

THE PRAYER BOOK

THE LESSON: 1 THESSALONIANS 5

Since the earliest days of the Church, Christians have formed liturgical rites, which have guided our worship together and inspired our private devotions. These rites have generally included the reading of scripture, instruction (or preaching), prayer and receiving Holy Communion, but they have varied widely as to the details depending on the historical period, language and culture.

The Book of Common Prayer that we use originated at the time of the Reformation in the sixteenth century. This was a complex period in history, when reformers across Europe were breaking away from the Catholic Church, which previously had been *the* Church of the western world. Our prayer book was drawn from the tradition of the ancient liturgy, but was offered in the language of the people (rather than in Latin), and compiled with a view to correcting some of the distortions that had characterized the Catholic Church of that day. In a very real sense, our prayer book connects us with the best of the Christian tradition, neither rejecting a legacy that goes back for millennia, nor forgetting the lessons of the Reformation. Since that time our prayer book has been updated for our use today, here in Canada, and it is a wonderful resource for us in fulfilling the mandate of "praying without ceasing".

AT-HOME CHALLENGE

PART 1: Each day this week, pray with the (brief) morning and evening prayer section from the "Forms of Prayer to be used in Families" part of the Prayer Book, which can be found in the BCP beginning on page 728. If you don't have a copy, you can look it up here: http://prayerbook.ca/resources/bcponline/family-prayer

PART 2: At the conclusion of the week, complete your own personal daily prayer plan, drawing from the different resources that we've looked at.

- AND/OR -

Take some time to pray through this intercession (below), pausing to reflect after each phrase.

O God, whose never-failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth: We humbly beseech thee to put away from us all hurtful things, and to give us those things which be profitable for us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (COLLECT FOR THE EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY, BCP PAGE 229)



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1 THESSALONIANS 5: HOW WE SHOULD LIVE

¹²We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, ¹³and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. ¹⁴And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. ¹⁵See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone. ¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise prophecies, ²¹but test everything; hold fast what is good. ²²Abstain from every form of evil.

²³Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.