

## **THE PSALM 119 PRAYER CYCLE**

For a visual reference, click on the following: [THE 119 PRAYER CYCLE \(VISUAL GUIDE\)](#)

For a PDF file of the "119 Prayer Cycle" click on [119 Prayer Cycle Progression PDF](#)

Before you begin, comfort yourself with the following promise:

When we work the Word of God (through all of these daily disciplines) the God of the Word promises to work on us.

1 Thessalonians 2:13: "And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe."

Philippians 2:12-13: "... continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose."

## **THE PRAYER CYCLE (MORNING)**

### **Station 1: Invocation/Morning Prayer**

Before you rise in the morning, make the sign of the cross and say:

"In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen"

### **Luther's Morning Prayer:**

Pray the following:

"I thank Thee, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Thy dear Son, that Thou hast kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray Thee that Thou wouldst keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please Thee. For into Thy hands I commend myself, my body and soul and all things. Let Thy holy angel be with me, that the wicked Foe may have no power over me. Amen"

Psalm 119:147: "I rise before dawn and cry for help; I have put my hope in your word."

Psalm 5:1-3: "Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my sighing. Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray. In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation."

## **Station 2: The Person and Work of Jesus Christ**

Choose a Gospel for the week (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John). As you read through the Gospel ...

Meditate upon the person of Jesus:

His divinity (the Son of God: Colossians 1:15-23; John 3:11-18; John 11:17-44)

His humanity (the Son of Man: John 11:35; Hebrews 2:14-18; Hebrews 4:14-16)

His exaltation and humiliation (Philippians 2:5-11; John 1:1-18; Isaiah 52:13 - 53:12)

Meditate on the work of Jesus.

Jesus FOR me. (Romans 8:28-39)

Jesus IN me. (Galatians 2:20-21; Philippians 2:12-13)

Jesus THROUGH me. (Ephesians 2:1-10)

Jesus WITH me. (Matthew 28:18-20)

Ask for the gifts that only Jesus can give to you:

Grace beyond any fault, failure, sin and weakness in your life.

(Ephesians 2:8-10; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10)

Mercy that goes beyond anything that I can bear and holds back anything  
that I deserve. (Psalm 86; 1 Timothy 1:12-17)

Peace that goes beyond any human understanding. (Philippians 4:7-9; 1 Peter 1:1-2)

Hope that goes beyond any despair that the world, the Devil  
and your own sinful flesh might bring. (Romans 15:13; Psalm 146)

Joy that goes beyond any happiness that this world might offer.

(Hebrews 12:1-3; 1 Peter 1:3-9)

And the promise of His presence that he'll never leave or forsake.

(Psalm 23; Hebrews 13:5-6)

## **Station 3: Blessed**

At this station, begin by saying and meditating on the first two verses of Psalm 119:

Psalm 119:1-2: "Blessed are they whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the Lord. Blessed are they who keep his statutes and seek him with all their heart."

Then meditate upon the essence of the "blessed" life. Reflect on the following verses that summarize the life of prayer, meditation and the daily troubles of life.

Psalm 119:18: "Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law."

(oratio = prayer)

Psalm 119:97: "Oh how I love your law, I meditate on it all day long."

(meditatio = meditatio)

Psalm 119:25: "I am laid low in the dust, preserve my life according to your word."

(tentatio = the daily troubles of life)

#### **Station 4: I Have Strayed**

At this station, begin by saying and meditating on the last verse of Psalm 119:

Psalm 119:176: "I have strayed like a lost sheep. Seek your servant for I have not forgotten your commands."

Then make a confession of your sins by saying either "The Jesus Prayer" or "The General Confession":

"Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner (or you can say THE sinner)."

OR

"O almighty God, merciful Father, I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto Thee all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended Thee and justly deserved Thy temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray Thee of Thy boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being." (from *The Lutheran Hymnal*)

As you reflect on the following verses, let go of your own works and cling to the sacrificial work of Jesus. Hold onto the cross. Claim the forgiveness of sins. Remember your baptism.

1 John 1:8-10: "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word and has no place in our lives."

Romans 6:1-4: "What shall we say then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."

As you prepare to leave this station, pray the following three portions of Psalm 119. Speak them directly to Jesus. Trust that He will lead and guide you into paths of righteousness, giving you abundant grace-gifts along the way.

Psalm 119:59-60: "I have considered my ways and have turned my steps to your statutes.

