

OPENING PERIOD PRAYERS FOR MODERN CHURCH HISTORY (1600-1800) CLASS

Review 100-1600 AD - from Dr. Ford Lewis Battles, Professor of Church History (1915-1979)

"Oh Father, we have not always been faithful to Thy Word. We have not always taken up our cross to follow Thy Son. And too often we have forgotten the church we are called to serve. Renew in our hearts and in our minds the faith that was in Peter and Paul—the faith that strengthened the ancient martyrs, the faith that moved the pens and lips of the fathers, the faith that built cathedrals and universities, the faith that moved the Reformers to renew the church in their time. Oh Father, teach us to impart that faith to Thy people. These petitions we lay before Thy presence in the name of Thy Son, our Lord. Amen."

Topic 1 Introduction to Church History 1600-1800 - from Philip Melancthon (1497-1560)

"O God, we do not desire new contentions and discord. We pray only that the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us and rose from the grave, will guide us, that all of us who are in many churches and many communions may be one church and one communion and one in Him." Amen.

Topic 2 Opening Prayer from Jeremy Taylor (1613-1667)

"Lord, do thou turn me all into love, and all my love into obedience, and let my obedience be without interruption. Grant, O Lord, that in Your wounds I may find my safety, in Your stripes my cure, in Your pain my peace, in Your cross my victory, in Your resurrection my triumph, and a crown of righteousness in the glories of Your eternal kingdom. Amen."

Topic 3 Opening Prayer from Richard Baxter (1615-1691)

"Lord Jesus, take my spirit, I trust thy loving merit, take home this wandering sheep, for Thou hast sought it. This soul in safety keep, for Thou hast bought it. Amen."

Topic 4 Opening Prayer based on Psalm 103

(Honoring the importance of the Psalms to the Scottish Presbyterians)

"O my soul, bless God, the Father. All that is within me, bless His name, bless the Father and forget not all His mercies to proclaim. As it was without beginning, so at last without an end to their children's children ever shall His righteousness extend unto such as keep His covenant and are steadfast in His way, unto those who still remember His commandments and obey. Bless the Father, all His creatures ever under His control all throughout His vast dominion, bless the Father, O my soul. Amen."

Topic 5 Opening Prayer – Closing Words from the Canon of the Synod of Dordt

"May Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who is seated at the Father's right hand and gave gifts to men, sanctify us in the truth. Bring to the truth those who err, and endue the faithful ministers of His Word with the Spirit of wisdom and discretion that all their discoveries may tend to the glory of God and the edification of those who hear them. Amen."

Slides, Handouts, and Links to Main Sources Available at
<http://rpchurchmanassas.org/drupal/ChurchHistory16001800>

Topic 6 Opening Prayer – Westminster Larger Catechism Question 183

Q. For whom are we to pray?

A. We are to pray for the whole church of Christ upon earth, for magistrates and ministers, for ourselves, our brethren, yea, our enemies, and for all sorts of men living or that shall live hereafter, but not for the dead.

“Let us pray for the whole church of Christ upon earth. Now pray for magistrates. And for ministers. Let each one of us pray for ourselves. Let us pray for our brethren. And for our enemies. And for all people living or that shall live hereafter. Amen.”

Topic 7 Opening Prayer from Anne Bradstreet (1612-1672)

“All praise to Him who now hath turned my fears to joys, my sighs to song, my tears to smiles, my sad to glad. Amen.”

Topic 8 Opening Prayer from Hermann Witsius (1636-1708)

“Oh God, Who art the teacher and giver of all wisdom, be Thou present by Thy Spirit with us as we engage. Yeah, that we may engage together in these [church] studies. Open Thou our eyes that we may behold wondrous things out of Thy Law. May Thy Holy Scriptures be our pure delight. May we neither be deceived in reading them nor handle them deceitfully. Sanctify us through Thy truth. Thy Word is truth. Preserve, defend, and enlarge this [church]; consecrate it to Thy glory. Let envies, strifes, divisions, and heresies be forever at a distance. May orthodoxy prevail; may piety flourish. Let mercy and truth meet together. Let righteousness and peace kiss each other. Our beloved country, rescued by Thy wonder-working right hand from so many evils, do Thou preserve in safety and peace. After our days in this life have been spent in prolonged felicity, do Thou at last transfer us with all Thine elect to heaven itself. This is the sum of our prayers. This is the sum of our hope. Hear and accept us, Oh triune Jehovah. Amen.”

