

## DAILY PRAYER POINTS

**SUNDAY** – There is a reason the Lord has brought you to this new week. Pray that He will shine brightly through you so that everyone that comes across you this week may know His presence in you and be blessed by your words and actions.

**MONDAY** – Thank God for the strength and ability to serve Him each day through Jesus Christ, in the power of the Spirit. Pray that we'll all know God's blessing and strength in serving the Lord with joy and thankfulness.

**TUESDAY** – Pray thank God that *'the Day'* is approaching when fellowship with his people will never feel wearying! Ask him to keep you going until then. (Heb.10:25)

**WEDNESDAY** – Ask God to help Session and the Committee of Management as we prayerfully plan for the future of St Andrew's during an uncertain time within the PCQ and Australia, as a whole.

**THURSDAY** – Pray for **Merle Smith & Del Stevenson**

**FRIDAY** – Continue to pray for those in need of God's healing and comforting hand: Belinda Birch, Edith Collins, John Donnell, Jane Kippin, Kevin Petrofski Jr and Margaret Petrofski, and Dawn Robinson. **Pray also for blessings on those who can't get to church:** Audrey Armstrong, Del Finn, Carol Gillett, Joey Kelly, Gladys Marnock, Millie McCarthy, Heather McGaw, Marie McKee, Mavis Smith, and David Valintine.

**SATURDAY** – Give thanks that in all circumstances our Heavenly Father knows our needs and supplies them richly to us in His Son and His Spirit.

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# THE ANCHOR

NEWSLETTER OF THE ST ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



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DAILY PRAYER POINTS

## SIN'S STRATEGY (AND HOW TO FIGHT IT)

By HANNAH LE CRAS

**I JUST COMMITTED A SIN. IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT IT WAS.** It does matter that I knew it was wicked; tried not to do it, and did it anyway. What was wrong with me that I couldn't stop myself from doing evil? And how did I get from a place of enjoying God and obeying him, to doing the very thing he hates?

It wasn't the first time I've sinned and asked those two questions, and it sure won't be the last. Perhaps you have asked them too. But I want to introduce

you to someone who has helped me find answers. His name is John Owen, and he departed this earth nearly 350 years ago. But when I read his book *Indwelling Sin in Believers* it was like having my soul cut open, dissected and diagnosed. Let me give you the fast version of my therapy.

**So, What Is Wrong With Me?**

Owen gets straight to the point from the very beginning—our problem is sin. Even though Christ has died for us and destroyed the power of sin to condemn us to death and hell, there remains another power of sin. Owen calls this the “indwelling” power of sin, which simply means that sin has the power to make us sin because it still dwells within us. It is no longer unchallenged—we have the power of grace in us now—but it persists nonetheless. This is the source of the battle that rages within every Christian:


For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. (Romans 7:18-20).

So, what’s wrong with me is that I have a spiritual power called sin dwelling in my heart, urging me to commit evil. That was one question answered!

**How Does Sin Happen?**

Owen then proceeds to hand the Christian the battle plan of our enemy, sin. Of course, sin isn’t really a living entity, but it helps to understand how it works by using language as though it is. The key passage Owen unpacks is James 1:14-15:

*But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.*



**EVEN THOUGH CHRIST HAS DIED FOR US ... THERE REMAINS ANOTHER POWER OF SIN.**

As in the case in Revelation 6:9, the martyrs are in our scene. They cry out from under the altar “*How long, O Lord, until you judge and avenge our blood*”. “*Jesse’s rod*” refers to the coming judgment from King Jesus.



As we pick up the brush for verse 3, we sing of redeemed Israel. The remnant of Israel who trusted in the promise of the coming Messiah are saved by the same grace that we are will be in our painting of the multitudes praising Christ. It is remarkable to think that we will sing Jesus’ praises alongside Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and countless other believing Jews.

We Gentiles are up next in the fourth verse. We will give gifts to our king as we remember the terrible sacrifice he paid to free us from our sins.

We need to add some more detail to our scene, and so we sing in verse 5 and 6 of how this gathering crowd included people of all ages. Children, did you know that you can join in honouring the King of Glory, Jesus Christ? Any one, of any age, who feels his or her sin and knows the love of Christ can join in this song. People from every tribe and tongue and nation add their harmonious voices to the rising tune.



And so we enter the final, climatic verse as we take a step back from the scene we have been painting and find a “sacred throng”, a great and awesome assembly, a majestic multitude all falling at Jesus’ feet and singing this everlasting song: “*Crown Him, Crown Him, Lord of All*”!



**GIFTS AND OFFERINGS**

**Bank: Bendigo Bank**  
**Account Name:** St Andrew’s Presbyterian Church  
**BSB Number:** 633000  
**Account Number:** 129166906



## QUESTION 101.

**What do we pray for in the first petition?**

A. In the first petition, which is, “*May your name be hallowed,*” we pray that God would enable us and others to glorify him in everything by which he makes himself known, and that he would direct all things to his own glory.



## QUESTION 102.

**What do we pray for in the second petition?**

A. In the second petition, which is, “*May your kingdom come,*” we pray that Satan’s kingdom may be destroyed, that the kingdom of grace may be advanced and ourselves and others may be brought into it and kept in it, and that the coming of the kingdom of glory may be hastened.