I will hasten and not delay to obey your commands."

Psalm 119:9-10: "How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands."

Psalm 119:133: "Direct my footsteps according to your word; let no sin rule over me."

### **Station 5: Seven Times a Day and the Centerpiece**

Anticipate God's activity. Walk forward in expectation. Commit to listening to his voice throughout the day by saying the following:

Psalm 119:164: "Seven times a day I praise you for your righteous laws."

### **Centerpiece: Daily Scripture Reading**

At this station you stop, give yourself to the daily reading of the Scriptures, and then, cross the threshold into the territory of "the Sevens".

Begin by saying:

Psalm 119:164: "Seven times a day I praise you for your righteous laws."

Then, commit to listening to the voice of Jesus throughout the day by giving yourself to one of the following Scripture reading resources:

I would suggest that you begin by reading through Psalm 119. It's made up of 176 verses, segmented into 22 sections of 8. When you feel at home in the territory of Psalm 119, explore the rest of the Scriptures. Venture out. Use one of the following reading plans to map out your week.

The One Year Bible (online version [click here](#))

The One Year Chronological Bible (online version [click here](#))

Bible Gateway Reading Plan (online version [click here](#))

A Book of the Bible (go "old school" - grab a cup of coffee and your Bible - the one with the paper pages)

Torah Reading Schedule - this plan follows the Messianic/Jewish structure of reading the Scriptures. It centers on the Torah (the first five books of the Old Testament) and supplements the readings with parallel references from the Prophets and the New

Testament (click here for one example). The best resource I've found for this type of study is John Parson's site Hebrew For Christians.

I would also suggest that you start with a good study Bible. I've listed a couple for you. Choose a translation that's easy for you to read, kind to the ear, soothing to the soul, easy to memorize.

And then, head on out. Start exploring.

Here's a list of recommended Bibles/Translations.

The Lutheran Study Bible (English Standard Version)

Concordia Self-Study Bible (New International Version)

The Message (not a translation of the Bible but a paraphrase - interesting to read)

The Complete Jewish Bible (this resource has the Messianic Torah reading schedule built into the text)

Bible Gateway and Bible Study Tools (online sites that offer translations and paraphrases)

### **THE PRAYER CYCLE ("THE SEVENS")**

There are seven stations in the Psalm 119 Prayer Cycle:

Memorization and Meditation of the Scriptures (the Word as "friends" and "daggers")

Love (the Ten Commandments)

God (the Creed)

Prayer (the Lord's Prayer)

Forgiveness (the Jesus Prayer, the Sacrament of Baptism, Confession, the Sacrament of the Altar)

Life Happens/The Lord is ... (the Psalms)

Follow Me ... Vocation (Luther's Table of Duties)

As you make your way through the seven stations, portions of Psalm 119 will guide you. These "guides" are meant to prepare your heart to meditate upon the beautiful truths of each station. A step by step illustration follows.

#### **Station 6: Memorization and Meditation of the Scriptures**

From the Centerpiece, move toward Station 6 by saying the following:

(say 7x) Psalm 119:11: "I have hidden your word in my heart  
that I might not sin against you."

Pause at this Station and spend time memorizing and meditating upon the Scriptures. Picture the portions of Scripture that you want to hide in your heart as "friends" and "daggers". Envision them as someone who will comfort and encourage you in the daily troubles of life. Also, use them as weapons to fight against your great enemies: the world, the Devil and your own sinful flesh.

There are a variety of systems available to help you memorize the Scriptures. I have found that there are only three keys to success: repetition, repetition, repetition. Choose from some of the suggested plans. Be consistent daily, weekly and monthly.

For posts about memorization click [here](#) and [here](#).

### **Station 7: Love - The Ten Commandments**

From Station 6, move toward Station 7 by saying the following:

(say 7x) Psalm 119:32: "I run in the path of your commands,  
for you have set my heart free."

Pause at this Station and spend time meditating upon the Ten Commandments. Go beyond categorizing the Ten Commandments as a list of "dos" and "donts". See them as Jesus portrays them ... a picture of love.

Thou shalt have no other gods before me.  
Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord Thy God in vain.  
Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy.  
Honor thy father and thy mother.  
Thou shalt not kill.  
Thou shalt not commit adultery.  
Thou shalt not steal.  
Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.  
Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house.  
Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his cattle, nor anything that is thy neighbors.

If time allows, and for further meditation, you can use Luther's meaning to the Ten Commandments in the Small Catechism: the Ten Commandments.

