



## The Lord's Prayer as a Model for Discipleship

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Taught to us by Christ himself, the Lord's Prayer serves as a model for our lives as his disciples. In this list of requests he gave us to ask of God, Jesus was not only teaching us about prayer itself, he was showing us ways in which our lives of faith daily depend upon our Heavenly Father. In the phrases of the Lord's Prayer, he was showing us what it means to live a life of faithful trust and discipleship, reflected in the very things we ask our Lord to accomplish in us. Consider how each phrase of the Lord's Prayer reveals a key aspect of our daily discipleship.

### **Our Father, who art in heaven ...**

As disciples of Christ, we look to God as a real, living being, who has made us his own children through Christ our Savior. We call upon our Heavenly Father in prayer, trusting that he hears and answers us.

### **Hallowed be thy name ...**

As disciples of Christ, we ask that God would use us as his instruments in this world to bring glory to his name, honoring him in prayer and worship, and in our witness to our neighbors of all that Christ has done.

### **Thy kingdom come ...**

As disciples of Christ, we recognize that it is through God's Word, he plants the seed of faith in our hearts and brings to fruition by the power of his own Holy Spirit. Through the study of Holy Scripture, by the receiving of his promise in the Sacraments, and in the proclamation of his living Word, God keeps us steadfast in faith and rules as the King of our hearts.

### **Thy will be done ...**

As disciples of Christ, we trust that through this same Word, God reveals the bondage we have to our own sinful will. He puts to death in us the desire to have our own way, and by his Holy Spirit he leads us in obedience to serve his will and not our own.

### **Give us this day our daily bread ...**

As disciples of Christ, we trust in God to provide for all our daily needs, physical and spiritual, knowing that he loves and cares for us, and that he alone can sustain us from day to day. Confident that God will provide for us, we are able to generously share his gifts with our neighbors.

### **Forgive us our sins as we forgive ...**

As disciples of Christ, we come to our Savior in confession, asking for God's forgiveness, knowing that we daily fall short of his expectations. In turn, we forgive one another in his name and by his power, knowing that it is through us that God speaks his Word of grace and mercy in Christ to others.

### **And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil ...**

As disciples of Christ, we expect to face difficulty, resistance, and even persecution for bearing his name. We trust God to be with us in times of temptation, struggle and weakness. Knowing that we are weak but he is strong, we rest all our faith and hope in his deliverance from the power of sin, death, and the devil.

Indeed, the petitions of the Lord's Prayer are things that involve our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength; they are the things that comprise all we do in thought, word, and deed. But these petitions are more than a list of human works to perform; they are first and foremost the things for which we look to God. They are the fruit of God's own Spirit in us as he leads us and shapes us in lives of discipleship, "that they may see and know, may consider and understand together, that the hand of the LORD has done this, the Holy One of Israel has created it" (Isaiah 41:20).

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen**

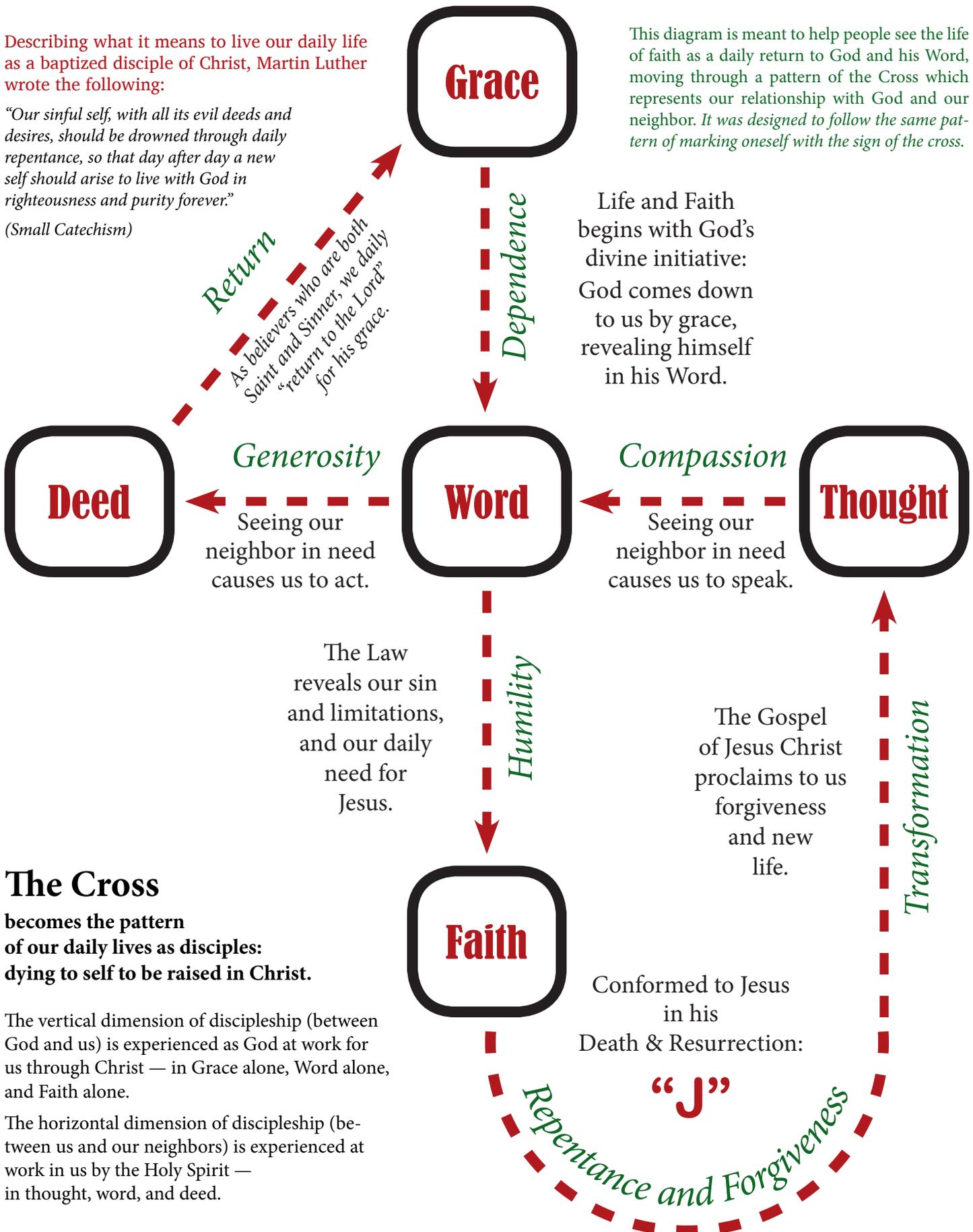
# Discipleship: Living a Cross-Patterned Life

Describing what it means to live our daily life as a baptized disciple of Christ, Martin Luther wrote the following:

*“Our sinful self, with all its evil deeds and desires, should be drowned through daily repentance, so that day after day a new self should arise to live with God in righteousness and purity forever.”*

*(Small Catechism)*

This diagram is meant to help people see the life of faith as a daily return to God and his Word, moving through a pattern of the Cross which represents our relationship with God and our neighbor. It was designed to follow the same pattern of marking oneself with the sign of the cross.



## The Cross

becomes the pattern of our daily lives as disciples: dying to self to be raised in Christ.

The vertical dimension of discipleship (between God and us) is experienced as God at work for us through Christ — in Grace alone, Word alone, and Faith alone.

The horizontal dimension of discipleship (between us and our neighbors) is experienced at work in us by the Holy Spirit — in thought, word, and deed.