Praying with Cranmer

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[0:00] Good to be with you this evening. I understand we're in a course of kind of evening lectures here, and that you're in my classroom this evening.

I want to talk to you a little bit about Praying with Cranmer is the title of the talk. As a teenager in Winnipeg, I used to go every year to the Children's Hospital used book sale at Polo Park Shopping Mall.
Little stalls would be set up throughout the mall with books organized by the volunteers. Every year, I would come across, in the midst of searching through the shelves, some of these little wine-colored prayer books for sale for 25 cents, and I couldn't resist buying one.
This is one of those books that I bought in Winnipeg as a teenager. It's the same as the one in the pew in front of you. Most of the pews have at least a scattering of these prayer books.
It's the 1962 Book of Common Prayer for the Anglican Church of Canada. Mine is in a little bit worse shape than the ones in the pew. The spine is gone. The front and back boards are loose and tattered.
[1:11] The page is creased and dog-eared. No wonder. My copy has a nameplate, and it says this particular prayer book was the gift of Mrs. R. H. Funnell in memory of her mother, Mrs. Georgiana Crouch, to the St. James Anglican Church on March the 9th, 1969.

This was an old Anglican church across the Polo Park Shopping Mall that goes back to 1851 when the old Anglican church there was granted land by the Hudson Bay Company.
So this particular prayer book has a distinguished history. I like little book biographies, people who've already lived in these books. For over a half century, the pages of this book have been looking back and watching Anglicans mouth its words in prayer from Mrs. Funnell to Bruce Heinemarsh.
Well, as a non-Anglican teenager in the 1970s, when I first picked up this book, there are several things I would have noticed, as would a modern person today unfamiliar with liturgical service books.
First, it's obviously not like a normal book that you would sit down and read from cover to cover. It seems an intriguingly complex combination of different sorts of things.
[2:28] Instructions, tables, public services, various sets of prayers and readings, a version of the Psalms, and so on. Secondly, you would notice a lot of unfamiliar words.

Words like rubric, and versical, and collect, and little bits of Latin like te diem laudamas. These are not words that a teenager in Winnipeg uses when he rides his 10-speed zucchini bike to 7-Eleven to have a Slurpee with his friends.
So obviously, this book was going to require a little investigation for it to unfold some of its meaning. It wasn't plain on first sight. Thirdly, you would notice that the language kind of reminds you somehow of Shakespeare or the King James Bible with its these and thous, and even a phrase like, he hath hopen his servant Israel.
I had never hopened myself to a Slurpee at 7-Eleven. Still, it was intriguing, and even just reading a little, you still found that the language had, anywhere you opened, the language had this remarkable rhythm, compression, beauty, almost wherever you began reading.
Fourthly, when you try to use the book for your personal devotions, after all, it's called a prayer book, you notice that it isn't really written for that purpose, or not exactly, or not entirely.
[3:51] It's a little bit more like the experience of reading a play, a drama, written for public performance by multiple voices. Finally, you notice, fifthly, that there is a kind of calendar in this book for readings and for prayers, but it isn't like the calendar that you use in your everyday life to schedule your shifts as a lifeguard at the pool or to record the due dates for your school

assignments.

This calendar is different. Even though Christmas and Easter are easy enough to figure out, it's a little bit hard to figure out the rest of this calendar with its days and its names like Quincagissima for one of the days or to correlate it to your normal calendar that you inhabit in the rest of your life.
So a teenager brings home this book from the shopping mall and finds that it is a composite book made up of different things, a book with unfamiliar words, a book with an antiquarian form of English, a book that reads like a play, and a book with a strange sense of time.
You think that would have been enough to put me off entirely, but it wasn't. I was a little intrigued by the puzzle of it all, and I had assessed there was something here that was still worth exploring and getting to know further.
I returned to make a more serious effort to use my Children's Hospital Book Sale Prayer Book. That's my sort of title for it in my mind. In my private prayers in my 20s, as a graduate student here at Regent College, when Carol and I moved to Vancouver in the 80s.
[5:21] And then again, in my 30s, when I was a doctoral student in Oxford, our family joined an evangelical Anglican church and for the first time, actually shared in a public pattern of prayer shaped by the prayer book.

