Heidelberg Catechism LORD'S DAY 45

Q116. Why do Christians need to pray?

**A. Because prayer is the most important part of the thankfulness God requires of us.[1] And also because God gives his grace and Holy Spirit only to those who pray continually and groan inwardly, asking God for these gifts and thanking God for them.[2]**

1. Ps. 50:14–15 – "Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and pay your vows to the Most High. Call on me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me."
2. Matt. 7:7[–8] – "Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened."

Luke 11:9–13 – "So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Is there anyone among you who, if your child asked for a fish, would give a snake instead of a fish? Or if the child asked for an egg, would give a scorpion? If you, then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

Matt. 13:12 – "For to those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance, but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away."

Ps. 50:15 – "Call on me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me."

Q117. What is the kind of prayer that pleases God and that he listens to?

**A. First, we must pray from the heart to no other than the one true God, revealed to us in his Word,[1] asking for everything God has commanded us to ask for.[2] Second, we must fully recognize our need and misery,[3] so that we humble ourselves in God's majestic presence.[4] Third, we must rest on this unshakable foundation:[5] even though we do not deserve it, God will surely listen to our prayer because of Christ our Lord.[6] That is what God promised us in his Word.[7]**

1. John 4:22 – "You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews."
2. Rom. 8:26 – "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words."

1 John 5:14 – "And this is the boldness we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us."

John 4:23–24 – "But the hour is coming and is now here when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

Ps. 145:18 – The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth."

3. 2 Chron. 20:12 – "O our God, will you not execute judgment upon them? For we are powerless against this great multitude that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you."
4. Ps 2:11 – "Serve the Lord with fear; with trembling"

Ps. 34:19 – "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord rescues them from them all."

Isa 66:2 – "All these things my hand has made, so all these things are mine, says the Lord. But this is the one to whom I will look, to the humble and contrite in spirit who trembles at my word."
5. Rom 10:[13] – "For 'everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'"
Rom. 8:15 – "For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba! Father!"
James 1:6 – "But ask in faith, never doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind."
6. John 14:13–15 – "I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it. 'If you love me, you will keep my commandments.'"
John 15:16 – "You did not choose me, but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name."
John 16:23 – "On that day you will ask nothing of me. Very truly, I tell you, if you ask anything of the Father in my name, he will give it to you."
Dan 9:17–18 – "Now therefore, O our God, listen to the prayer of your servant and to his supplication, and for your own sake, Lord, let your face shine upon your desolated sanctuary. Incline your ear, O my God, and hear. Open your eyes and look at our desolation and the city that bears your name. We do not present our supplication before you on the ground of our righteousness but on the ground of your great mercies."
7. Matt 7:8 – "For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened."
Ps 143:1 – "Hear my prayer, O Lord; give ear to my supplications in your faithfulness; answer me in your righteousness."

Q118. What did God command us to pray for?

**A. Everything we need, spiritually and physically,[1] as embraced in the prayer Christ our Lord himself taught us.**

1. James 1:17 – "Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change."
Matt. 6:33 – "But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

Q119. What is this prayer?

**A. Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one. For the kingdom and the power and the glory are yours forever. Amen.[1]**

1. Matt. 6:9[–13] – "Pray, then, in this way: Our Father in heaven, may your name be revered as holy."
Luke 11:2[–4] – "So he said to them, 'When you pray, say: Father, may your name be revered as holy. May your kingdom come."