### **Station 8: God - The Apostle's Creed**

From Station 7, move toward Station 8 by saying the following:

(say 7x) Psalm 119:73: "Your hands made me and formed me; give me  
understanding according to your word."

Pause at this Station and spend time meditating upon the Apostle's Creed. Use the Creed to focus your thoughts on the nature, the character and the work of the Triune God.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

If time allows, and for further meditation, you can use Luther's meaning to the Apostle's Creed in the Small Catechism: the Creed.

### **Station 9: Prayer - The Lord's Prayer**

From Station 8, move toward Station 9 by saying the following:

(say 7x) Psalm 119:145: "I call with all my heart; answer me O Lord,  
and I will obey your decrees."

Pause at this Station and spend time meditating upon the Lord's Prayer. Use the petitions of the Lord's Prayer to express all of the needs, desires, sighs, groans and hopes of your life. Be assured that these petitions are heard by the Father because he has commanded us so to pray and has promised to hear us.

Our Father who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

If time allows, and for further meditation, you can use Luther's meaning to the Lord's Prayer in the Small Catechism: the Lord's Prayer.

### **Station 10: Forgiveness**

From Station 9, move toward Station 10 by saying the following:

(say 7x) Psalm 119:41: "May your unfailing love come to me, O Lord,  
your salvation according to your promise."

Pause at this Station and spend time meditating on the forgiveness of sins that comes through the sacrifice of Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit through the means of grace. Use "the Jesus Prayer", remember your Baptism, open yourself up to another through Confession, receive the Sacrament of the Altar in worship.

The Jesus Prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner."

If time allows, and for further meditation, you can use Luther's meaning to the Sacrament of Baptism, Confession/the Office of the Keys, and the Sacrament of the Altar in the Small Catechism: The Sacrament of Baptism, Confession, The Sacrament of the Altar.

### **Station 11: Life Happens/The Lord is ... the Psalms**

From Station 10, move toward Station 11 by saying the following:

(say 7x) Psalm 119:114: "You are my refuge and my shield; I have put my hope in your word."

Pause at this Station and spend time reading and meditating on and through the Psalms. Use the Psalms to acknowledge your emotions concerning the daily troubles of life but also to affirm who your God is.

A number of examples of how to "answer God" (Eugene Peterson's phrase for the Psalms) in all the seasons of life follows:

Answering God in my sin: Psalm 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143

Answering God in my questions: Psalm 13, 22

Answering God in my hate: Psalm 137

Answering God in my praise: Psalm 145-150

Answering God in my remembrance: Psalm 103

Answering God in my living and dying: Psalm 90

Answering God in my thanksgiving: Psalm 136

Answering God in my deliverance: Psalm 18

Answering God in my waiting: Psalm 27

Answering God in my persecution: Psalm 35

Answering God in my longing: Psalm 42

Answering God in my restlessness: Psalm 62

Answering God in my complaint: Psalm 64

Answering God in my awe: Psalm 139

Answering God in my lying down and rising: Psalm 4,5

### **Station 12: Follow Me ... Vocation**

From Station 11, move toward Station 12 by saying the following:

(say 7x) Psalm 119:175: "Let me live that I may praise you, and may your laws sustain me."



Pause at this Station and spend time identifying and meditating upon all of the vocations ("callings") that God has given to you. Reflect and focus on the truth that in and through these "callings" we love and serve our neighbor (as well as Jesus).

They might include:

father/mother

son/daughter

husband/wife

friend

employer/employee

and all of the other vocations ("callings") that the Triune God uses to provide, save, encourage, feed, teach, create, guide, protect, rule, heal, comfort, rebuke, punish, dispense justice, and keep social order in a broken and depraved world.

Jesus says, "Follow me." As you pray for guidance and strength to fulfill your God graced vocation, say the following over each divine calling:

(say 7x) Psalm 119:105: "Your word is lamp to my feet and light for my path."

If time allows and for further meditation, you can use Luther's meaning concerning the Table of Duties in the Small Catechism: Luther's Table of Duties.

### **THE PRAYER CYCLE (EVENING)**

#### **Station 1: Invocation/Evening Prayer**

Before you lie down in the evening, make the sign of the cross and say:

"In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen"

#### **Luther's Evening Prayer:**

Pray the following:

"I thank Thee, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Thy dear Son, that Thou hast graciously kept me this day; and I pray Thee that Thou wouldst forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Thy hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Thy holy angel be with me that the wicked Foe may have no power over me. Amen"

Psalm 119:148: "My eyes stay open through the watches of the night,  
that I may meditate on your promises."