Gradually, I feel I have been schooled by the prayer book. I've been shaped by it as a Christian. I have been formed in my own prayer life.
I have found myself praying with Cranmer. Archbishop Thomas Cranmer was the main architect of this English Book of Common Prayer during the Reformation of the 16th century.
And that's why I say I find myself praying with Cranmer. Whether you are a cradle Anglican or a complete newcomer to Anglican worship, as I was when I picked up this prayer book as a teenager, it might be helpful now and again to pause and to reflect on the pattern of worship that we share together as God's people here in this place.
At St. John's, we stick pretty close to the patterns of this little prayer book, though we have taken various steps to overcome some of the difficulties I have just mentioned that can create a barrier of accessibility nowadays.
[6:38] After all, when it was originally composed, the prayer book was intended to be a book of common prayer. That is, in the common language of the people understood and used by them.

By all of them, not just by the priests. And so we lay out the whole service now in a bulletin, in a service sheet. So there's not a lot of flipping of pages back and forth and ribbons back and forth in the prayer book.
And we have some simplifications, some modernizations, and some explanations. But in essence, this is this. In a way, this is what Cranmer was doing in the 16th century when he complained about the medieval service books, saying that figuring out any of those books was, quote, so hard and intricate a matter that many times there was more business to find out what should be read than to read it when it was found out.
That was already in the 16th century he felt that way. You see, in the early Middle Ages, there were separate books for each person officiating in the service. The celebrant, Jordan, would have a sacramentary if he's performing the Eucharist, Holy Communion.
The various chanters had their antiphonaries, responsorials, graduals, psalters, and hymnals. And the various readers had their own lectionaries, epistolaries, and evangelaries, and so on.
[7:56] To keep the whole service moving along, another official was needed as a kind of director or rule keeper, and he had in his hand another book called The Ordinary or The Directory or The Pie. Complicated.

Before the Reformation, this had been partly simplified into the Missal for Holy Communion, the Breviary for Daily Prayers, that's the ancestor of our morning and evening prayer that we do at St. John's, and a few other books.
Cranmer's work was to take all of this material and simplify it into one book in good proper English, not in Latin, and to cut out or revise anything that seemed untrue on a fresh reading of Scripture so that what was left was either the words of Scripture or based on Scripture.
I think on the whole, he did a pretty fine job. And so do our clergy, I think, in preparing these services, these ones, for us all. So that's a little background, but in what remains of our time together, let me do just two things with you.

First, I'll try to describe the character of prayer that's shaped in this prayer book tradition, and then we'll dig deeper into two particular patterns of prayer that you can take away with you and extend into your own life personally.
[9:13] So first, we'll do public school, what it is to be schooled by this book in our worship, and then we'll talk about homeschool. Okay? Public school, homeschool. So first of all, the prayer book is a public school of prayer.

How does it school us? Six characteristics, just briefly. First of all, it's biblical and doctrinal. Eighty percent of the words are actually just Scripture by one calculation, and the other 20 percent seem to be prayers based on Scripture.
As Cranmer said, this book ordains nothing to be read but the very Word of God or that which is grounded upon the same. These prayers are not a geyser of feeling, though there's feeling there. They are not the prayers of the just, the just and really prayers. You know, the person who prayed, Lord, I pray that you would just really help me just stop saying just and really in my prayers. You know?
These aren't just prayers off the top of your head or just prayers that a gush of feeling, though feeling is important. This is a prayed theology.
[10:19] Winston Churchill said, we shape our buildings and then our buildings shape us. The same is true for the liturgy. The liturgy shapes us. As we pray, so we believe.

So we really believe. And this is a biblical and doctrinal school of prayer. Secondly, it's Catholic and Reformed. Catholic in the sense that there's a spirit of prayer that runs across time and across space.
When I pick up this little book as a teenager in the 1970s and begin reading through it, I am trying to say its prayers.
I'm praying with the liturgy of St. James and John Chrysostom in the Eastern Church. I'm praying with Gregory the Great in the 7th century. I remember coming across the call for purity, Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, and all desires known, when reading a 14th century English text.
And I thought, I know that prayer. I pray that prayer. We also pray with our brothers in Malawi, Nigeria, Kenya, Malaysia, Hong Kong, and Mumbai as they pray in this pattern of prayer.
[11:26] The idiosyncrasies of my personal prayer are corrected and enlarged in the company of all the saints. It's Catholic, but it's also Reformed. Cranmer's concern was to purify the liturgy, to expose it again to a fresh reading of Scripture.

