

# A COURSE IN PRAYER

TAZEWELL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



# **Part One**

## **Desiring Prayer**

**The Necessity of Prayer**  
**The Greatness of Prayer**

# **Part Two**

## **Understanding Prayer**

**What is Prayer?**  
**Conversing with God**  
**Encountering God**

# **Part Three**

## **Learning Prayer**

**Letters on Prayer**  
**The Prayer of Prayers**  
**The Touchstones of Prayer**

# **Part Four**

## **Deepening Prayer**

**As Conversation: Meditating on God's Word**  
**As Encounter: Seeking God's Face**

# **Part Five**

## **Doing Prayer**

**Practice: Daily Prayer**

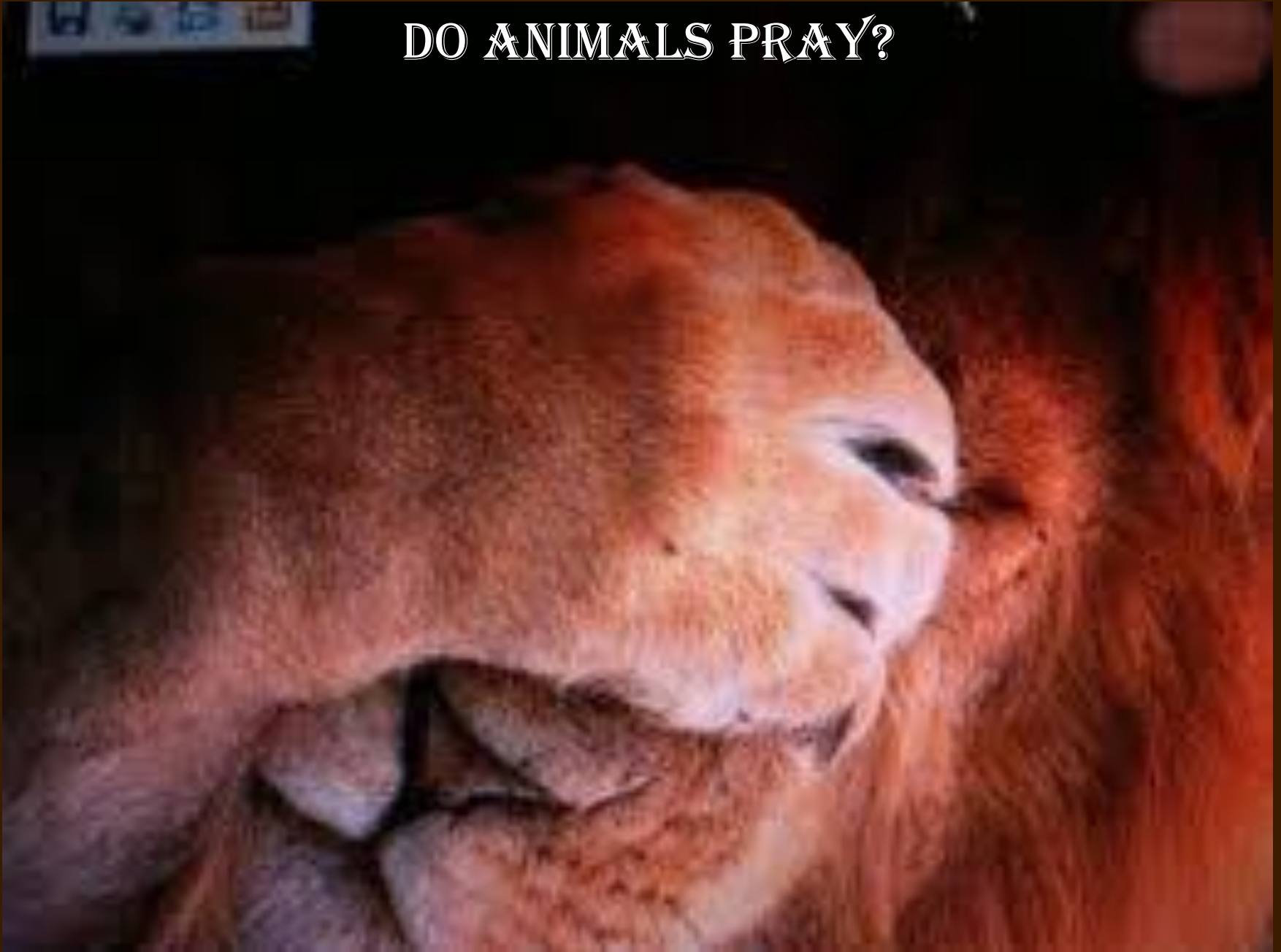
# Part Five

## Doing Prayer

**Practice: Daily Prayer**  
**“The Daily Office”**  
**(Liturgy of the Hours)**



# DO ANIMALS PRAY?



**I hope this lion has a christian heart!**



**Oh, lord. Bless this meal you put on my table.**

In your spiritual life . . . .

