

Main Idea: As we’ll see today, a vital characteristic of a God-centered church is a special kind of praying. At WBC we are joyfully committed to God-focused, Trinitarian praying as modeled by Paul in Ephesians 1:15-23.

- I. Trinitarian praying seeks to know God better (15-17).
  - A. Paul’s prayer was for people who knew Christ (15).
  - B. Paul’s prayer was ongoing (16-17a).
    1. In order to know God better, you must first know Him.
    2. If you do know God, you need to know Him better.
  - C. Paul’s prayer recognized the triune nature of God (17b).
    1. We address the Father.
    2. We plead the merit of the Son.
    3. We request the help of the Spirit.
- II. Trinitarian praying seeks to know God’s gifts better (18-23).
  - A. If we are in Christ, we have hope (18a).
  - B. If we are in Christ, we are an inheritance (18b).
  - C. If we are in Christ, we have power (19-23).
    1. It’s the same power that raised Christ from the dead (20a).
    2. It’s the same power that seated Christ on His throne in heaven (20b-21).
    3. It’s the same power that made Christ head over everything (22-23).

Make It Personal: Let’s exalt the true, Trinitarian God every time we pray.

This summer we’re seeking to answer the question, “Who are we as a church?” And the simple answer is, we enjoy being a *God-centered church*. Who God is, what He is like, and what He has done and is doing shapes everything for us. It’s our joy in all we do to exalt God by working out what He has worked into our DNA, namely twelve commitments.

This morning we turn to the book of Ephesians to see the tenth. A vital characteristic of a God-centered church is a special kind of praying, modeled for us in Ephesians 1:15-23. At WBC we are joyfully committed to God-focused, *Trinitarian* praying.

*Scripture Reading: Ephesians 1:15-23*

We cannot overstate the importance of prayer, in personal life and church life. Paul makes this clear in 1 Timothy 2:1–4, “First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, <sup>2</sup> for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. <sup>3</sup> This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, <sup>4</sup> who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

We are to be a praying people. *First of all*, insists Paul. Prayer is not a secondary matter, but top line. We’re to give attention to prayer, to make prayer a priority in the life of the church.

Few churches would argue this point. All churches pray, don’t they? Frankly, all religions pray. But of course, all prayer is not the same. Not all praying is acceptable to God.

What is acceptable? Here’s the answer. Trinitarian praying. What does that mean? It doesn’t mean that we use the word “Trinity” in our prayers, but something much more significant, as we’ll see, something that Paul models for us in today’s text.

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<sup>\*\*</sup>Note: This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church. It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

<sup>1</sup> For an earlier development of this text, see the series on prayer preached at WBC in 2014.

Ephesians is called a “prison” epistle because Paul wrote it while incarcerated, probably in Rome. He’d been arrested in Jerusalem. His crime? He’d been telling the world about Jesus, and that crime infuriated the zealous Jews and irritated the powerful Romans. Consequently, Paul spent the next four years of his life in chains.

The hymnwriter, William Cowper, said it well:

*God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform.*

*He plants His footsteps in the sea, and rides upon the storm.*

It’s true, isn’t it? The infinite God’s ways are often mysterious to finite creatures, and even His answers to our prayers can come in the strangest of packages. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn offered this personal testimony, “It was only when I lay there on rotting prison straw that I sensed within myself the first stirrings of good. Gradually, it was disclosed to me that the line separating good and evil passes, not through states, nor between classes, nor between political parties either, but right through every human heart, and through all human hearts. So, bless you, prison, for having been in my life.”<sup>2</sup>

Just think. The apostle Paul, whose calling and great delight in life was to make Christ known to the peoples who had never heard of Him, was incarcerated. He couldn’t travel to cities to preach the gospel. He couldn’t even leave the dwelling where he lived under house arrest, chained to a soldier. Yet still he could participate in the ministry of gospel advancement by using his *pen* and his *prayers*.

