

## A Worthy Prayer

Ash Wednesday – February 17, 2021

Romans 8:26-27 – In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.

LSB 418 - O Lord, Throughout These Forty Days verse 3 – *Though parched and hungry, yet you prayed and fixed Your mind above; So, teach us to deny ourselves, since we have known God's love.*

Our Lord fasted in the wilderness for forty days as He was tempted and assailed by Satan. Christ relied not on physical bread and water which can only temporarily sustain. Instead, Christ relied on the spiritual manna, on every Word that comes from the mouth of God. Christ continually had his heart, soul, and mind on the things above through prayer and not upon the temporary and meaningless wealth that Satan offered in temptation. As followers of Christ, we are called to do likewise but we struggle daily against the sins and desires of the flesh. And this is why prayer is so important.

As sinful human beings, we produce wicked, vengeful, evil, and selfish prayers. As sinners, we don't pray as we should. But the Holy Spirit has been given to the baptized and to those who have heard the Word of God and believed it. The Spirit of God Himself allows us to silence our unholy desires by voicing forth holy petitions that God will hear and listen to. In prayer, a Christian does not ask God for what they desire. Rather, they ask for God's desires and will to be done in their life. The practice of prayer daily asks God to remove the sinful desires in our heart and replace them His holy and good desires. This change to our hearts is renewing and turns our eyes to follow Christ and set our minds on forwarding the heavenly kingdom. So, let us pray.

Prayer: Almighty God, through these 40 days of Lent keep our hearts and minds on You alone. Teach us to deny ourselves, since we have encountered Christ's love. Hear the Holy Spirit which you have given to us. Remove our sinful desires and create in us a pure heart and a right spirit. Use us Lord, as You see fit. Author our lives to encounter hearts of wickedness with Your Word, that they may turn and live. Not our will be done Lord, but Your will be done. Amen.

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