

Study Guide

for the

CTR Statement of Personal Devotion

In discerning whether or not one should adopt the Statement of Personal Devotion, it is important understand what it means. The statement itself was intentionally kept brief. The purpose of this document is to expand each section, provide biblical background and additional resources. Please don't hesitate to contact us with questions, concerns, or other responses.

I make this Statement of Personal Devotion freely and wholeheartedly. No other person has compelled me to do so, and it is my responsibility to carry it through. It is my responsibility. It is for me an act of love, carried out in concert with all those I am joining with to make this statement today.

This is a personal statement. Later statements of commitment for CTR will be community-oriented. But they will not work without this baseline commitment to living out John 17 personally. And for some, adopting this personal statement but not going forward with any of the community statements will be the right decision.

We believe heaven rejoices for you to voluntarily devote yourself in this way. "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your mind, and with all your soul, and with all your strength. And you shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Foundation of Faith

I affirm the historic Christian faith as expressed in the Nicene Creed.

Together recite the Nicene Creed ([version on CTR website](#))

We are a diverse community of followers of Jesus coming from different traditions. How do we make clear that Jesus and His teachings are the center of this community? Which are the beliefs we feel are essential to hold in common?

We have chosen the Nicene Creed for this purpose. Along with the Apostle's Creed, it is recognized and accepted by all ecclesial communities represented at CTR. However, unlike the "I believe ..." statements of the Apostle's Creed, the Nicene Creed is a shared corporate statement: "We believe ...". This makes it fit better for us, as a community.

The Nicene Creed also expresses more fully than the Apostles Creed the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. Because the love shared between the Father and the Son is the love which Jesus prays we will share with one another, it is important for our community to be united around the historic confession

regarding the unity and distinction of the Three Persons of the Trinity.

See Appendix 1 for the text of the Nicene Creed, along with some clarification and comments about aspects that are potentially controversial.

Foundation of Local Church Life

I am rooted in a particular ecclesial community of the people of God. I am a faithful, baptized member of a local expression of the body of Christ:

Name

I intend to remain active in worship, giving, and service to my local < church / parish / congregation / fellowship / synagogue >.

One of our core values is that each member of the CTR community will be an active participant of a named local ecclesial community. We purposefully limit CTR community events and responsibilities to reduce the risk of taxing overly busy schedules and hindering members' ability to engage effectively outside of CTR.

We recognize that there can be tension between participation in a local body, and commitment to living out John 17. For instance, what if your local Protestant church doesn't believe Catholics are even Christians? Or if your Catholic priest does not value ecumenical work? There is no easy answer. It is part & parcel with a prophetic calling, to live in tension. We encourage you to not flee from either one, or the other. Instead, we encourage you to embrace the tension, lift it to the Lord, and look for God's grace to fill and transform it.

The term "ecclesial community" was helpfully suggested by Hogan Heritage. We had been considering other expressions such as "church", "stream", "tradition", and "people of God." Each of these was problematic in some way. "Ecclesial community" is well understood in more traditional churches. Anabaptist and non-denominational churches will understand its roots in the Greek word "ecclesia", translated "church" in the New Testament.

For our Roman Catholic brothers and sisters, their ecclesial community would be a local parish. Protestants have a wider variety of names for congregations. We want to leave open the possibility that this statement could be adopted by Messianic Jews, who may attend synagogue.

If you want to adopt this Statement of Personal Devotion, but are not actively engaged in a local ecclesial community, we would encourage you to spend the next year committing yourself to a local church, then reconsider adopting this Statement next year.

Statement of Devotion

I devote myself to Jesus. I take into my own heart the prayer of his heart in John 17. To the best of my understanding and ability, I choose to live out Jesus' prayer for unity in His church each day for the next year:

I pray also for whoever will believe in me through their message, so that they all will be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be one in us so that this world will believe that you sent me into this world. I have given them the glory that you gave me, so that they will be one as we are one— I in them and you in me—so that they will be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me into this world, and that you have loved them even as you have loved me.

-- John 17:21-23 (IEB)

To devote is to give wholeheartedly. It is active, not passive. Here is an example of devotion in the New Testament:

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."

- Acts 2:42

So we already have devotions as disciples of Jesus, and as members of our local ecclesial communities. We are not replacing them with this Statement of Personal Devotion. We are adding to them. To add a new devotion should not be entered into lightly. It should be a Spirit-led decision, for walking it out is impossible without the grace of God.

What does it mean to live out a prayer? It means primarily that we make Jesus's desire our own. We care about Him. We love Him. We seek the fulfillment of His desire in our lives and in our community as a prophetic sign of the coming Kingdom. We are not devoting ourselves to an abstract idea. We are devoting ourselves to Jesus, the Second Person of the Trinity.

Jesus prays for you and me! And all believers today! And throughout history! And the future!

True prayer expresses the heart's deepest desires. To have insight into Jesus' deepest desires for us is beyond precious.

And what is this desire? He could have prayed anything! For doctrinal clarity, for moral purity, for missionary zeal, for service to the poor, for financial integrity ... even for his people to be a people of prayer themselves. But this is not what Jesus prays for us. He prays that we would be united. Does this not express his deepest desire before His heavenly Father? Should this not be our deepest desire?

*The entire chapter of John 17 is devoted to Jesus' High Priestly Prayer. CTR is particularly focused on verses 21-23 of John 17. We do not neglect the other parts of John 17, but it is here, in the heart of the prayer, that we start in our striving to live in the unity Christ prayed for. As a community, we commit to studying and meditating on the entire High Priestly Prayer, in which these verses are set.**

Other parts of John 17 will be highlighted in subsequent community commitments.