Paul records three important prayer texts in Ephesians, one in chapter one, the second in chapter three, and the third in chapter six. As we examine his first prayer for the Ephesians recorded in Ephesians 1:15-23, we’re going to discover two insights into trinitarian praying that should affect the way we call on God.

### I. Trinitarian praying seeks to know God better (15-17).

Listen to verses 15-17, “For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints,<sup>16</sup> I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers,<sup>17</sup> that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him.”

The NIV says, “*so that you may know him better.*” In that final phrase we hear the heart of Paul. What mattered most to him? What was his top prayer request? He prayed that his friends in Ephesus would know God better.

Why did Paul bring that particular request to God in behalf of the Ephesians? To answer that question, we must go back and ponder the first words in verse 15.

“For this reason.” What reason does Paul say motivated him to pray for the Ephesians? Is he referring merely to the fact that he had heard about the Ephesians’ faith and love? It is likely that Paul had in mind that and much more, namely what he just wrote about in the entire preceding section of verses 3-14.

Let’s look back and we’ll see the reason Paul prayed as he did. In verses 3-14 Paul praises God for His sovereign and gracious work in providing salvation for sinners. But it’s not generic praise. It’s certainly not man-centered praise. It’s trinitarian praise. He praises the God the Father for designing redemption (verses 3-6). Then he praises God the Son for His work to accomplish redemption (verses 7-12). And then he praises God

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<sup>2</sup> *The Gulag Archipelago*, taken from Charles Swindoll, *Leadership*.

the Holy Spirit for His work in applying redemption (verses 13-14). It's with *this* in mind that Paul prayed.<sup>3</sup>

Don't miss this. It's with the knowledge that the Almighty God has chosen from eternity past to save sinners, that He sent His Son into the world to provide that salvation by means of His perfect life and substitutionary death and victorious resurrection, and that the Holy Spirit is working through the proclamation of this gospel message to save and seal sinners, that Paul now prays. It's what God has done, is doing, and will do that moves Paul to pray what he's about to pray for the Ephesians.

Notice three specifics regarding this prayer.

**A. Paul's prayer was for people who knew Christ (15).** He says in verse 15 (NIV), "For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints..."

We first learn about Paul's relationship with the people of Ephesus in Acts 18, for Paul made an initial stop there during his second missionary journey. But it was during his third missionary journey that he invested at least two years of his life there, first preaching in the synagogues and then later beginning a daily Bible study in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. The result? The Lord established a church there, and from that church the gospel began to have a regional impact. Acts 19:10 indicates, "This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord."

Then several years passed, during which time Paul was arrested and eventually shipped to Rome. But as he begins this letter, he says he's "heard" things about his dear friends in Ephesus. He's heard about their *faith* and *love*.

These are two marks of a true Christian, *faith* in the Lord Jesus, and *love* for the saints.<sup>4</sup> Faith in the Lord—this speaks of a proper vertical relationship. And love for all the saints—this speaks of proper horizontal relationships. These are two necessary evidences of a genuine Christian. When people truly know Christ, you'll see the fruit of a proper relationship with God and with people.

This is important. This is a prayer for people who knew Christ.

**B. Paul's prayer was ongoing (16-17a).** Verse 16 says (NIV), "I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers." And verse 17 begins, "I keep asking." Notice Paul's persistence in praying, his consistency.

Paul did a lot of ministerial tasks. He preached. He did personal evangelism. He wrote letters to encourage, instruct, and address problems. He organized ministry trips, and much more. But here's something he did day and night. He *prayed*. In this case, he says he prayed continually for the believers in Ephesus, asking God again and again for the same thing.

And what was that request? *I keep asking God to help you know Him better.* Let's think carefully about this.

1. *In order to know God better, you must first know Him.* If I said, "This year I'd like to get to know Governor DeWine better," that word "*better*" suggests there's a relationship in place, but I'd like to see it go beyond what it is. The reason that Paul asked God to help the Ephesians to know Him *better* was because they *did* know Him.

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<sup>3</sup> I'm indebted to D. A. Carson's helpful observations concerning this; p. 169.