**Are you “sailing”?**

**Are you “rowing”?**

**Are you “drifting”?**

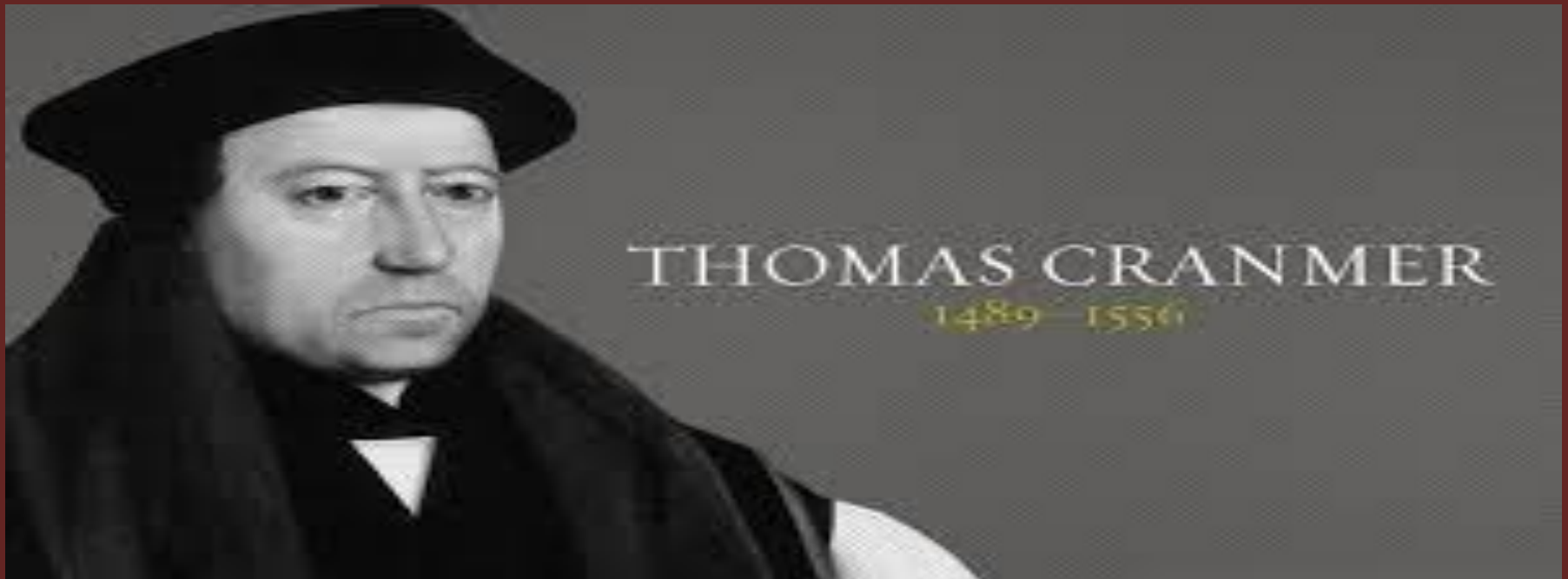
**Are you “sinking”?**



# “THE DAILY OFFICE” — HALLOWING TIME

- *“pray without ceasing”* (1 Thess. 5:17)  
*(i.e. if possible, do everything all day with conscious reference to God)*
- *set hours*  
*“Three times a day [Daniel] got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to God”* (Dan. 6:10)
- *monastic multiple services of daily prayer*
  - *Matins (midnight)*
  - *Lauds (3 a.m.)*
  - *Prime (6 a.m.)*
  - *Terce (9 a.m.)*
  - *Sext (noon)*
  - *None (3 p.m.)*
  - *Vespers (6 p.m.)*
  - *Compline (9 p.m.)*





- Helped ordinary people with a full day of work do daily prayer
  - just two prayer times (Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer)
  - calendar of bible readings (4 chapters – 2 for morning, 2 for evening)
  - monthly schedule for all 150 psalms