Bruce Coburn has a song that has the line, the trouble with normal is it always gets worse. And there's a way that can kind of be true sometimes of Anglicanism. You know?
The kind of via media can be just a way of we just kind of, we need to continue to be reformed, continue to expose what we're doing to the light of Scripture. Not just accept what's normal. Cranmer, this is a Reformed book.
And we could give examples of that. But it's liturgical and seasonal. It's not just, what do we say first of all, it's not just biblical and doctrinal, Catholic and Reformed. It's liturgical and seasonal.
These are set prayers. They're liturgical. They've been thought about. They're not just homemade instant prayers. Some thought has gone into them. They are designed for worship. There's always a liturgy, even when unacknowledged.
[12:34] Every church service has a liturgy. And this one has, considerable thought has gone into it. And it's also, thought is given to the time of day and the season of the church year so that we're able to pray with a sense always of rehearsing the story of God's saving work.

And our life is not simply governed by capitalist time, work, discipline and mechanical tools of time keeping. The quality of time is shaped by living in the Christian story.
And also, the time of day. In the morning, the benedictus, the dawn from on high shall break upon us. In the evening, the nunc dimittus, now let thy servant depart in peace. In the morning, we offer up the day.
In the evening, we lay down our concerns. The book is corporate and individual. It's common prayer in the common language. It's for all people, not just for the priests.
We are all individually involved in the common faith. We have work to do as individuals. We have to take up our instruments in the orchestra and play the common score. We must add our hearts and voice to the choir.

[13:37] In the 17th century, Jeremy Taylor, an Anglican, thought of this quite poetically. Public worship, he said, was like rain falling from heaven. And private devotion was like refreshing a garden with a watering pot.

The prayer book was good for public worship, the rain coming down, but it also serves as a daily watering pot. This school of prayer is contrite and aspirational.
There's a real contrition, a sense of poverty of spirit and humility in the prayers of the prayer book as you're shaped by this kind of prayer. You are reminded you confess your sins. You confess your sins daily, confess your sins weekly, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness.
All hearts open, all desires known, no health in us. There's a real sense of coming honestly and spare before God with our poverty of spirit. Many of the prayers go back to times when they were written in uncertain times of war, famine, disease, barbarian incursions.
No wonder so many of the colics refer to things like the sundry and manifold changes of this world where we so often pray that God would defend us, thy humble servants, in all assaults of our enemies.
[14:50] There's a sense that we really need. We're contrite. We need God's help. But also there's tremendous aspiration, tremendous longing, tremendous feeling that we may perfectly love thee and worthily magnify thy holy name, that we may come to those eternal joys which thou hast prepared for them that love thee, that we may rise to the life immortal with, you know, and so on.

There are cycles of proclamation, confession, forgiveness, and praise that we repeat through this book. Finally, the book, to be schooled in this school is to be formed in a pattern of prayer that is aesthetic and literary.
It's beautiful and it's literary. It's been called Cranmer's Immortal Bequest. Pretty as a prayer book. Paul Simon, in his song called That Was Your Mother, that he sings to his child about the time when he first met his child's mother in Louisiana, has a line in the song, Along Came a Young Girl, She's Pretty as a Prayer Book, Sweet as an Apple on Christmas Day.
I said, Good gracious, if this be my luck, if that's my prayer book, Lord, let us pray. But pretty as a prayer book, right? He picked up on the fact that if you want a metaphor for something pretty, you think about the language of the prayer book.
It's the golden age of the English language, Shakespeare, Milton. There's a simplicity, a dignity, an elegance, a rhythm, balance periods, cadences. If you want to read a wonderful analysis of this, one of C.S. Lewis' academic books, English Literature in the 16th Century, Excluding Drama, is the title.
[16:31] Speaks about the rhythms of prose, the peaks and valleys, the weaving of words, the ringing of changes, like change ringing in English bells. There is a wonderful language in the prayer book.

