

# THE LORD'S PRAYER:

THE RECEPTION OF THE PRAYER



THE THESIS  
OF THIS  
LESSON

The Lord's Prayer has been almost *ubiquitous* in corporate worship throughout the history of the Church. We ought to be encouraged that when we pray the Lord's Prayer together *with a pure and reverent heart*, that "we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses" (Heb. 12:1).

## WHAT IS LITURGY?

- Most basically, liturgy (coming from *lēitos* [public] and *ergos* [working]... “public service”) refers to **the order of a corporate worship service.**
- *Every* individual church has a liturgy. Some are more basic; others are more complex and ritualistic. Some are more helpful, worshipful, and Biblical; others can be distracting and anti-Biblical.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER IN THE EARLY CHURCH

The Lord's Prayer was likely used as a part of corporate worship as early as the first or second century:

- The *Didache*
- Tertullian of Carthage
- Cyprian of Carthage

## THE LORD'S PRAYER IN THE EARLY CHURCH: THE *DIDACHE*

- The *Didache*, known also as The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, is an early Christian document that was used as a 'church manual.' It was most likely written sometime between 70 AD and 150 AD.
- It instructs Christians to pray the Lord's Prayer **three times every day**; however, it doesn't specify *when* to pray.
- This shows that the Lord's Prayer was already highly integrated into corporate Christian living **within the lifespan of the Apostles**.

## THE *DIDACHE*: CHAPTER 8

“But let not your fasts be with the hypocrites; for they fast on the second and fifth day of the week; but fast on the fourth day and the Preparation. Neither pray as the hypocrites; **but as the Lord commanded in His Gospel, thus pray:** ‘Our Father Who art in heaven, hallowed be Your Name. Your Kingdom come. Your will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. Give us today our daily bread, and forgive us our debt as we also forgive our debtors. And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one; for Yours is the power and the glory forever.’ **Thrice in the day thus pray.**”





## THE LORD'S PRAYER IN THE EARLY CHURCH: TERTULLIAN

- Known as the 'father of Latin theology.' He was a prolific author and apologist of the early Christian Church.
- Tertullian, in his treatise *On Prayer*, argued that **personal prayers** can be 'superadded' to the Lord's Prayer in worship.
- The Lord's Prayer is therefore considered a 'legitimate' and 'customary' prayer which serves as a **substructure** for *all* prayer.

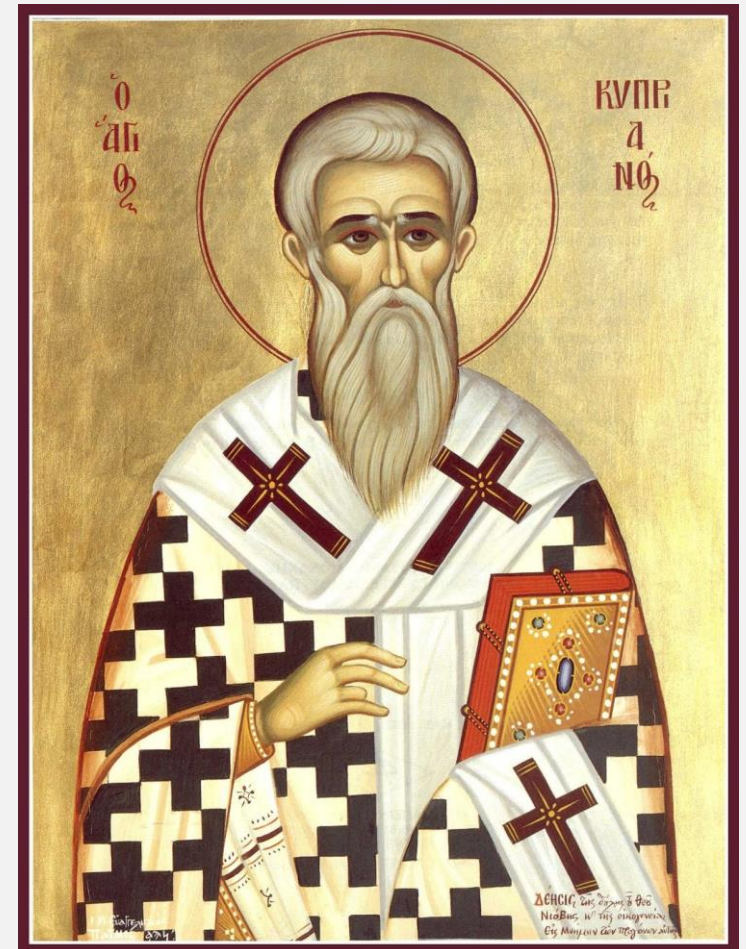
## TERTULLIAN'S *ON PRAYER*: CHAPTER 10

“Since, however, the Lord, the Foreseer of human necessities, said separately, after delivering His Rule of Prayer, ‘Ask, and you shall receive;’ and since there are petitions which are made according to the circumstances of each individual; our additional wants have the right – after beginning **with the legitimate and customary prayers as a foundation**, as it were – of rearing an outer superstructure of petitions, yet **with remembrance of the Master’s precepts.**”



# THE LORD'S PRAYER IN THE EARLY CHURCH: CYPRIAN OF CARTHAGE

- Cyprian was the bishop of Carthage through the 250s AD and a prominent leader in the Early Church. He is best known for his middle-ground stance on allowing lapsed Christians to be brought back into the church (although as beginners).
- Cyprian encouraged Christians to continue to pray **linearly** according to the instruction of the Lord's Prayer.
- This testifies to the reality that the sequence of praying the Lord's Prayer was **undisputed and common**.



