help you in the worship. If that's, you know, if that's at the beginning of the worshiper, you understand? Saying that, that you model for your family, you lead your family. And being humbled before, God.

You know, one of the wonderful things about the sequence. Here. And I don't know. Uh, I'm sure it was intentional, I just don't know that it was, I'm not familiar enough with The article was uh, was composed. Understanding reverence, humility fervency. What makes you more fervent in prayer? Than realizing, not just who you are and what you deserve.

But what God has done. To give to you to be treated by him as Christ deserves. So that you come not groveling. As a barely released from your sentence sinner. But you come with confidence as a child. You come completely forgiven of all things, you come like the woman whose fervency the Pharisees could not understand.

They were offended. You remember the woman who who had been forgiven of so much sin. And so that's what they knew about her. You know, her reputation for the sin that she was forgiven of and how she came and she's. She's at his feet and Weeping so much in gratitude and and love that she got his feet.

All muddy. Uh, you know they didn't have clean feet like we did. Uh, like we do, they walked everywhere in sandals their feet were very dirty and she she wept on his feet until her his feet were muddy then. Oh no, she made. She made the Master's Feet money and she dries his feet with her hair.

It's so offensive. To the Pharisees to see that level of pervency. Why weren't they fervent? Well, one of the reasons is The same as the reason they weren't reverent. What did we say earlier? They were, they weren't reverent because they weren't praying in the secret places. Before the face of God, they were praying as Before men.

Uh, well, that's one of the reasons why they weren't fervent. Another reason why they weren't fervent is because they didn't realize How much they were forgiven? Isn't that what Jesus said? He who has forgiven little loves little But he who is forgiven much loves much. Okay, so there's this duty to Zeal and there's this Duty.

To fervency in prayer. The one of the proof texts they give is. James chapter 5, the fervent. Prayer of The righteous man is effective in its work, there's a duty to it. But you don't just need to know the duty. The what? Of how you should pray. You need to know the how don't you?

Because you don't want, pretended fervency. You don't want. Um, faked. Fervency unto God, or Or something that is stirred up more from your flesh than from his Spirit. And so, if the scripture tells you how the spirit produces, Fervency in coming to the Lord, he who is forgiven much loves much.

Then humility lends itself into fervency, doesn't it? When we are humbled before him, we realize what we are, who we are, what we have done, what we deserve, we come, we enjoy the full and free forgiveness. And we reciprocate, right? It's the same as in first John Uh, when you want to When you want to be fervent in obeying God's law, you don't just want to obey by doing the right things, you want to obey with the right heart and the right manner with the right attitude.

What does he say? He says, if you love me, you will obey my Commandments. Okay, so we know that we want obedience, that comes out of love, But how can we love him? Uh well he also says first John 4. We love him because he first loved us and in this we know love You know, there's In chapter three.

We know love because the father gave the son in chapter four, we know love because the son gave himself. And so again, there is this humility in your praying um, Should always. Bring into your praying, you have. It something from the gospel. One of the things. That that we in order to pray with understanding in the public Worship is we, we pray from the passage that we have just read and it's a passage that We have a congregational value.

And I hope it's a value in each of your households, to have studied those passages during the prior week. So that we come with understanding especially for uh for the children who are so sharp if they hear something on a Tuesday and a Wednesday and a Thursday and they come a few days later and it's kind of in their their short-term memory, they catch things and we praise God and we see him working in

Model, especially coming out of the serial readings. Every passage in scripture has something to humiliate us. Something to encourage us before the Lord something. Provoke. Uh fervency. Understanding reverence, humility. Fervency, Faith. Love Uh and uh, perseverance.

The passage, they the passages. They give or the two group texts or Colossians 4 2. Continue in prayer or be steadfast in prayer and watch in the same with Thanksgiving, in Ephesians, 6, 18, praying, always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit and watching there unto with all perseverance and supplication for All Saints.

One of The Temptations is. If you've prayed. Uh, for something for a while. And it doesn't produce the result that you had hoped. Or even if, You have a? Um, God helps you and you have kind of this renewed dedication to prayer. Um, More frequency, more quantity, more quality, and yet, You're just not having the experience of God.

In the prayer. Uh, that you had desired or expected. Uh, there is in our flesh, a tendency to give up, isn't there? Uh, to say, it didn't work. Um, To, you know, to have Yeah, the the same.

No, I don't think I'll use that illustration. Um, That's one you can ask me about at the Q. A Uh, if you care to Uh but but to say it didn't work. And that forgets. What prayer is, doesn't it?

Because if prayer is the worship of God, By drawing near in Christ. And that is objectively true. Whether you experience it or not. Then whether the results seem to work or whether the experience is as desired or as expected. Should not hinder you or be a reason to give up to leave off.

Uh, to become less frequent again. To become less devoted again. If perseverance was not something that we needed in prayer. God would not command it. And if prayer was easy, And satisfying every time. It wouldn't need perseverance. And so, one of the things that he That he urges is perseverance and this isn't just You know, keeping praying for something over a long period of time or keeping up a habit.

Of prayer. Over an extended period of time. It's also in your times of prayer, because as we mentioned earlier, sometimes or maybe much of the time or maybe most of the time, Your praying will feel a little bit like, Um, I don't know growing up we said pulling teeth although that sounds more painful than difficult.

Um, You know, like like a Uh, like Trying to run through, you know, three feet of mud. Some of you are less than three feet tall, don't do it. Um, Uh, that was for the five foot and up people. Uh, sometimes, you know, often prayer is like that and perseverance in prayer is something that God commands, and that you may need within each prayer time.

Not just referring to your prayer times as a whole over a long period of time. So, this is This. How we should pray. And One of the great reasons for that is that this comes from a right understanding that prayer is an act of worship. Now, if this is how you should pray again, Um, Uh, if this, if, if this is how you should pray, think about what people say about praying the Saints, If prayer ought to be with understanding, reverence, humility, fervency, Faith, love and perseverance.

You had better not have the wrong object. Uh, on the end at the end of all of those things. You better be directing those things toward God. All right, let's pray. Father, we thank you that your spirit helps us in our weakness and that this help extends beyond that mysterious and wonderful.

Help in which he acts upon our souls our minds, our affections our Wills, as we cry out to you. But your spirit has also coming from your son as the spirit of your son carried men along. To write your word to us, and for us so that we Uh, could have good instruction on prayer.

Give us. We pray not to be. Those simple and foolish that lay little weight or value upon the instruction that we receive. But give us in this area of what you teach to heed. What we have been hearing from Proverbs Lord, that we would keep it in our heart and treasure it.

That we would bind it on our fingers as it were. In this case, make us to bind it on our lips and hearts for praying. Well to you according to your word. I ask Lord that for many of us who have You in this life for a long time.

That your spirit would grow us and mature us in prayer, and are praying as a consequence of this study. But Lord, I am also jealous for the Uh, desirous for the young on their behalf. That they would even. Now at this time in their life, begin to engage you Um, in spirit and in truth in the area of prayer.

Uh, learning how to draw near in Christ and offer up spiritual sacrifice. In this way. Granted, all we ask in Jesus name, amen.