* We also recognize that the High Priestly prayer is set within the Last Supper Discourse; which is set within the gospel of John; which is set within the entirety of scripture.

Entering Into the Unity of the Trinity

John 17 is an invitation into the unity of the Trinity. I rejoice that I am invited into the relationship of love between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

I recognize that our Father in heaven extends this invitation to every person on earth through Jesus.

I embrace the glory of manifesting the name of God.

I pray also for whoever will believe in me through their message, so that they all will be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be one in us so that this world will believe that you sent me into this world. I have given them the glory that you gave me, so that they will be one as we are one— I in them and you in me—so that they will be brought to complete unity.

- John 17:21-22

May they also be one in us so that this world will believe that you sent me into this world. I have given them the glory that you gave me, so that they will be one as we are one— I in them and you in me—so that they will be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me into this world, and that you have loved them even as you have loved me.

- John 17:22-23

I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world.

- John 17:6

The Five Renunciations

Entering the unity of the Trinity requires walking in the light. To walk in the light, I must leave darkness behind.

1. I renounce hostility ...
(First married men)
... towards God, my wife,
and all people.
(Then married women)
... towards God, my
husband, and all people.
(Then those who are not married)
... towards God and towards
all people.

To renounce an action or an attitude is to make a public statement of rejection. It is confession that the action or attitude renounced is inconsistent with the love of God, and for that reason should be rejected. It is a commitment to guard our words and our thoughts. And because this is a public renunciation, made in a community of witnesses, it is a commitment to be held accountable for our words and actions in all public contexts - including community gatherings, church services, etc. as well as social media, which sadly often encourages (or even 'exalts') hostility and contempt. Let us keep in mind that Jesus said the world will know that we are His disciples by our love for one another. For His sake, let us strive to express love for fellow Christians and for our enemies in the words we speak and in those we write.

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. – 1 John 1:7

In our New Testament study on the foundations of reconciliation, we have come to understand that reconciliation addresses not primarily division, but hostility and alienation.

Separation in the sense of distinction is not a barrier to unity for God. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are unique persons of the Godhead, and yet they are fully united and truly One. A husband and wife are separate people, yet God makes them one. God created and ordained various divisions in scripture. He separated day and night. He separated a people unto Himself, then separated a priestly tribe within that people.

The problem which reconciliation addresses is hostility. And interpersonal hostility is expressed in many ways, both with words and deeds (Matthew 5:21-24; see Appendix 2).

The 1st arena of hostility is between individuals and God (Genesis 3:1-10 & 22-24; Romans 5:10; Colossians 1:19-23). Thus this is the first and most important arena of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians 5:20) That is why it is listed first in the renunciations.

The 2nd arena of hostility is between husband and wife, between man and woman (Genesis 3:11-19; 1 Corinthians 7:10-11). Thus

husbands renounce hostility to their wives, and wives to their husbands.

The 3rd arena of hostility is between individuals – brother to brother, so to speak (Genesis 4:3-16). This is usually the arena where division of the body of Christ plays out (Ephesians 2:14-18).

This first renunciation of hostility to “all people” provides a general statement that is then covered in more detail in the next 4 renunciations.

See Appendix 9 for links to a series of in-depth studies on hostility in the Foundations of Reconciliation series by Amy & Thomas.

2. I renounce anti-Semitism.

We recognize the Jewish people as a people dear to the Father, marked by His promises and eternal love.

We acknowledge the sad history of Christian anti-Semitism and grieve over it. (See Appendix 5 for examples of anti-Semitism.)

We thank God that He has preserved the Jewish people through all their tribulations, and we rejoice to see many Jews coming to know Jesus as their Messiah in our time. We pray for the day when many more sons of Israel welcome the return of Jesus, King of the Jews, and King of the Nations.

3. I renounce anti-Catholicism.

4. I renounce anti-Protestantism.

We begin our renunciation of anti-Catholicism and anti-Protestantism by recognizing unequivocally that both traditions are Christian - in that they affirm the Nicene Creed as a fundamental expression of Christian faith.

We recognize that the Holy Spirit has worked powerfully through both traditions, in both individuals and institutions. We humble ourselves before the Lord and confess that we dare not reject anyone whom He has willed to fill with His Spirit. We commit to look and listen for the Holy Spirit in one another.

To renounce anti-Catholicism or anti-Protestantism does not mean we must agree with every doctrine our brothers and sisters hold. We respect one another’s conscience.

We commit to listening carefully and learning directly from one another. When we encounter words or practices that concern us, we seek to learn more about the history or reason for those practices. Respectful dialogue can bring us closer toward unity.

We recognize that our enemy loves to slander and distort, so we commit to speaking openly

5. I renounce contempt towards all whom Christ has accepted.

I will be open to the Holy Spirit showing me additional areas for repentance.

with one another instead of entertaining polemic against one another.

Contempt is a particular problem in modern Western societies. Our news, entertainment, and social media are full of contempt. Tragically, our churches are also filled with contempt.

Jesus gave a specific warning against contempt in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:22), calling it a sin of violence – equivalent to murder of the heart – and urging an immediate response of reconciliation (Matthew 5:23).

Paul points out that we must accept one another, as Christ has accepted us (Romans 5:17). How can we be contemptuous to one whom our Lord and Saviour has graciously welcomed and forgiven? We must renounce contempt in our own hearts, words, and deeds.

See Appendix 3 for some thoughts from George Miley on the subject of contempt.

As we learn to walk in the light, we will discover that the Holy Spirit will continue to open up new areas of self-knowledge. This requires a continual commitment to humility, repentance and love for one another.

We don't need to strive to identify these areas. We allow the Holy Spirit to do this work. Only God knows when we are ready to face a new area of repentance.