CYPRIAN'S *TREATISE ON THE LORD'S  
PRAYER*

“Let us therefore, brethren beloved, **pray as God our Teacher has taught us.** It is a loving and friendly prayer to beseech God with His own word, to come up to His ears in the prayer of Christ.”

THE LORD'S  
PRAYER AS A  
PART OF  
LITURGY

The Lord's Prayer was adopted as a prominent part of Christian liturgy with the rise of Christendom:

- Jerome of Stridon
- *The Apostolic Constitutions*
- The Rule of St. Benedict
- The Roman Rite
- Martin Luther's Catechisms
- Thomas Cranmer's Book of Common Prayer



## THE LORD'S PRAYER AS A PART OF LITURGY: JEROME

- Jerome is best known for his translation of the Bible into Latin—what we now know as ‘the Vulgate’
- Jerome understood the word ‘ἐπιούσιος’ (the word ‘daily’ in the Lord’s Prayer) to mean ‘supersubstantial,’ clearly relating it to **the Lord’s Supper**.
- Jerome continued and solidified the interpretation that the bread in the Lord’s Prayer referred to the eschatological bread in the future heavenly banquet.
- Because the Lord’s Supper was the primary aspect of liturgy and worship in the Early Church, the prayer was recited right before they would partake of Communion.





## THE APOSTOLIC CONSTITUTIONS

- A collection of eight books relating to Church Order and ecclesiastical law. The title, as well as some of the various writings within the collection, falsely claim to be of Apostolic origin. It is generally recognized that they were written in Syria around 380 AD.
- The Constitutions, like the Didache, include the Lord's Prayer as a part of **daily prayers** and liturgy.

- **St. Benedict's Rule**

- The Rule of St. Benedict is a book of precepts written around 530 AD in order to govern monastic life.
- The inclusion of the Lord's Prayer in the Rule shows that it was an essential part of **monastic worship**.

- **The Roman Rite**

- Various writings, letters, and sacramentaries of the Roman Catholic Church in the Medieval era show that the Lord's Prayer was often recited *in or near* **the Canon of the Mass**.



THE  
MEDIEVAL  
CHURCH





## THE REFORMATION



- Martin Luther used the Lord's Prayer (along with the Ten Commandments and the Apostle's Creed) as the primary basis of his catechisms.
  - “These are the most necessary parts of Christian teaching that one should first learn to repeat word for word [...] A person who is so rude and unruly as to be unwilling to learn these things is not to be tolerated. **For in these three parts, everything we have in the Scriptures is included in short, plain, and simple terms.**”
  - “Each [petition] is so great that it ought to drive us to keep praying the Lord's Prayer **all of our lives.**”
- Thomas Cranmer included the Lord's Prayer in the Book of Common Prayer as a regular part of the Morning and Evening prayers, as well as a pre-Communion prayer.