Psalm 4:8: "I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O Lord,  
make me dwell in safety."

## **Station 2: The Person and Word of Jesus the Christ**

Choose a Gospel for the week (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John). As you read through the Gospel ...

Meditate upon the person of Jesus:

His divinity (the Son of God: Colossians 1:15-23; John 3:11-18; John 11:17-44)

His humanity (the Son of Man: John 11:35; Hebrews 2:14-18; Hebrews 4:14-16)

His exaltation and humiliation (Philippians 2:5-11; John 1:1-18; Isaiah 52:13 - 53:12)

Meditate on the work of Jesus.

Jesus FOR me. (Romans 8:28-39)

Jesus IN me. (Galatians 2:20-21; Philippians 2:12-13)

Jesus THROUGH me. (Ephesians 2:1-10)

Jesus WITH me. (Matthew 28:18-20)

Ask for the gifts that only Jesus can give to you:

Grace beyond any fault, failure, sin and weakness in your life. (Ephesians 2:8-10; 2  
Corinthians 12:7-10)

Mercy that goes beyond anything that I can bear and holds back anything that I deserve.  
(Psalm 86; 1 Timothy 1:12-17)

Peace that goes beyond any human understanding. (Philippians 4:7-9; 1 Peter 1:1-2)

Hope that goes beyond any despair that the world, the Devil and your own sinful flesh  
might bring. (Romans 15:13; Psalm 146)

Joy that goes beyond any happiness that this world might offer. (Hebrews 12:1-3; 1 Peter  
1:3-9)

And the promise of His presence that he'll never leave or forsake. (Psalm 23; Hebrews  
13:5-6)

### **Station 3: Blessed**

At this station, begin by saying and meditating on the first two verses of Psalm 119:

Psalm 119:1-2: "Blessed are they whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the Lord. Blessed are they who keep his statutes and seek him with all their heart."

Then meditate upon the essence of the "blessed" life. Reflect on the following verses that summarize the life of prayer, meditation and the daily troubles of life.

Psalm 119:18: "Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law."

(oratio = prayer)

Psalm 119:97: "Oh how I love your law, I meditate on it all day long."

(meditatio = meditatio)

Psalm 119:25: "I am laid low in the dust, preserve my life according to your word."

(tentatio = the daily troubles of life)

### **Station 4: I Have Strayed**

At this station, begin by saying and meditating on the last verse of Psalm 119:

Psalm 119:176: "I have strayed like a lost sheep. Seek your servant for I have not forgotten your commands."

Then make a confession of your sins by saying either "The Jesus Prayer" or "The General Confession":

"Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner (or you can say THE sinner)."

OR

"O almighty God, merciful Father, I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto Thee all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended Thee and justly deserved Thy temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray Thee of Thy boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being." (from *The Lutheran Hymnal*)

As you reflect on the following verses, let go of your own works and cling to the sacrificial work of Jesus. Hold onto the cross. Claim the forgiveness of sins. Remember your baptism.

1 John 1:8-10: "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us

from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives."

Romans 6:1-4: "What shall we say then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."

As you prepare to leave this station, pray the following three portions of Psalm 119. Speak them directly to Jesus. Trust that He will lead and guide you into paths of righteousness, giving you abundant grace-gifts along the way.

Psalm 119:59-60: "I have considered my ways and have turned my steps to your statutes. I will hasten and not delay to obey your commands."

Psalm 119:9-10: "How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands."

Psalm 119:133: "Direct my footsteps according to your word; let no sin rule over me."

### **Station 5: Seven Times a Day**

Commit to listening to his voice throughout the watches of the night by saying the following:

Psalm 119:164: "Seven times a day I praise you for your righteous laws."

Lie yourself down to sleep in peace.

THE 119 PRAYER CYCLE (VISUAL GUIDE)

For a PDF file of the "119 Prayer Cycle" click on 119 Prayer Cycle Progression PDF

### **More**

- [About](#)
- [Accent](#)
- [All Posts](#)
- [Books/Resources](#)
- [Email Subscriptions](#)

© Copyright Paul W. Arndt

*All content included on this site (unless otherwise noted), such as text, graphics and images is the property of Paul W. Arndt and is protected by international copyright laws. All Scripture quoted on this site is taken from THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.*