The Five Commitments

In order to live out John 17, I commit to these actions:

It may be helpful to distinguish between an intention, a commitment, and a vow.

An intention is a movement of the heart towards an end. A commitment is an intention put into action. A public commitment requires accountability. A vow is a solemn, binding promise. Marriage is enacted with vows. Baptism liturgies in many traditions also include vows.

For this section, we are asking for your commitment. This is more than an intention – though it is important to have the intention as a starting place. This is less than a vow – these are not binding promises, or lifelong commitments.

1. I will pray with Jesus for the unity of the Body of Christ.

Because this is a commitment, it should involve concrete actions, including the removal of obstacles to the commitment (fear, busy-ness, sloth, envy, unforgiveness and the like).

It might feel like heresy to pray for our love for one other to be of the same quality as the Father and the Son – except that Jesus prayed it. His prayer gives us confidence to pray for this!

Do you think Jesus has stopped praying John 17:21? When we think of our Great High Priest interceding for us in Heaven (Hebrews 7:25), certainly one of his prayers must be the only prayer recorded in Scripture that He prayed on earth for us. For it has not yet been answered by the Father!

And how do we pray with Jesus for unity? Here are some places to begin:

(1) Turn John 17:21-26 into your own prayer. No better way to join with Jesus!

(2) We can allow the Spirit to pray in and through us, since also the Spirit of Jesus intercedes for us, with groans too deep for words (Roman 8:26).

(3) Make a habit of praying for the unity of the body of Christ using prayers drawn from Scripture (see Appendix 6).

(4) Similarly, take into your heart some of the many good prayers crafted throughout the history of the church on this subject (see Appendix 7).

2. I will be a minister of reconciliation.

“All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation. For God was reconciling the world to himself through Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has entrusted us with the message of reconciliation. Therefore we serve as Christ’s ambassadors, as though God was calling out to everyone through us. We plead with you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God!”

-- 2 Corinthians 5:18-20 (IEB)

God initiates and completes reconciliation. It is Jesus who has reconciled us to the Father (Romans 5:10, Colossians 1:19-22). It is Jesus who removes the dividing wall of hostility between Jews and Gentiles (Ephesians 2:14-16).

God honors us by inviting us to partner with Him in the ministry of reconciliation.

3. I will grieve the divisions of the people of God.

Hallelujah! This is a high calling – may we walk worthy of it.

We practice reconciliation first in our own lives, in our families, in our friendships, in our communities, in our churches, in our daily life. This is hard work! See Appendix 4 for a summary of the Actions of Reconciliation, and Appendix 9 for a link to a in-depth teaching on the actions of reconciliation.

Being a minister of reconciliation also means speaking prophetically – calling others to be reconciled to God, then to be reconciled to each other. This can be as simple as a gentle comment on a Facebook post, or as courageous as approaching a respected leader to encourage reconciliation where a relationship has been broken.

The rewards of being a reconciler are second to none! You will see hostility healed, relationships restored, and forgiveness extended. You will also experience rejection and an increased sense of sorrow at the hostility in our world. This is the work of God.

Grief, or lament, is a powerful act of reconciliation. To grieve is to recognize that something is wrong, and to allow that wrong to touch your mind and emotions.

Grief is possible when other steps of reconciliation may not be possible. For example, a Protestant and Catholic may find there is an important doctrinal issue that they simply cannot agree on. What if they were to decide to grieve together that they can't come to agreement?

Shared grief can forge unity. In the Wittenberg 2017 initiative, we experienced Catholics and Lutherans together repenting to Jews and Anabaptists. The Catholics & Lutherans were united in their grief.

See Appendix 9 for a link to a teaching Amy & Thomas Cogdell gave in Wittenberg regarding the importance of grieving. It also references a book "Reconciling All Things" that has an extensive section on the topic of Lament.

4. I will thank God for the glory given to other ecclesial communities.

Thanksgiving is also a powerful act of reconciliation. We tend to focus on, discuss, and pray about what we don't agree with in "the other." To be thankful for them necessitates thinking about what is good and right in that community.

To be thankful for the glory of other traditions, we must come to know them. Spending time with one another, studying history, looking for

the Holy Spirit in other believers are all acts of love. These acts of love will lead to thanksgiving.

Can we give thanks for an ecclesial community even when there are doctrines, practices, or leaders in that community whom we believe are wrong? Yes we can! How do we know this? The apostle Paul teaches us. Most of Paul's letters were written to confront sinful practices and/or correct wrong doctrine. But he begins each of these letters with a powerful thanksgiving to God for the same group of people he is about to correct!

For example, in 1 Corinthians Paul addresses disunity, pride, sexual perversion, and dangerously divisive communion practices – among other things! Yet how does he begin this letter?

"I give thanks to God always for you because of the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, that you were enriched in every way in him with all speech and all knowledge ... so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift, as you eagerly wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will keep you strong and on track to the end, without guilt or shame on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ."

-- 1 Corinthians 1:4-8

Wow! What if we were the kind of people who regularly prayed this prayer of thanksgiving for churches and denominations whose practices or theology concern us?

To take the next step, what if we were to speak this thanksgiving to them in person? Be ready for the Holy Spirit to give you opportunities to disarm hostility with gratitude.

See Appendix 8 for a full list of Pauline Prayers of Thanksgiving.

5. In regards to receiving communion, I will honor other ecclesial communities while staying true to the teachings of my own tradition.

*In ecclesial communities where we are requested not to take communion, we are choosing as a community to honor this request and to **not** take communion. This means that Protestants who adopt this Statement should not receive the Eucharist in Roman Catholic masses, and similarly Roman Catholics in our community should not partake in Protestant churches.*

This is extremely painful. We believe this division is painful to Christ. However, to unilaterally go against the teachings of the Roman Catholic church would be to dishonor them. It would also be a short-cut to the full

unity we believe God desires. There are significant doctrinal and pastoral differences between churches. The pain of separation in the Eucharist reminds us of those divisions which need reconciling on a deep level.