There's a tremendous fondness for devils, devices and desires, erred and strayed, sins and wickedness, pardons and absolves, pure and holy. For Cranmer, if it's worth saying once, you really should say it twice.
There's a pattern there. So it's a beautiful, beautiful liturgy. There's a danger here, though, of a kind of literary distancing, of a kind of literary experience, a stylistic preoccupation, danger of a piety that's too pretty.
The language of feeling and personal language and the language of emotions is direct and it's our mother tongue speech and it's forceful. It's what the New Testament calls parisia, boldness of approach, freedom to speak in the assembly, freedom of access.
The unconstrained, childlike approach to the father, neither ashamed nor fearing shame. So we have a beauty of language here and it's meant to shape us but it's not meant to constrain us from adding our own personal language.
[17:48] So that's the, that's public school. Every now and then it's good just to step back and go, how are we being shaped? We just kind of enter into it and you don't kind of step outside it to kind of watch what you're doing.

But as we pray in the pattern of the prayer book, these are some of the ways in which I think our prayer life is being shaped. But now let's talk a little bit about homeschool. You don't need to be into the prayer book to draw some spiritual fruit from this tradition.

There's all sorts of things that you can just raid out of this book and take with you and can become a part of your life in private, day by day, to extend the experience of public worship into our private devotional life.
I'd like to pull out of your weekly evening services the prayer book contained in these bulletins week by week. Just two forms of prayer to talk about for you to take home and use as your watering can for your spiritual garden until you return to church for some more rain.
I'm going to call these two patterns of prayer that you can take with you. You can test drive them right away. I'm going to call the first one short prayers, the second one fat prayers. So first of all, short prayers.
[18:58] Turn for a moment to page four of your service sheet because we prayed some of these already. There are two versicles there. Not an icicle or a cubicle or a popsicle but a versicle.

Just a diminutive verse. Not quite a verse, just a little verse. Oh Lord, open our lips and our mouth will declare your praise as one. Oh God, make speed to save us. Oh Lord, make haste to help us as another one.
Little verses. In our services, the minister says one half, we say the other. The first one is from Psalm 51 and it follows David's confession of his sin in the psalm just as it does in our services follows our confession.
Open our lips and our mouth will declare your praise. The second one is from Psalm 70, verse 1. Oh God, make speed to save us. Oh Lord, make haste to help us.
And this little versicle traditionally opened all the daily offices of the church. Morning prayer, midday prayer, evening prayer, night prayer, all of them. And it has a really interesting history. Just a little sidebar on where that comes from.
[20:08] I mean, it comes from Psalm 70 and Psalm 70 itself has a cameo appearance. The whole psalm appears in Psalm 40, at the end of Psalm 40. So clearly it was sort of important in the Psalter.

And in Psalm 40, David begins by talking about God's salvation. You have lifted me out of the muck and the mire. You have set my feet on a rock. You put a song in my mouth. And then again, he descends into trouble.
My sins have overtaken me. And then comes Psalm 70's appearance in Psalm 40. Oh God, make speed to save me. Oh Lord, make haste to help me. I'm in trouble again. You've been my Savior. I turn to you again. And then it appears again just on its own like it's a prayer you can use anytime, anywhere. The early Christians took very seriously the simple command of the Apostle Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5.17, pray continuously.
Pray without ceasing. And many of them wondered how to do that. Late in the 4th century, an earnest young man named John, John Cassian, was living in an intensive Christian community devoted to prayer in Bethlehem near the Cave of the Nativity.
[21:15] One day he meets an old man from Egypt who tells stories of a radical Christian counterculture that had formed in Egypt. The remarkable prayer lives of some of the Christians there. John was fired with enthusiasm and decided he must go and see this for himself.