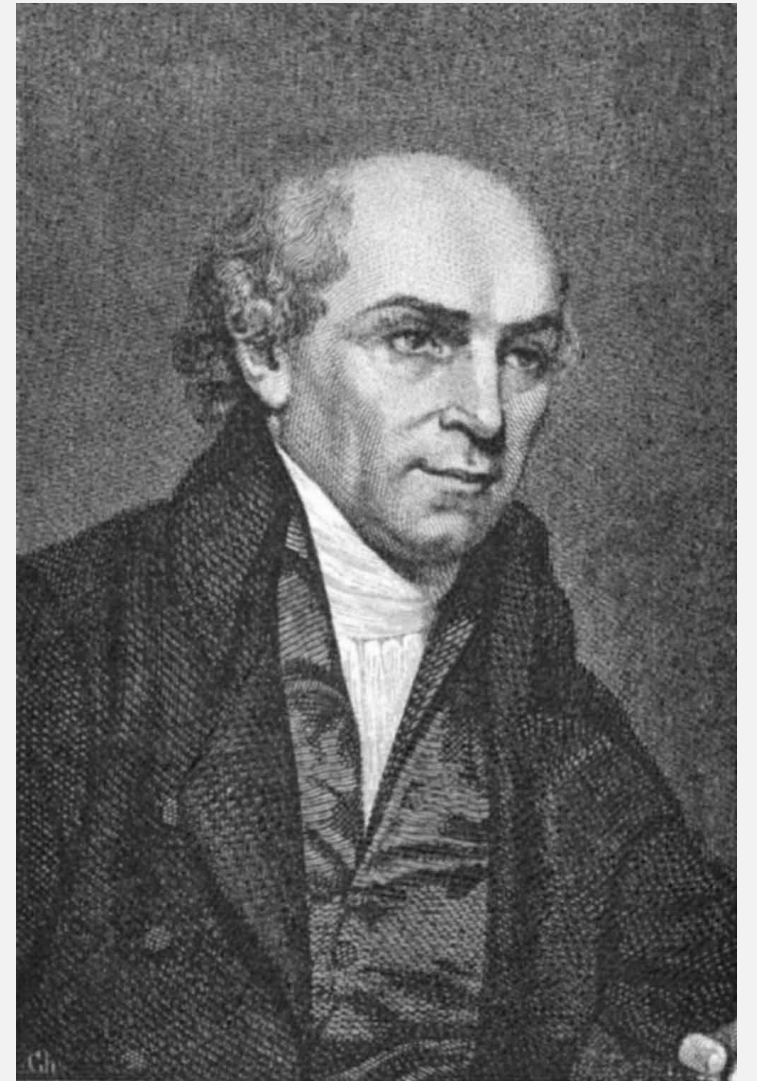
## THE LORD'S PRAYER IN BAPTIST HISTORY

While not used often in Baptist liturgy, the Lord's Prayer has always been considered a prominent lynchpin of Christian worship:

- William Carey
- Charles H. Spurgeon
- Billy Graham

## IN BAPTIST HISTORY: WILLIAM CAREY

“One of the first, and most important of those duties which are incumbent upon us, is ***fervent and united prayer*** [...] Many can do nothing but pray, and prayer is perhaps the only thing in which Christians of all denominations can cordially, and unreservedly unite; but in this we may all be one, and in this the strictest unanimity ought to prevail” (*Enquiry*).





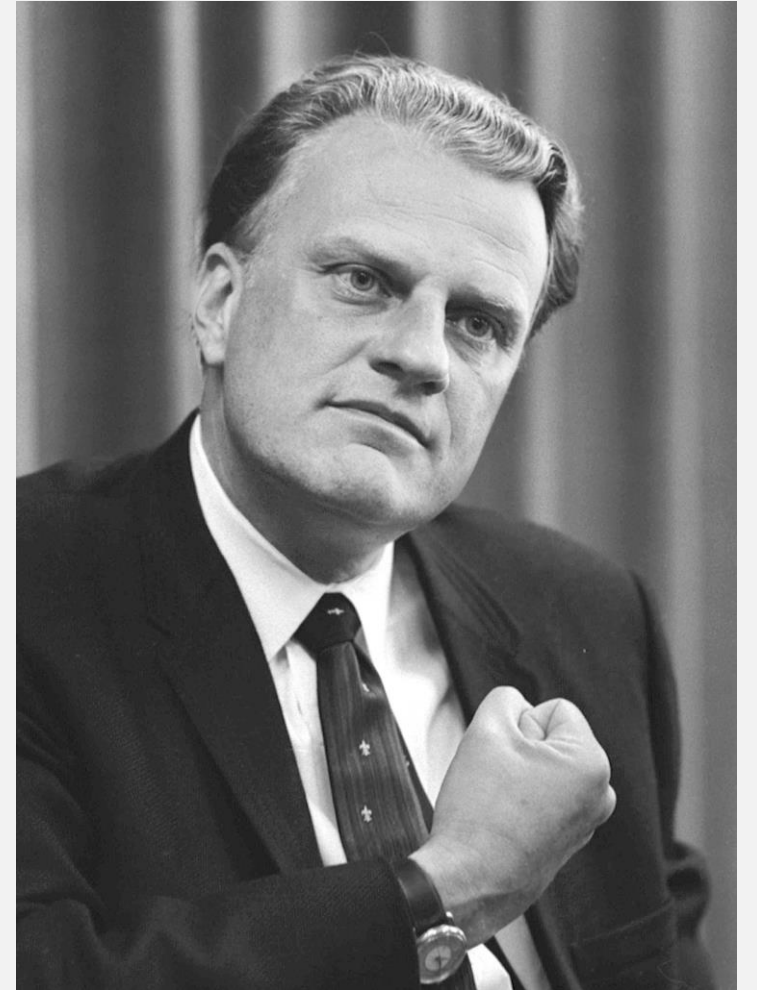
IN BAPTIST HISTORY: CHARLES H.  
SPURGEON

“Thus from a sense of adoption,  
up to fellowship with our  
reigning Lord, this short model  
of prayer **conducts the soul.**  
Lord, teach us thus to pray”  
*(Morning and Evening).*



## IN BAPTIST HISTORY: BILLY GRAHAM

“Since the beginning, Jesus’ followers have memorized the Lord’s Prayer and used it in their worship. And with good reason, because He gave it to His disciples as an **example and model** for them to follow [...] At the same time, simply saying a memorized prayer doesn’t accomplish anything if we aren’t paying attention to its meaning and saying it from our hearts”  
(Answers).





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