<sup>4</sup> Apparently, the church has grown for he says he *heard* about their faith and love. He *saw* firsthand the initial believers faith and love, but has now *heard* about the more recent converts.

This is basic, but essential. If you want to know God *better*, you must first come to know Him. You say, “Well, doesn’t everybody know God?” No, in fact, at birth *no one* knows God. We all enter the world cut off from Him, ignorant of Him, blind to Him. But the problem is even worse. We are actually His enemies, under His judgment. Why? Because of sin. We enter this world with a sin nature that we inherited from Adam, and then, because we’ve lived in light of that nature, our own sins.

So we don’t know Him. We know *about* Him. We can’t help but know about Him, for His creation says clearly to us, “I’m here. I made you. I’ve shown my care for you in thousands of ways.” But we don’t know Him. And we’ll never know Him until two things happen.

One, He opens our eyes. And two, we then humbly receive the life preserver. Yes, in order to know God, we must accept the One He sent into the world to rescue us and reconcile us to Himself. We must repent and accept His Son, Jesus Christ, as our Savior.

Again, this is basic, but vital. To know God *better*, you must first know Him. But...

2. *If you do know God, you need to know Him better.* He’s so great, there’s always more to know about Him. That’s why Paul keeps bringing this request to God again and again. Help them know You better!

This brings us to a third specific.

**C. Paul’s prayer recognized the triune nature of God (17b).** God is one eternal being, yes, yet He exists, has existed, and will always exist as three persons. He is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Each of the three persons is equal in terms of essence and worth, yet each possesses a distinct role and function.

We see the triune nature of God displayed at our Lord’s baptism. We see God the incarnate Son going under the water, and God the Spirit coming upon Him like a dove, and hear the voice of God the Father saying, “This is my beloved Son” (Matthew 4).

Jesus says we are to baptize people with the triune nature of God in mind. Listen to Matthew 28:19, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” That final phrase isn’t merely a fancy recitation. To baptize a new believer *in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit*, means that this person is professing total dependence upon what each of these persons has done and will do henceforth.

For Paul the doctrine of the Trinity was no abstract, ivory tower concept. Indeed, the triune nature of God affected the way he lived, and certainly the way he prayed, as it should us.

Notice how Paul mentions all three persons in verse 17, “That the God of **our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory**, may give you **the Spirit** of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him.” Here’s the NIV, “I keep asking that the God of our **Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father**, may give you **the Spirit** of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.”

This is trinitarian praying. From Paul’s example, we learn that in prayer...

1. *We address the Father.*
2. *We plead the merit of the Son.*
3. *We request the help of the Spirit.*

Paul says he addressed his prayer to *God*. Who is God? He is *the glorious Father*. He’s the One who designed our salvation, who chose to adopt us. Jesus said in Matthew 6:6, “But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray *to your Father* who is in secret.” And say, “*Our Father* in heaven.”

But since Paul knew that this God is holy and cannot allow sinners to enter His presence, Paul pleaded the merit of God's Son as the basis for approaching Him, affirming that he was asking the God *of our Lord Jesus Christ*. Only those who are trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ can call on God, and those who do know Christ can call on God boldly, for God's Son is our high priest, as Hebrews makes clear. In John 16:23 Jesus says, "Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you."

And so, on the merit of the Son, Paul addressed the Father, and requests help. From whom? From the Spirit. He asks the Father on the merit of the Son to give the Spirit of wisdom to the Ephesians. That's God the Holy Spirit, whom he just referred to in verse 13, whose help Paul is requesting so that the Ephesian Christians would know the Living God better. The Holy Spirit is the intercessor. It's by His help that we cry "Abba Father" according to Romans 8:15. In Ephesians 2:18, Paul says, "For through him [Christ] we both have access in one Spirit to the Father."

My friends, Jesus said that eternal life is *knowing God* (John 17:3). But God is not merely some "higher power" or some "use whatever name you want to call him, it doesn't matter." No. God is who He is, and the God who is has revealed Himself in His Word as a triune being, one God, three persons. And when we pray, He wants us to line up our thoughts and words with the reality of His self-disclosure.