We choose personal pain, rather than corporate dishonoring the leadership of our churches. We choose to wait and petition Christ for full healing rather than opting for a superficial fix to our longing. So whenever disunity bars us from sharing the table of the Lord with those we love, we bring the pain to God and ask for His solution. We recognize that our pain is a small reflection of the pain of God's heart regarding the broken Body of Christ.

Finally, we recognize that others outside our community may choose to approach this problem differently. Some have the freedom of conscience to receive the Eucharist even when the church rules would caution against it. We do not condemn those who take this approach. We simply have determined that it is not our way of living out John 17.

Request for Power from the Holy Spirit

I cannot live out John 17 in my own strength. I need the living Spirit of the living God to guide and empower me.

*Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.
O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit instructs the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations,
Through Christ Our Lord,
Amen.*

"And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you."

-- John 14:16-17 (IEB)

"When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come."

-- John 16:13 (IEB)

"With you is wisdom, she who knows your works and was present when you made the world;

She understands what is pleasing in your sight and what is right according to your commandments.

Send her forth from the holy heavens, and from the throne of your glory send her, that she may labor at my side, and that I may learn what is pleasing to you.

For she knows and understand all things, and she will guide me wisely in my actions and guard me with her glory."

-- Wisdom of Solomon 9:9-11 (NRSV)

Closing Prayer

Father, I desire to be with Jesus where He is, and to see His glory, the glory You gave Him before the foundation of the world. I long for the government to be placed upon Jesus' shoulders. I look towards the day when the Bride of Christ finally unites her voice and joins with the Spirit of God, so that together we cry out: "Come, Lord Jesus!" And I listen eagerly for the response of the Root and the Offspring of David: "Behold, I am coming soon!"

In John 17 Jesus is looking not only towards his crucifixion and resurrection, but also the unity we can experience with Him in this life and in the life to come. We know this from John 17:24 – he prays to "be with" all those who would believe in Him based on the disciples' testimony.

"Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, so that they can see my glory—the glory you gave me because you loved me before the creation of the universe."

– John 17:24

Jesus is, of course, with us now.

"Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matt. 28:20

But His prayer in John 17:24 is looking forward to us being with Him in the New Jerusalem. So to live out John 17 is to look and long for the return of Jesus. It is to pray to the Father "we want to be with Jesus," in response to Jesus prayer to the Father that He wants to be with us.

When history culminates in this great event, Jesus will make all things new, and all things right.

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

– Isaiah 9:6

While nobody knows the date and time of Jesus' return, only the Father, there do seem to be three "markers" to look and work for. One is the evangelization of all nations (Matthew 24:14). Another is the illumination of Israel (Matthew 23:37-39, note that this comes after Matthew 21:9; and see also Romans 11:11-12). And a third is found in Revelation 22, at the very end of the Bible:

"I, Jesus, sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright Morning Star." The Holy Spirit and the bride shout, "Come!" ... Jesus, who testifies to all these things, declares, "Yes, I am coming soon!" Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!"

– Revelation 22:16-17,20

This indicates that Jesus will be ready to come "soon" when the body of Christ worldwide is united so as to be a single "Bride" with a single voice crying out, joining with the voice of the Holy Spirit who is already crying out, "Come, Lord Jesus."

And this makes sense, doesn't it? What Bridegroom would want to come for a Bride who doesn't long for Him? Or a Bride who was so divided and self-absorbed that her own body was destroying itself? Yet this is the state of the body of Christ today. Our work of living out John 17 is a work of healing in the body of Christ, to prepare the Bride to be able to shout with a single, clear, lovely voice – "Come, Lord Jesus!"

Appendix 1 – The Nicene Creed

Below is the text of the Nicene Creed that we will affirm together. Three notes afterwards explain our approach to potentially controversial aspects of the Nicene Creed.

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.**

Through him all things were made.

**For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father [and the Son]*.**

With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.

He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.**

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,

and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

** We have placed this phrase in brackets to recognize our brothers and sisters in the Eastern Churches, who usually do not include the phrase "and the Son" in their version of the Nicene Creed.*

*** The word "catholic" in the creed does not refer to the Roman Catholic church, but means "universal".*

Additional note: We have found very helpful the Messianic Jewish perspective on the Nicene Creed and Councils of Nicaea and Constantinople. We take seriously the concern that the foundational history of Israel as the people of God is not directly referenced in the Nicene Creed. This, combined with acts during the Nicaean Council that intentionally distanced the church from its Jewish roots, can cause Messianic Jews to regard the Nicene Creed as not representative of their core beliefs. We understand this. Even so, we hope that this does not mean that they cannot affirm the Nicene Creed – since the problem is something that is missing, rather than something that is wrong. We have been tremendously helped in this regard by Appendix 4 of Mark Kinzer's book Searching Her Own Mystery: Nostra Aetate, the Jewish People, and the Identity of the Church.

Appendix 2 – Words of Hostility & Reconciliation

Here is a useful guide to self-diagnosing hostility in your own heart. The words in the center column, in red, are words of hostility. Sit with them and ask the Holy Spirit, “Do any of these words characterize my relationships with others?” If so, take action to pursue reconciliation and move towards unity.