The Egyptians were already complaining of spiritual tourists. But John was more serious than most of the visitors. So for about seven years he tours the region around the Nile Delta and the desert just south of Alexandria with one of his friends and he interviews 15 of the most famous elders in the area writing up his interviews later in a book called simply The Conferences.
Each of the interviews treated one topic on the spiritual life and the climax of the first edition of the book came in the 10th interview with Abba Isaac at Sceitas in the desert oasis of Wadi Natrin. Abba Isaac was addressing this difficult question. How do you enter into uninterrupted communion with God? How do you pray all the time? All the time? It's an interesting question for us today. What does it mean to pray always in every moment in all conditions? How do you remain vividly conscious of God's presence from morning to night? Do you find there are large blocks of time you lose a whole morning or a whole day and you realize you were literally without a prayer?
[22:36] You'd forgotten that God even exists. You go about your work and your conversations resourcefully without even thinking about God or that he's present. It's a particular challenge to us as modern people.

What Abba Isaac says, I've got the answer to that. The answer comes about halfway through interview 10 with a formula for prayer that had been handed down by the fathers in the desert.

Abba Isaac says to John, he says, all you need is this. Psalm 70 verse 1. Seriously, it's all you need. Meditate on this.
Take this away. Come to my help, O God, Lord, hurry to my rescue. That's it. This verse, he says, should be continually turning in your heart. It is to be recited in the midst of whatever task you're doing, whatever service you're performing as you travel around.
Think about this verse, he says, when you go to sleep. Think about it while you sleep. Think about it when you eat. Think about it even when nature calls. It should be your first thought in the morning. [23:36] It's your last thought before bed. It should be at your side always accompanying you through every moment just as Moses commanded that the Shema here, O Israel, was to be continually practiced.

This verse would anchor the mind. It would be a leitmotif, a beso continuo, a musical theme present all the way through your life. Even when praying other prayers or reading other Bible passages, it was to be a foundation and a capstone, a base layer and the climax of all your prayers.
There you have it. The purpose-driven monk will pray this verse over and over. Here's a little bit of what Cassian said about this one verse. It is not without good reason that this verse has been chosen from the whole Scripture as a device.
It carries with it all the feelings of which human nature is capable. It can be adapted to every condition. It can be deployed against every danger. It expresses the humility of pious confession. The watchfulness born of unending worry and fear conveys a sense of our frailty, the assurance of being heard, the confidence and help that is always and everywhere present.
Someone who is forever calling out to his protector is sure of having him close by. This is the voice filled with the ardor of love and charity. This is the terrified cry of someone who sees the snares of the enemy, the cry of someone besieged day and night claiming that he cannot escape until his protector comes to the rescue.
[24:57] There's about two pages of this, sort of a song of praise to this verse. It's a comprehensive practice. It directs the prayer to understand him or herself, humility, poverty of spirit.

I'm a person who needs God and it directs them to think about God as in the person of a savior. He is a savior. It commends virtues to us, watchfulness, trust, and love.
The genius of short, frequent prayers as a way to be recollected to the presence of God every moment, this was a genuine insight from these early Christians. It made its way into the Church of the East with their use of the Jesus prayer, Lord Jesus, Son of God, have mercy upon me, a sinner. In the Sinai tradition all the way to the Russian pilgrim in the 19th century, in the Church in the West, it makes it into the liturgy. Psalm 70 verse 1 made it into Church services as a little verse, a versicle, and it made it all the way to us.
At the evening service each week when you say the words, God make speed to save us or Lord make haste to help us, you are connected to the whole Church of the East and the West back through the centuries to Abba Isaac and John and beyond them back to Psalm 70.
[26:17] My own father taught me much about the use of short frequent prayers when I was growing up. He said to me, Bruce, if you leave God out of the little things in your life, you will leave him out of 90% of your life.

And I watched him as a busy Christian businessman practice what he called spiritual breathing. He told me, this is where you talk to God moment by moment and it becomes as natural and even unconscious as breathing.
He wasn't a pastor, he wasn't a missionary, he's a businessman. And I know that like Abba Isaac, he had short sentence prayers from Scripture to help him do this. Abba Doug.
Why not take some versicles home for a test drive? Pray Psalm 51, 15 when you wake up in the morning as soon as your eyes open. Oh Lord, open our lips and our mouth will declare your praise. As a way of operating up this day to God as a gift of gratitude. Pray Psalm 4, verse 8 at night. This comes from night prayer, not evening prayer, but night prayer.
[27:23] Psalm 4, verse 8 before bed. We will lay us down in peace and take our rest for it is thou, Lord, only that make us to dwell in safety. As a way of yielding up and laying down to God at the end of the day all my worries, all my fears, all I have accomplished but all I haven't accomplished, all that's left on my to-do list, all those whom I love into God's safekeeping.