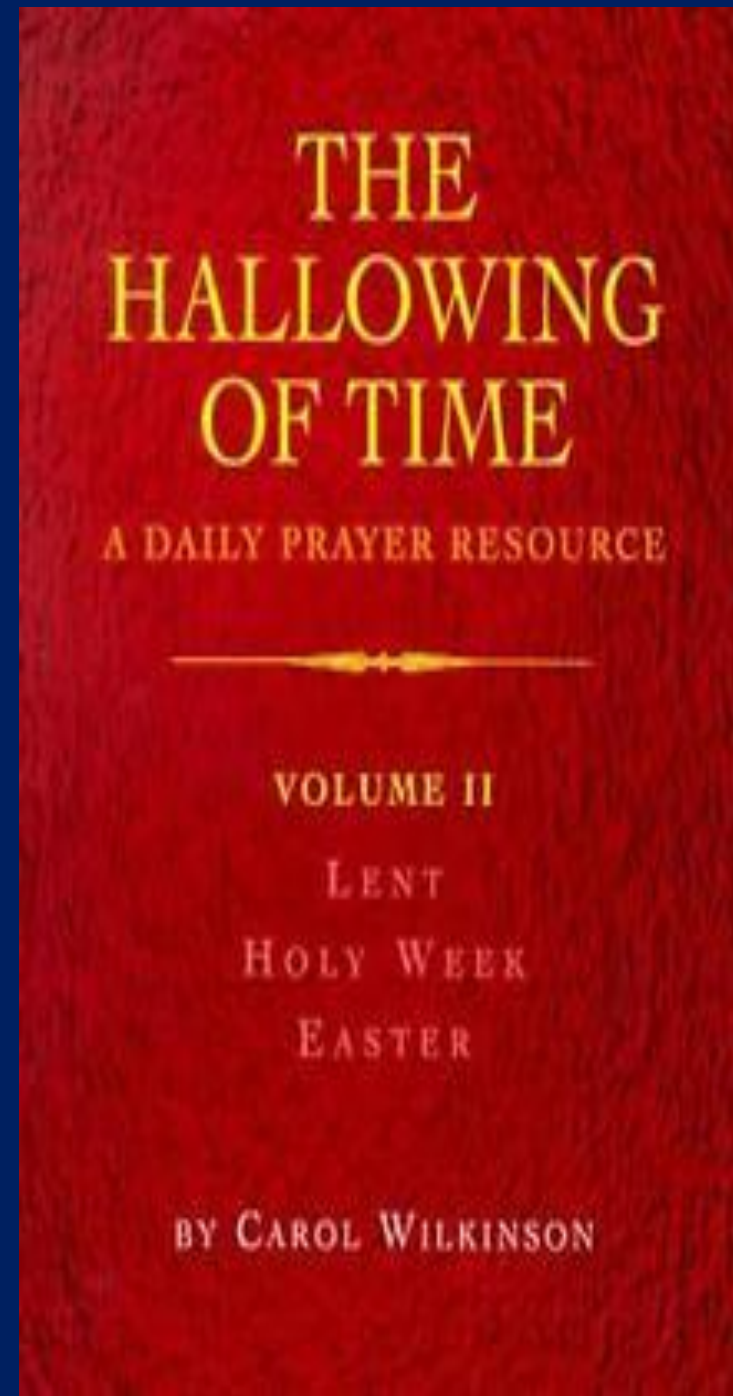




- **“Protestantizing”** of daily prayer
- John Calvin: 5 brief, model prayers for each day
- Morning private prayer and evening family prayer
- Evangelical practice of a single, daily “Quiet Time”
- *-emphasis on interpretive Bible study and petitionary prayer*
- *-many find too rationalistic*
- Turn to more Catholic and Eastern Orthodox traditions, including *lectio divina*, contemplative prayer, and fixed hours of liturgical prayer

## Recommendation: Personal Belief

- More than once-daily
- Grounded in meditation on passages
- Interwoven with corporate prayer
- Engage affections of the heart



# A Pattern for Daily Prayer

## **Evocation**

*“to bring to mind”*

*invocation, calling on God*

*Invitatory psalm like Ps. 95*

## **Meditation**

*on some portion of the Bible as  
a bridge into prayer*

## **Word Prayer**

*“pray the text” before moving  
on to more free-dorm prayer  
(or pray a psalm back to God)*

## **Free Prayer**

*adoration and thanksgiving,  
confession and repentance,  
intercession and petition*

## **Contemplation**





# Morning Prayer

*(25 minutes)*

## **APPROACHING GOD**

Ask God for help as you read and pray

Choose from one of many scriptural invocations

## **BIBLE READING AND MEDITATION**

Read a passage several times

Then make notes to yourself

Choose the verse and truth is most striking or helpful; paraphrase it

## **PRAYER**

Adoration, Confession, Petition, Thanksgiving

Pray for your needs and pressing concerns

Take a final moment just to be still in God

# Evening Prayers

“Now that the day hath passed, I glorify Thee...”



*(15 minutes)*

## **APPROACHING GOD**

Ask God for help as you read and pray

## **BIBLE READING AND MEDITATION**

Read a psalm

(eventually working through the Psalter twice a year)

## **PRAYER**

Turn the Psalm into a prayer and pray it back to God

Think over your day and confess where you sinned or failed to respond as you should have

Think over your day and pray for people you met or heard about who have needs

Pray for some of the more urgent and important needs on your heart



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# ***Noon Day Prayer Every Thursday***

***Beginning March 2***

Scripture verse for approaching God

Invitatory Psalm/ Gloria Patri  
*(responsive)*

\*Hymn

Psalm Appointed *(responsive)*

Scripture Appointed *(short)*  
*followed by brief silent meditation*

Prayers  
*guided and free, Lord's Prayer*

\*Hymn

\*Blessing

*"A Prayer to Take with You"*

# *John Calvin* *(handout)*

*Prayer upon Rising from Sleep*

*Prayer upon Beginning  
One's Work or Study*

*Prayer after the Midday Meal*

*Prayer before Sleep*

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Joy and patience are far above our strength... We must persevere in prayer that he may not permit our hearts to faint... Prayer and perseverance are necessary in our daily conflicts. The best remedy to the weariness is diligence in prayer.

John Calvin

# Thoughts? Questions?



## Daily Prayer

*a resource of Forward Movement*