**Commentary on Prayer by Martin Luther**

To pray, as the Second Commandment teaches, is to call on God in every need. This He requires of us. It is not a matter that is to be left to our choice. For by invocation and prayer the name of God is honored and profitably employed.

If you do not intend to ask until you know or feel yourself worthy and fit, you must never ask. For our prayer must never be based or depend on our worthiness but on the immovable truth of the divine promise.

I myself was once in this plight. I considered Christ a Judge who had to be placated by the observation of my monastic rule. I prayed: O Lord Jesus, I come to Thee and pray Thee that these burdens of my order may compensate for my sins. But now I give thanks to the Father of all mercies, who has called me out of this darkness to the light of the Gospel.

A truly Christian prayer should and must proceed from the spirit of grace, which says: I have lived as I could, but I pray Thee, do not take my life and actions into consideration but Thy mercy and goodness, promised through Christ, and give me what I ask for His sake. In this way we forsake ourselves in prayer in real, genuine humility and cling to the promise of grace alone, firmly confident that God will hear us because He has bidden us pray and has pledged us a favorable reception.