Unity	→	Hostility		
Peace	→	Tension	→	<i>Peace</i>
Patience	→	Taking Offense	→	<i>Patience</i>
Confidence	→	Insecurity	→	<i>Confidence</i>
Blessing	→	Blame	→	<i>Blessing</i>
Transparency	→	Willful Blindness	→	<i>Transparency</i>
Diversity	→	Competition	→	<i>Diversity</i>
Trust	→	Fear	→	<i>Trust</i>
Gentleness	→	Harshness	→	<i>Gentleness</i>
Attentiveness	→	Defensiveness	→	<i>Attentiveness</i>
Nearness	→	Exclusion	→	<i>Nearness</i>
Truth	→	Lying	→	<i>Truth</i>
...	→	...	→	...
Serving	→	Manipulation	→	<i>Serving</i>
Kindness	→	Meanness	→	<i>Kindness</i>
Joy	→	Cynicism	→	<i>Joy</i>
Sacrifice	→	Self-will	→	<i>Sacrifice</i>
Humility	→	Pride	→	<i>Humility</i>
Respect	→	Contempt	→	<i>Respect</i>
Responsibility	→	Victim mentality	→	<i>Responsibility</i>
Honor	→	Slander	→	<i>Honor</i>
Tenderness	→	Bitterness	→	<i>Tenderness</i>
Delight	→	Jealousy	→	<i>Delight</i>
Confrontation	→	Anger	→	<i>Confrontation</i>
Forgiveness	→	Revenge	→	<i>Forgiveness</i>
		Hostility	→	Unity

For more details on the Words of Hostility, here is the teaching that references this diagram:
<http://youtu.be/6AeimBPMPQ>

Appendix 3 – George Miley addresses Contempt

We asked George Miley to send us his thoughts on the subject of contempt. His teachings have influenced our specific inclusion of contempt in the 5th Renunciation.

Here is George's response. We are grateful to know George, who has the gift of teaching, bringing clarity to a difficult subject.

In Matthew 5:21-48 Jesus is addressing internal issues that lead from a life of evil and destruction to a life of eternal righteousness--the righteousness of the heart. He addresses six issues:

1. Violence
2. Destructive sexual desire
3. Divorce (relational abandonment)
4. Oaths (verbal manipulation)
5. Responding to wrong, real or perceived, by retaliation
6. Agape love

There is something to be said for seeing these as sequential. For example, if violence and destructive sexual activity were removed from marriage, what effect would that have on the number of divorces?

In any event, Jesus begins with acts of violence. Perhaps this is where human evil begins. Within one generation of the fall, Cain murdered his brother.

Murder is an act of violence. But Jesus is painting a picture of the righteousness of the kingdom as opposed to the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees--a righteousness of external behavior. Murder is external behavior. Jesus now extends the category to issues of the heart: anger and contempt.

Anger expressed is violence against another/others. Contempt is also violent. It is the demeaning of another/others. It is despising them in the heart. When given permission, it is expressed in contemptuous speech. Contemptuous speech, unchecked, gives permission for acts of contempt/violence.

The Nazis spoke openly, nationally, with contempt for Jews. Contempt became normal, acceptable, to be advocated. This gave permission ultimately for the Holocaust.

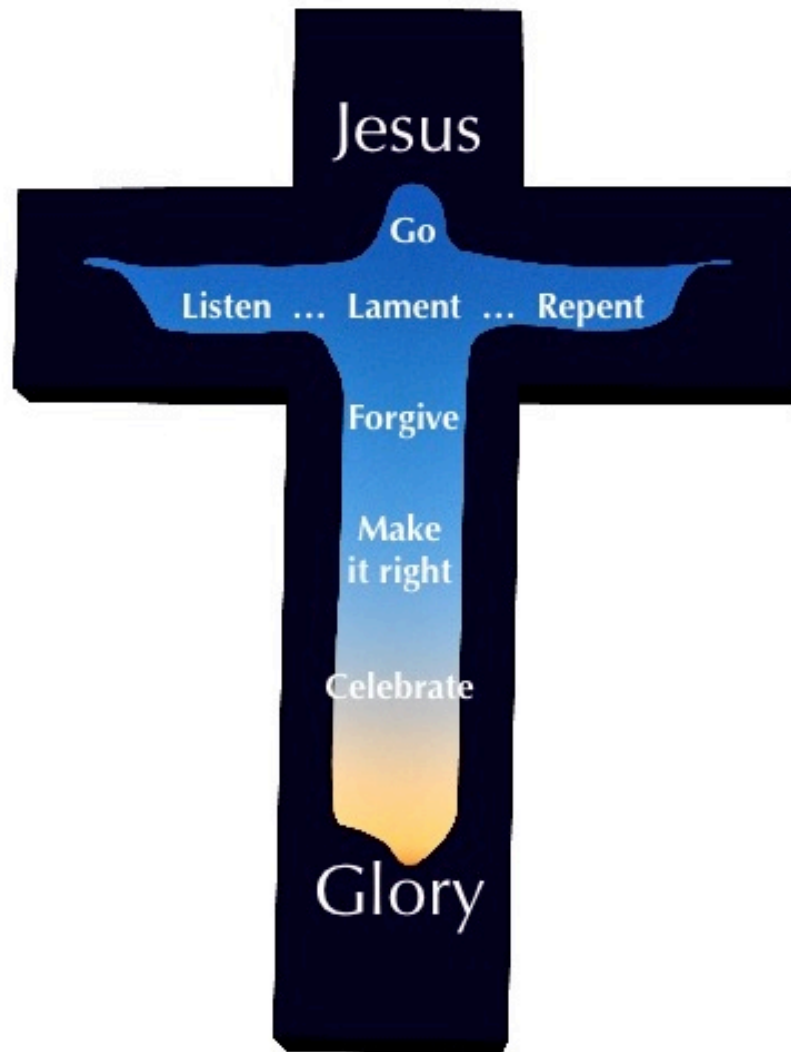
The level of contempt in American public speech today is giving permission for physical violence expressed toward individuals and groups. There are people and groups who are contemptible and therefore worthy of violent treatment.