Does what we call God when we pray really matter? Perhaps an illustration will help.

Many of us have enjoyed a good meal at the Storm home. Suppose after such an experience, I wrote a thank you letter and said, "Thanks for a wonderful evening! Gary, you did a wonderful job on that meal. I really appreciate all your work." Anything wrong with those words? Yes, Gary and Nancy are one flesh, so to thank them both for a wonderful evening is certainly appropriate. But Gary didn't cook that meal. He contributed in other ways, but Nancy cooked the meal. And to miss that point means I don't know them very well.

Now listen to this prayer. "Thank you God for your salvation. Thank you Father for dying for my sins. I really appreciate it." What's wrong with this prayer? The Father didn't die for my sins, did He? And if I say that in my prayer, it's an indication I don't know Him very well.

Notice carefully what Paul is doing in Ephesians 1. The Trinitarian structure of his prayer at the end of Ephesians 1 grows right out of the truths he just taught in verses 3-14. It's because of who God the Father is and what He has done that we address our prayer to Him. The Father chose us, says verse 4. The Father predestined us and adopted us, says verse 5.

And it's because of who God the Son is and what He has done for us that we plead His merit when we pray. The Son provided us with redemption and forgiveness through His shed blood, says verse 7.

And it's because of who God the Holy Spirit is and what He does that we request His help in prayer. He is the One whom the Son sent to convict sinners, according to John 16:8, and seal believers, according to Ephesians 1:13.

This is why we need to be asking God to help us know Him better. He is the infinite Creator, and we will never plumb the depths of His greatness and grace. When it comes to Triune God, there's always more to learn! And if we truly know God, this should be our desire, and this should be our continual prayer request, both for ourselves and each

other. *Help us to know You better!* And help us pray in light of what we know about You.

John Stott said it well, “There is no higher knowledge than the knowledge of God Himself.”<sup>5</sup> How important is *knowing God better* to you? Is it so important that you set aside time every day to study the Book He has given us for the very purpose that we might know Him? Do you make it a priority every morning, or evening, or both, to meditate on what He is like and what He has done for us, specifically to ponder the cross-work His Son accomplished for us? Is knowing Him important enough that you make every effort possible to be present when His people gather to open His Word? Is knowing Him so significant to you that you give sacrificially so that others might come to know Him?

And may I mention a very specific way that God answers this request? It’s through the use of trials. Billy Sunday once said, “I’ve thanked God a thousand times for the roses but never for the thorns, but now I have learned to thank Him for the thorns.”<sup>6</sup>

How can a person thank God for thorns? It’s not the thorns per se, but the understanding that God’s intent is to use the thorns and everything else in our lives to *help us know Him better*.

So trinitarian praying seeks to know God better. But there’s more, a second insight.

## II. Trinitarian praying seeks to know God’s gifts better (18-23).

If you are in Christ, then God has given you many things, and Paul highlights three of them, three valuable possessions. You have them. It’s a fact. But you may not know that you have them, or you may know it yet not be living like it. Paul prayed that God would do something for the Ephesians so they would know better what they have.

Before we look at the gifts, notice what Paul said needed to happen in order to appreciate the gifts. Notice the beginning of verse 18, “Having the eyes of your hearts enlightened.” The NIV says, “I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know...” Something needs to happen in your *heart*, and Paul prayed that it would. In the Bible the “heart” refers to the part of you that no one can see. It’s the place where we think, process information, make value judgments, and then make decisions. In our day we associate the term “heart” with emotion, and while the biblical term encompasses emotion, it refers primarily to our *mind*.

Notice that Paul says he’s asking God to “enlighten” the heart, and specifically “the eyes of your heart.” In other words, he wants God to help the Ephesians see something (that’s what eyes are for), to see something more clearly (that’s what light is for), and to see it not merely in some external sense that won’t affect their lives, but to see it in the place where they process information, make value judgments, and make decisions, that is, in their *hearts*.