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## ALL HAIL THE POWER OF JESUS’ NAME.

**A**LL HAIL THE POWER OF JESUS’ NAME IS A HYMN THAT DECLARES THE KINGSHIP OF CHRIST. The structure of this hymn is simple. The first verse begins with the command that goes out to all people “*All hail the power of Jesus’ name*”. Each verse then considers a group of people (or angels) who come and bow down to Jesus, the Lord of All.

The book of Revelation speaks of a scene in heaven where all the heavenly angels, all of the redeemed, and all of creation fall down in worship and praise, lifting their voices to the King of Kings.

In this hymn we recreate this scene piece by piece, like a painter filling out an artwork.

First, we sing of the angels, those great powerful spirit beings, falling flat on their faces in honour of King Jesus.



Owen’s exposition of these verses showed me that sin actually has a process. It works in a certain way and we can learn that way and so be able to better fight against it. He breaks it down like this:

**1. Distraction**

*Every man is tempted when he is lured...*

Sin’s first move is distraction. Proverbs 1:17 says “In vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird.” However, if the bird can be lured to look away, the trap can successfully be set. Now, in the soul of a Christian the mind is like the eye. When our mind is suitably occupied with the things of God and watching against sin (our spiritual duties), we “see” the traps sin sets for us. But if our minds are distracted by something else (e.g. worldly pursuits), sin can then take the opportunity to hide the trap. Distraction from spiritual duties then, is where sin first aims.

**2. Deception**

*... and enticed by his own desire...*

Next, the bait is laid out: sin entices with the promise of pleasure. Dazzled by the appeal, the danger goes unnoticed—like a hook covered with the bait. This is how Eve was deceived and ate the fruit. Her initial response to Satan—“If we eat or touch it we shall die”—showed her awareness of the danger. But then she allowed herself to forget it when her desires were stirred up by thoughts of the beauty of the fruit and its usefulness for making her wise (Gen 3:6).

**3. Decision**

*... Then, desire when it has conceived ...*

Acts of sin cannot be committed unless first there is a decision to commit them—this is the conception of sin. These decisions occur in the part of our soul we designate “the will”, a faculty that is influenced by both reason and affection



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(i.e. our likes/dislikes). When the mind is drawn off from its duty and a longing for the pleasures of sin is created, the way is paved for the decision to sin. Sin appears to be good, and so we choose it.

#### 4. Deed

*... gives birth to sin ...*

The next step in this progression is the “birthing” of sin—the actual deed of it. This is where we are surprised, right? We wonder, like I did, “how did I get here?” What we fail to realise is that we lose the battle to sin far earlier than we think.

Let’s trace it back. I did sin because I chose it. I chose it because it appeared good. It appeared good because I saw the pleasure of it and not the danger. I



**IF I HAD KEPT MY MIND OCCUPIED WITH THE THINGS OF GOD AND WATCHING AGAINST SIN, I WOULD HAVE SEEN THE DANGER.**

saw the pleasure and not the danger because when sin was laying the trap I was distracted.

That’s it, right there. I was distracted. If I had kept my mind occupied with the things of God and watching against sin, I would have seen the danger when sin came with its proposal. Yet, being distracted from this duty, I allowed sin to work further and so lost the battle.

Friends, this is where we need to aim our efforts: to attend to the spiritual duties that protect us from being deceived by sin. These duties are the means by which God promises to help us. Distraction from them is the means by which sin wins its victories. Much more could be said about this, but that is a discussion for another time.

#### 5. Death

*... and sin, when it is fully grown, brings forth death.*

For now, let’s remember that the end of sin is death. We mustn’t think of sin like a harmless pet that we can keep on a leash and tame. It’s a voracious dragon, and without the saving grace of Jesus, it will take us in its jaws all the way to hell. That, in fact, is its endgame.

I say then, with Owen: “Awake, therefore, all of you in whose hearts is anything of the ways of God! Your enemy is not only upon you, as on Samson of old, but is in you also.” Get to know its battle plan. And FIGHT.



## BECOMING A CHRISTIAN

### TWO WEEKS ON... BIBLE READING PLAN

TWO WEEKS ON BECOMING A CHRISTIAN

The who, what, when, where, and how to become a Christian. Foundational verses for evangelism.

**WEEK 2** |  Day 8, Acts **26** - Paul Testifies Of His Conversion Before A King.  Day 9, Romans **3** - God’s Provision For Sin.  Day 10, Romans **5** - Peace With God.  Day 11, Galatians **3** - Salvation Unavailable By Obeying The Law.  Day 12, Ephesians **2** - New Life In Christ.  Day 13, 1 Peter **1** - Future Rewards Of Salvation.  Day 14, 2 Peter **1** - Making Your Salvation Sure.

## WESTMINSTER SHORTER CATECHISM

The Westminster catechisms begin with the language of glorifying and enjoying God. *These Standards exist to explain in doctrinal terms how Scripture directs us to glorify and enjoy God in all we think, do, and say.* - Burk Parsons

### QUESTION 100.

**What does the preface of the Lord’s prayer teach us? A. The preface** of the Lord’s prayer, which is, “Our Father who is in heaven,” teaches us to draw near to God with a full holy reverence and confidence, and as children who draw near to a father able and ready to help us. Also (in using the plural our), it teaches us that we should pray with and for others.