Divisions in the Body of Christ have been advanced by the permission given to speak about "the other" in contempt. "The other" is not worthy of respect, because of

What is powerful enough to address this? Christlikeness formed in the inner life. As we become more and more the kind of person Jesus is, contempt for enemy turns into love for enemy. It is just the kind of person Jesus is, and the kind of person we become in him.

Appendix 4 – Actions of Reconciliation

What concrete steps must be taken to pursue reconciliation? Well, each case is unique and it is very important to seek the direction of the Holy Spirit. That being said, there is a commonly traveled path that can be referenced. We have created a simple graphic to show that reconciliation always starts with Jesus, and always ends in glory if both parties are willing to engage. The actions taken in between are usually in the sequence shown, though once again it is most important to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit.



For more details on the Actions of Reconciliation, here is the teaching that references this diagram: <https://youtu.be/bxBLCobr5ac>

Appendix 5 – Examples of Anti-Semitism

Our friends at the 9th of Av initiative have compiled a comprehensive 248-page list of historical acts related to anti-Semitism, mostly by Christians. “The List” was compiled in the hopes that repentance will bring healing to the relationship between Christians and Jews.

The entire list is worth reading, though it’s not an easy read.

Below are selected acts of anti-Semitism, to help answer the question “What is anti-Semitism?” that could arise from the 2nd Renunciation of this Statement. They are purposefully drawn from all periods of history, and from all the major ecclesial communities of the Body of Christ.

Church Fathers

67	Irenaeus' writings sow seeds for what later became known as Replacement Theology	c. 180	In his book Against Heresies, he identified Jews with Heresies, and made it clear that the Jews were disinherited from the love of God. <i>“The Jews have rejected the Son of God and cast Him out of the vineyard when they slew Him. Therefore, God has justly rejected them and has given to the Gentiles outside the vineyard the fruits of its cultivation.”</i>	Ilus Holy Hatred p. 30 Father Forgive p. 66 http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/irenaeus-book4.html
68	Tertullian:	197	Tertullian's <i>Apologeticus</i> made it clear that the Jews were	Father Forgive p. 66

The Eastern Church

86	St. Ephrem the Syrian	c. 306-73	penance before receiving the Sunday communion. Ephrem the Syrian was a Syriac Christian deacon, theologian, and a prolific writer of liturgical hymns (<i>see entries below</i>), a number of which carry maligning references to the Jews. Ephrem is especially beloved in the Syriac Orthodox Church, and counted as a Venerable Father (i.e., a sainted Monk) in the Eastern Orthodox Church. He was declared a Doctor of the Church in the Catholic Church in 1920. In this region, Christian “orthodoxy” as defined by the Church Council of Nicaea in 325 CE (<i>see entry below</i>) was threatened by other groups and beliefs regarded as heretical, including Bardaisanites, Arians, Marcionites, Manicheans, Gnostics etc. Judaism also presented a strong attraction to local Christians. Ephrem promoted an ‘orthodox’ understanding of Christian faith through the many hymns, or <i>madrash</i> e, that he wrote for liturgical use, many of which were anti-Jewish. He must have perceived the Jewish celebration of Passover as a threat to Christian worship, otherwise he would not have gone to such lengths to argue that the temple was permanently destroyed, that Christian worship replaced Jewish worship, and that “the people” (Jews) were dispersed so that the church from “the peoples” (Christians) could be assembled.	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ephrem_the_Syrian https://njr.div.ed.ac.uk/primary-sources/rabbinic/st-ephrem-ephrem-the-syrian-c-306-373-ce-anti-jewish-hymns/ http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0259-94222015000100088#top_fn33 Father Forgive p. 68
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The Roman Catholic Church

France; the Rhineland, Cologne, Mainz, Worms, and Speyer in Germany	1146-47		<i>Radulph</i> ", and forced the monk to return to his monastery. The Pope commissioned French abbot Bernard of Clairvaux to preach the Second Crusade, and granted the same indulgences for it which Pope Urban II had accorded to the First Crusade. As in the First Crusade, the preaching inadvertently led to attacks on Jews, with a fanatical French monk named Radulphe (<i>see entry 1146 above</i>) inspiring massacres of Jews in the Rhineland, Cologne, Mainz, Worms and Speyer, claiming Jews were not contributing financially to the rescue of the Holy Land, and using the rationale that it didn't make sense to go all the way to the Holy Land to kill the infidel while leaving them safe and snug at home. It also insured that they had the virtue of fighting an "infidel" without having to face the expense and danger of a long journey, or an armed enemy who could fight back. St. Bernard, the Crusade's official preacher, (assigned that role by the Pope), tried to stop the killings by citing the Church's traditional view that the Jews must be preserved until the return of Yeshua, when they will supposedly serve as witnesses to their own crimes. Although many Jews were killed, compared to the First Crusade, the loss of life was far less extensive in the Second Crusade.	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Crusade http://www.jewishhistory.org.il/history.php?startyear=1140&endyear=1149 https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/2617029/jewish/The-Bloody-Crusades.htm
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The Protestant Church (Lutheran)