Now let’s look at these three gifts/possessions. They’re yours if you are in Christ.

**A. If we are in Christ, we have hope (18a).** “That you may know what is the hope to which he has called you.” Consider those words carefully. They indicate that we who are in Christ have hope. Again, we may not grasp fully what that hope is (which is why it’s Paul’s prayer request), but we have it. And what we have in Christ is not a generic hope, but a very specific hope. Paul refers to it as the hope *to which God has called us*.

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<sup>5</sup> John Stott, p. 54.

<sup>6</sup> Taken from his sermon on “Heaven,” Dorsett, p. 175.

Our hope, then, is linked to our God-initiated calling. And just what is our calling? Paul just told us back in verses 4-5 (NIV), “For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will.”

That’s our calling. In eternity past, God the Father chose us in Christ. His intent? He purposed to form a people that would be holy and blameless, a people that would resemble His dear Son.

And God always finishes what He starts. That’s what gives us hope. We may not yet resemble Christ as we ought, but we will. God won’t stop until we do. D. A. Carson explains, “If you are a Christian, the hope of your calling is the component of your salvation that you look forward to in the future.”<sup>7</sup>

So often what grabs our attention is the *unfinished* business. We’re plagued by the glaring reality that we do *not* resemble Christ in so many ways. I’m very aware of my impatience when standing in lines—that’s not like Christ. And my fear of man—that’s not like Christ. And sometimes I see your shortcomings, too. But know this. The day is coming when we will not only *see* Christ, but we will be *like* Him. That is our calling, and that calling gives us hope in the present, and a very powerful incentive, too. We *can* change, and we *will* change.

And so we pray, as did Paul, that God’s people will know the hope of their calling.

**B. If we are in Christ, we are an inheritance (18b).** “That you may know...what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints.”

It’s true that we are joint-heirs with Christ and as such have a tremendous inheritance coming. But that’s not what Paul has in mind here. Notice his terms: “His glorious inheritance in the saints.” He’s referring to *God’s* inheritance. What? God has an inheritance? Yes. It’s *in the saints*, says Paul. We who are *saints* are *God’s* inheritance.

How can that be? In what sense are *we* (the ‘saints’) God’s inheritance? Once again, Paul has in mind the Trinitarian mystery. We (the saints) are the inheritance of *God the Son*, a gift given to Him by the *God the Father* and for His eternal praise and pleasure. Paul just praised God for this in Ephesians 1:11, “In him [the Son] we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will.”

Jesus talked about this in John 6:39, “And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of *all that he has given me*, but raise them up at the last day.” Jesus here affirmed that God the Father had given Him a love gift, a people for whom He would die and then raise up at the last day. Later Jesus prayed about this love gift in John 17:24, “Father, I want *those you have given me* to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.”

Did you catch that? Jesus, on the night before He was crucified, indicated something He *wanted*. He wanted the people the Father had given Him to see His glory. Has that happened? Yes, in part. The first disciples saw His glory after His resurrection, but then He returned to heaven.

Are we seeing His glory now? No, not fully, for our glorious Savior is unseen in the present (see 1 Peter 1:8). But that will soon change. He wants His people, His inheritance, to see His glory. And not only *see* it, but *share* it. And what the Sovereign Son wants, the Sovereign Son will receive!

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<sup>7</sup> D. A. Carson, p. 176.

Beloved, we are Christ's inheritance. We belong to Him. We are the trophies of His grace. He has great things in store for us and through us. And He wants us to know it! Hence, we pray, fervently!

**C. If we are in Christ, we have power (19-23).** "That you may know...what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us [NIV 'for us'] who believe."

I don't think most of us have scratched the surface in understanding the power available to us for living the Christian life. One of the great excuses we often use to justify our ongoing, ungodly habits is, "I just can't change. It's the way I am!" But we *can* change, not by our strength for sure, but by *His*. We have power! And Paul prayed that the Ephesians would grasp this incomparable power for living God's kind of life.

How great is this power? Paul compares it to three previous divine accomplishments.