Those are two versicles and then try to pray this one, Psalm 70, verse 1. As many times as you can throughout the whole of your day, sometimes short prayers are the best.

If you're not a Christian or you feel you've only really ever had something of a remote kind of formal connection to church, you might consider praying Psalm 70, verse 1 as a way of turning to Christ in a new and more personal way.
one way of understanding what it means to become a Christian is that it's learning to begin to pray and to pray for yourself. Psalm 70, verse 1 invites you to recognize you need a Savior, you need help from beyond yourself.
Come to my help, oh God, and invites you to recognize that God is there for you in the character of a Savior, one who comes to the rescue. Short prayers are good. And sometimes, although more briefly given the hour, we need fat prayers too to grow as a Christian.
[28:45] There are fat prayers in our services called colics. The term colic for some of these prayers might seem odd. Why are these dense little prayers, some of them fixed at certain points in morning and evening prayer or Holy Communion and some of them changing with the church year and why are they called colics?

They're very old prayers and a very old form of prayer. In the early church, especially in Rome, after the persecutions had ended, Christians would gather early on Sunday at different staging points around the city and then process to a central church for worship.
Before they headed out, they would say a prayer and oratio ad collectum, a prayer for gathering together. Then they would repeat this at church at the beginning of Holy Communion. This was the colic for the day and it changed with the seasons of the year.
Even deeper than this occasion of gathering, however, was the more significant gathering up the prayers of the people by the leader. All our individual prayers gathered up into this one and the prayers soon settled into the general pattern we now have.
I like what one writer says about the relationship of us as individuals to this corporate prayer. Familiar words known in advance are made incandescent, as it were, by the ardor of individual devotion.
[30:02] We have our work to do to bring our hearts to these prayers. The colic form of prayer doesn't appear in the church in the east. It's unique to the western tradition. They begin to appear around the 5th century or the 400s.

Some of these prayers still in use in our worship are about 1,600 years old. At least 70 of the colics in the prayer book have pre-Reformation origins. They come back, they go back to these book called sacramentaries, these service books that were given names and associated with different popes, the Leonine, the Galatian, the Gregorian sacramentary.
And Cranmer kind of riffled through them and said, I'll take that one, I'll take that one, I'll write a new one there, and so on. But what I want to look at with you is this is on page, the last couple pages of your bulletin, page 10 and 11.
There's a little outline that has the versicles, the suggestions for taking away the versicles and using them. And then it has a little outline there of the structure of a colic. Do you pray the colic for purity in the evening service?
Yeah? All right. Okay, so the one I have there is the colic for purity at Holy Communion. And the structure of a colic typically has these five parts.
[31:21] And it kind of is nice to know. Like if you're reading a sonnet, it's nice to know the kind of structure of the sonnet. So as you read it, you kind of get it. You get what's going on. And so this might help you enter into the worship when the colics are read and prayed.

So there's the form of address, Almighty God in this case. And then there's the doctrine. There's the doctrine in this case.
What can we say about God that's true that we can predicate or base our prayers on? Unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known from whom no secrets are hit. There's the doctrine. Then there's the petition.
Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit. And then there's the aspiration. What more do we desire if our petition is granted? That we may perfectly love thee and worthily magnify thy holy name.
And then there's the pleading or the conclusion through Jesus Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you in the Holy Spirit one God now and forever. Amen. And that part isn't usually included because it's just kind of assumed.
[32:26] But it's taken up into the intercessory work of Christ and into the whole work of the Holy Trinity. So there's the structure. The address, the doctrine, the petition, the aspiration, and the

pleading.