Martin Luther publishes <i>Von Schem Hamphoras und vom Geschlecht Christi</i> : "Of the Unknowable Name and the Generations of Christ"	1543		<i>Von Schem Hamphoras</i> was written just a few months after "On the Jews and Their Lies" (<i>see entry above</i>), a 125-page book where he argues that the Jews are no longer the "chosen people" but the "devil's people". The Nazi Party used his writings to build up antisemitism during the 1930s and '40s, by exerting pressure on schools to incorporate it into the curriculum, and the Lutheran church to incorporate it into sermons. This book includes the quote on Judensau (<i>see entry below</i>), and this prophetic statement: " <i>Even if they were punished in the most gruesome manner that the streets ran with their blood, that their dead would be counted, not in the hundred thousands, but in the millions, as happened under Vespasian in Jerusalem and for evil under Hadrian, still they must insist on being right even if after these 1,500 years they were in misery another 1,500 years, still God must be a liar and they must be correct. In sum, they are the devil's children, damned to Hell... Perhaps, one of the merciful Saints among us Christians may think I am behaving too crude and disdainfully against the poor, miserable Jews in that I deal with them so sarcastically and insulting. But, good God, I am much too mild in insulting such devils...</i> "	Holy Hatred p. 91 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vom_Schem_Hamphoras https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Luther_and_antisemitism http://www.yashanet.com/library/fathers.htm
Martin Luther	1543		Luther tries unsuccessfully to get the Jews expelled from	https://en.wikipedia.

Mass Media / Entertainment

"The Wandering Jew", British film	1933		A British fantasy film about a Jew who is forced to wander the Earth for centuries because he rebuffed Jesus while he was carrying the Cross. He is finally burnt at the stake by the Spanish Inquisition, but is forgiven by God and finally allowed to die. This movie would serve as the inspiration for Germany's much more violent antisemitic propaganda movie "The Eternal Jew" in 1940.	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Wandering_Jew_(1933_film) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HGmbD1DnJTI
Hitler leverages	1933		"The Catholic Church considered the Jews pestilent for 1,500	https://en.wikiquote

The Protestant Church (USA / Evangelical)

			Av.	
Joel McDurmon, president of American Vision, "a Biblical Worldview Ministry"	2010		In his article "Jerusalem, Mother of Harlots" (later published in a book called "Jesus v. Jerusalem"), he claims that Jerusalem is the mystery whore Babylon; that because Jesus is the "Final Sacrifice, the sacrifices at the Temple became idolatrous and pagan... Within a generation, the idolatrous, adulterous nation—the great whore temple in Jerusalem—suffered a final blow from God. It was destroyed into oblivion"; and concludes "The Old Jewish people were not merely exiled from their kingdom someday to return. No. This time, the kingdom was taken from them and given to the true nation. Christ created a new bride. Why would Christ desire to return to the whore he has cast aside and divorced when He has a pristine Bride descending from heaven, uncorrupted by idolatry? He didn't. He left that whore riding her patron, the beast of Rome. And the great mother of harlots suffered the judgment of her whoredom. She was divorced and disinherited. The inheritance now belongs to the Bride."	https://americanvision.org/3880/jerusalem-mother-of-harlots/
Temple	2012		The Temple Institute begins releasing the first of its an	https://www.templeinstitute.org/

The Protestant Church (USA / Alt-right)

Pittsburgh massacre	Oct 27 2018	11	<p>The Pittsburgh massacre was a mass shooting that occurred at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, while Shabbat morning services were being held. 11 people were killed and 7 injured. It was the deadliest attack to date on the Jewish community in the United States.</p> <p>Robert Bowers, a Christian nationalist with a deep hatred for Jews, yelled "All Jews must die" as he opened fire. In his bio section on the "Gab" website (the alt-right version of Twitter), his profile photo caption read "Jews are the children of Satan (John 8:44)", adding "The Lord Jesus Christ is come in the flesh." By referencing John 8:44, which reads "You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies", he was demonising Jewish people.</p> <p>How ironic that the last entry in this LIST would have to echo the antisemitic refrain that has characterized the 2,000 year bloody history with the Jews. Perhaps this is a sign that we have much work still to do to repair the damages of the past.</p> <p>Regarding prayer, we suggest you look for the "40 Days of Repentance Prayer Guide" that has been published to accompany this document.</p>	https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/27/us/active-shooter-pittsburgh-synagogue-shooting.html https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pittsburgh_synagogue_shooting https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_nationalism https://www.patheos.com/blogs/progressive-secularhumanist/2018/10/pittsburgh-synagogue-shooter-identified-as-christian-nationalist-robert-bower/

Appendix 6 – Prayers towards Unity, Drawn from Scripture

Here are some biblical prayers drawn from the 3rd AHOP Prayer Book. Each of them touches in some way on the various themes of reconciliation and unity. We encourage you to pray these with Jesus, to the Father, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

101) 2 Chronicles 5: 13-14 *God’s enduring goodness & mercy*

The trumpeters and singers joined in unison, **as with one voice**, to give praise and thanks to the LORD. Accompanied by trumpets, cymbals and other instruments, they raised their voices in praise to the LORD and sang:

"He is good;
his love endures forever."

Then the temple of the LORD was filled with a cloud, and the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the temple of God.

154) Rev. 5: 8-14 *Angelic host, seraphim and the 24 elders worship Jesus – 2nd and 3rd “worthy songs”*

When He had taken the scroll, the 4 living creatures and the 24 elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a Harp, and golden Bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. They sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, And have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth.” Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was 10,000 times 10,000, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice: “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing!” Every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: “Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!” The 4 living creatures said, “Amen!” The 24 elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.

157) Rev. 7:9-12 All nations worship at end of the age - heavenly host overwhelmed by fulfillment of this

...behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, And crying out with a loud voice, saying, **“Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”** All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the 4 living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying: **“Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen.”**

169) Ephesians 3:20-21 Glory in the church throughout all generations

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

259) Acts 1:4, 14 Waiting in prayer for the power of the Holy Spirit

On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: **“Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised,** which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”
... They all **joined together constantly in prayer,** along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

351) Rev. 22:17,20 The cry of mutual longing from the Bride & the Spirit

And the Spirit and the Bride say, **“Come!”** And let him who hears say, **“Come!”** And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely ... Even so, **come, Lord Jesus!**

354) John 17:24 Jesus’ unquenchable desire for intimacy with us

“Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.”