Closing Prayer from Francis Turretin (1623-1687)

“May the God of truth and of peace cause us always to walk in truth and charity. May we grow every day in Him who is the head until we all arrive at the unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, perfected in power and to the measure of the maturity of Christ. Amen.”

Topic 9 Opening Prayer from Brother Lawrence (1610-1691)

“O my God, since Thou art with me, and I must now, in obedience to Thy commands, apply my mind to these outward things, I beseech Thee to grant me the grace to continue in Thy presence; and to this end do Thou prosper me with Thy assistance, receive all my works, and possess all my affections. Amen.”

Closing Prayer from Blaise Pascal (1623-1662)

“O Lord, let me not henceforth desire health or life, except to spend them for You, with You, and in You. You alone know what is good for me; do, therefore, what seems best to you. Give to me, or take from me; conform my will to Yours; and grant that, with humble and perfect submission, and in holy confidence, I may receive the orders of Your eternal providence and may equally adore all that comes to me from You, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

Topic 10 Opening Prayer from Gerhard Tersteegen (1697-1769)

“O Prince of Life, teach us to stand more boldly on Your side, to face the world and all our adversaries more courageously, and not to let ourselves be dismayed by any storm of temptation. May our eyes be steadfastly fixed on You in fearless faith. May we trust You with perfect confidence that You will keep us, save us, and bring us through by the power of Your grace and the riches of Your mercy. Amen.”

Topic 11 Opening Prayer from Count Nicolaus Zinzendorf (1700-1760)

Bishop of the Moravian Church

*“Jesus, lead Thou on till our rest is won; And although the way be cheerless,
We will follow calm and fearless: Guide us by Thy hand to our fatherland.
Jesus, lead Thou on till our rest is won; Heav’nly leader, still direct us,
Still support, control, protect us, Till we safely stand in our fatherland. Amen.”*

Closing Prayer from Johann Sebastian Back (1685-1750)

*“Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord! Be all Thy graces now outpoured
On each believer’s mind and heart; Thy fervent love to them impart.
Lord, by the brightness of Thy light, Thou in the faith doth men unite
Of every land and every tongue; This to Thy praise, O Lord, our God be sung.
Alleluia, alleluia.” Amen.*

Topic 12 Opening Prayer from John Wesley (1703-1791)

“Pardon, O gracious Jesus, what we have been; with Your holy discipline correct what we are. Order by your providence what we shall be; and in the end, crown your own gifts. Amen.”

Topic 13 Opening Prayer from George Whitefield (1714-1770)

*“My life, my blood, I here present, If for Thy cause they may be spent,
Fulfil Thy sovereign counsel, Lord, Thy will be done, Thy name adored.
Give me Thy strength, O God of power; Then let winds blow, or thunders roar,
Thy faithful witness will I be; Tis fixed: I can do all for Thee!” Amen.*

Topic 14 Opening Prayer based on Works of Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) tweaked by Jim Spurgeon

“Our Father, in this time of need, we pray for Your power, mercy and faithfulness. The interest of vital piety has long been in decay, and error and wickedness prevail not only in the world but also in Your Church. Would You, in this time of need pour out Your Spirit to breathe fresh life into Your people. As your Spirit brings conviction, we will know our need and flee to You for help. Fix our minds upon Christ and His surpassing excellence that our thoughts may be filled with Him. So, we pray, our heavenly Father, for the true reviving of Your Church among us so that we would not be weak, dull, and lifeless but in good earnest, fervent in spirit, with our hearts vigorously engaged in loving and serving You and our neighbors. And, we pray to You, O God, Lord of the harvest, that You would send out Your workers into the fields of this world and soon the knowledge of Your glory would cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. We pray this for Your glory and in Jesus’ Name, Amen.”