1. *It's the same power that raised Christ from the dead (19b-20a).* "That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead (NIV)."

So on Friday, they nailed Him to a Roman cross, and six hours later He died, and was placed in a tomb. But on Sunday morning, that lifeless body began to live again. God the Father did a miracle in that tomb. He demonstrated His power by raising His Son.

And He's still doing that! And I don't mean simply that in the future He will raise up His sons and daughters to eternal life, as wonderful as that is to ponder. Paul says that this resurrection power is available *now*. Paul prayed that the Ephesians would know God's resurrection power *now*.

Why would they need such power now? For the same reasons you and I need it. To break stubborn sin habits, to work through relational frustrations, to accomplish ministry assignments. Every day we need *power*, and every day it's available. The very same power by which God raised Christ from the dead is ours for the asking.

Here's a second illustration...

2. *It's the same power that seated Christ on His throne in heaven (20b-21).* "That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead *and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms*, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come (NIV)."

The devil thought he had triumphed on Friday, but he was wrong. Three days later God the Father raised His Son from the dead, and forty days after that He welcomed His Son home to heaven and gave Him a seat on the highest throne in and over the universe. Hitler, Stalin, Pol Pot, they and a hoard of others have shaken their tiny fists at God, but they're not on the throne now. God's Son is. And under His Son God the Father placed all potential rivals, demonic, human, and every other potential rival, not just in this age but in the future age as well.

Oh beloved, we need power, not just for challenges we can *see*, but also for the *unseen*. We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers. There is a demonic world that hates Christ and Christ's people. Can we stand? Yes, because we have access to Christ's ascension power. One more illustration...

3. *It's the same power that made Christ head over everything (22-23).* "And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way (NIV)."

What has the Father done? He has placed all things under the feet of His Son. Why? Notice the purpose clause. “For the church,” says the NIV. He made Him head over all things “to the church,” says the ESV, which is His Son’s “body”, says Paul.

You say, “I need power. Where can I experience this power, this power to overcome sin and live for God?”

The answer is threefold. One, if you are in Christ, you *have* it, for in Christ we have all we need. In Christ we have hope. In Christ we are God’s inheritance. In Christ we have power. So what you need is not something else. What you need is to grasp what you have in Christ.

This brings us to second part of the answer. Prayer. You need prayer, specific prayer, targeted prayer, trinitarian prayer. You need to be asking (for yourself and others) that God the Father would help you know Him better, and then, to know His gifts better. And pray this on the merit of the Son, submitting to the help of the Spirit.

Thirdly, place yourself fully into the life of the church. That’s where the action is, where the power is. The Father exalted His Son over all things for the sake of His church, a subject Paul will develop throughout the rest of this letter.

#### Make It Personal: Let’s exalt the true, Trinitarian God every time we pray.

As we conclude and prepare for the Lord’s table, I want us to consider an example. I read that John Stott began his day with a morning trinitarian prayer. I found more than one version, so apparently it wasn’t just a ritual, but a framework. This one comes from his biography, *Basic Christian*:<sup>8</sup>

*Good morning heavenly Father,  
good morning Lord Jesus,  
good morning Holy Spirit.*

*Heavenly Father, I worship you as the creator and sustainer of the universe.  
Lord Jesus, I worship you, Savior and Lord of the world.  
Holy Spirit, I worship you, sanctifier of the people of God.*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.*

*Heavenly Father, I pray that I may live this day in your presence  
and please you more and more.*

*Lord Jesus, I pray that this day I may take up my cross and follow you.*

*Holy Spirit, I pray that this day you will fill me with yourself and cause your fruit to ripen in  
my life:  
love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.*

*Holy, blessed and glorious Trinity, three persons in one God,  
have mercy upon me. Amen.*

**Closing Song:** #268 “God, Our Father, We Adore Thee” (verses 1, 2, 3)

**Communion**

**August Benediction:** Romans 11:36 (NIV84)

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/trevin-wax/john-stotts-morning-trinitarian-prayer/>