A little bit of grammar. Look for, first of all, a relative pronoun. Who or whom. That'll signal, okay, the doctrine.
Because you talk about God and then it's who or unto whom. That's a relative pronoun. Then look for the main verb, cleanse. That's the petition. And then look for the conjunction that that signals the purpose clause.
That or in order that we may perfectly love thee. And then you'll get the structure. Right? I don't know how many of you have pencils or pens but if you turn over the page there's some colics there and pick one of those and I'll give you just a minute and see if you can divide one of those into those five parts.
Right? And if you don't have a pen or pencil see if you can just do it in your head. Find the address. Find the doctrine.
[33:48] Find the petition. Find the aspiration. Find the pleading. You know you can score at least two out of five because you're going to get the address and the pleading, right?

So see if you can find the other bits. You'll be scored afterwards. Exchange your papers with the person next to you so they can mark it.
No, I'm just kidding. But why don't you just talk to the person next to you and see if you got the same as them. See if you found the same. Just take a minute. Talk to the person next to you. Okay, you can tell me afterwards how well you did. But I don't know if you find like if your mind is wandering a little bit during the service and then the colic comes it's over and you missed it. Right? Because they are very dense prayers. Very, very theological doctrinal prayers. Right? So being aware of the structure in a sense lets you be ready for it when it comes.
[34:52] Every now and then there won't like one part will be missing. There won't be an aspiration or the doctrine will be shorter or whatever but this is the basic structure. Now notice just a couple more things about the structure.

It's a structure also in terms of the theological virtues. Faith, hope and love. Christian, what do you believe? On the basis of this what do you desire?
And what do you ultimately hope for? Love is in the middle of the sandwich. Faith, hope and love. What do I believe? What does my love ask?
And what ultimately do I hope for? Notice also that it is salvation historical praying. What has God done in the past? On the basis of that what do I ask in the present?
And on the basis of that how do my desires stretch out toward the future with God? Right? So we're caught up in the work of God the history of salvation we're cultivating the theological virtues and we're praying on the basis of what we really believe.
[36:04] Right? This isn't the only form of prayer. Sometimes you just need to say help me God. Then you've got Psalm 70 verse 1. Sometimes you want to just say thank you God. But this is a form of prayer that can begin to shape us and I want to give you just one other piece of homework.

Take a familiar passage. Praying in the pattern of the collect can help you turn Bible reading into prayer. Take any passage that you're reading in your personal time of prayer.
If you read the Bible in the morning or read the Bible at night as you read a passage and then reflect on it say what is there in this passage that I can say I really believe? Well that becomes your doctrine.
On the basis of that what do I want to ask? Do I see any trajectory in this passage that can be what I really kind of hope for? And then you can write a prayer. So take a familiar passage such as Psalm 23 and read it over slowly and what is one truth that you would like to pray over out of this Psalm? Praying out of the scriptures. And here's an example, just a quick example. Loving God our good shepherd who is ever with us. And has told us to fear no evil.
[37:18] There's the doctrine. Here's the petition. Help us in all our troubles and amidst all our anxious thoughts to trust in you. And here's the aspiration that we might experience more of your goodness and mercy and dwell in your presence all our days through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen. See? Take anything you're reading and take this form and turning scripture into prayer. Right? So you got some homework.
Pray Psalm 70 verse 1 as much as you possibly can and see if it helps to be recollected to the presence of God. And then begin to, you know, the other thing you can do is you can memorize some of these colics.

They're great just to be memorized and prayed. All right? So there you have it. Praying with Cranmer, public school and home school, short prayers and fat prayers. At home we have not just this prayer book, but we actually have a lot of other prayer books scattered all over the house. I'm always finding one under a seat cushion or on a side table. There is even one I found in our garage right now in the freezer. Since Carolyn left it out in the rain and thought that she could try to freeze it and then quickly dry it out later with a hair dryer, see if she could get the pages on suck. [38:30] So we literally have prayer books everywhere around the house. But you need not be as eccentric as the Hindmarsh's. You need not have bunches of prayer books around your house like we do at ours.

After all, they cost more than 25 cents now. In the end, all the liturgy in the world is only scaffolding. The main thing is to enter the house as a child, come near the fire, to eat the meal to which Christ invites you.
Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.