358) *Philippians 1:8-9 Paul's affectionate longing for the church at Philippi*

God can testify **how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.** And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

401) *Judges 21: 2 - 4 The Israelites grieve for the tribe of Benjamin*

The people went to Bethel, where they sat before God until evening, raising their voices and weeping bitterly. "O LORD, the God of Israel," they cried, "why has this happened to Israel? **Why should one tribe be missing from Israel today?"**

Early the next day the people built an altar and presented burnt offerings and fellowship offerings.

557) *John 17:20-23 Jesus prays that the Bride would share the unity of the Father and the Son*

... that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. **I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them, and you in me.** May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

558) *1 Thes. 3:10-13 Prayer for love to increase in the Church*

... may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all...so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.

559) *Colossians 2:2-3 Struggling in prayer for unity in love producing knowledge of Christ*

... that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

560) Rom. 15:5-7 Prayer for unity in the church across a city or region

Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus.

576) John 17:9-17 The Son asks the Father to protect the Bride

I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. **Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name—the name you gave me—so that they may be one as we are one.** While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me ... I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. **My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.** They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

664) Philippians 1:4-7 Praying with joy for heart-partners in the gospel

In all my prayers for all of you, **I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel** from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart ...

880) Revelation 11:17: Heavenly beings give thanks to God for His judgments, which remove the things that hinder love on the earth

We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and you have begun to reign. The nations raged, but the time came for your wrath; and the time came for the dead to be judged; and the time came for rewarding your servants, the prophets and saints; and the time came for rewarding those who fear your name, both small and great; and the time came destroying the destroyers of the earth!

651) Revelation 19:7-10 The surpassing joy of the marriage supper of the Lamb

Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting:

“Hallelujah!

For our Lord God Almighty reigns.

Let us rejoice and be glad

and give him glory!

For the wedding of the Lamb has come,

and his bride has made herself ready.

Fine linen, bright and clean,

was given her to wear.”

(Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.)

Then the angel said to me, “Write: **‘Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!’**” And he added, “These are the true words of God.”

Appendix 7 – Prayers towards Unity, Crafted by the Church

Here are some prayers crafted by the church through the centuries. Each of them touches in some way on the various themes of reconciliation and unity. We encourage you to pray these, together with all the saints.

I'm not alone in calling You Father. I come to You along with other sisters and brothers. You are our Father. We come to You on behalf of others who would make great kingdom siblings, but they don't know You yet. Finish bringing Your family together.

- What Would Jesus Pray?, P. 2

Almighty God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit, together with believers all over the world, we gather today to glorify Your Name. You are the Creator of heaven and earth. There is no one like You, holy and righteous in all Your ways. We submit to Your authority as the King of the universe. We pray with one voice to enthrone You in our hearts and to honor You before the world. Lord God, You alone are worthy of our praise and adoration.

- GDOP Prayer for the World, Prayer #1, 2009

Gather Your scattered, broken flock. Common causes fail to hold us. Rival leaders divide us. Lift Your voice like a mighty shepherd. Assemble us as one united flock. Make Your presence known and lead us.

- Seek God for the City, 2011, Day 9

As enemies nailed You to a cross, You cried out for God to forgive them. When enemies of the cross rise up in these days with frightening strength, make us to be sons and daughters of God, enduring the hostility of those who oppose You with prayers of blessing. We lift our enemies to You. Give them what none of us deserve: the forgiveness and blessing of Your love.

- Seek God for the City, 2010 Day 36

For whoever believes
in the power
of the blood of Jesus,
nothing is impossible!

The Lord shall surely
perfect that thing,
that thing
which concerneth thee.

To whoever believes
in the power
of the blood
of the Crucified Lamb,
nothing shall be called impossible!

Blessed be the Lamb
that was slain before
the foundation of the world.

- Celtic Daily Prayer, Meditations, Day 7, P. 52-53

Christ, King of Tenderness, Christ, King of Tenderness, bind us with a bond that cannot be broken. Bind us with a bond of love that cannot be broken.

- *Celtic Daily Prayer, Holy Communion, p. 82*

I will go, Lord, if You lead me: I will hold Your people in my heart. Deeper in my heart I will hear Your call; I will cry for the desert until my eyes run with tears because people do not obey Your laws.

If I open my eyes to the world around me, if I open my heart to the people that surround me, then I feel pain and brokenness, I see suffering and injustice. Lord, see what evil the prince of this world is devising. Let the wind of Your Spirit blow and reverse the works of darkness: and Your fire will cover the earth.

- *Celtic Daily Prayer, In the power of the Spirit, p. 159*

You pour life into me, giving me speech, sense, desire, giving me thought and action. My fame or repute will be just as You allow; You mark the way before me.

As I remember saints who have journeyed before me, Lord, teach me the way of their simplicity: strength with humility, at peace in the fear of God. May I also go wherever I am led.

- *Celtic Daily Prayer, In willing service, p. 163-164*

Mighty and loving God, we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We seek our own way. We divide the body of Christ. In Your mercy, cleanse us and heal us. Let the words of our mouths, the thoughts of our hearts, and everything that we do be filled with faith, hope, and love. Amen.

- *Lutheran Liturgy, Confessional Prayer, 3rd Sunday after Epiphany (Year C)*

Lord, let our memory provide no shelter for grievance against another. Lord, let our heart provide no harbour for hatred of another. Lord, let our tongue be no accomplice in the judgment of a brother.

- *Celtic Daily Prayer, Into a desert place, p. 174-175*

- Come now live in us. Let us stay in You, since if we be all in You, we cannot be far from one another, though some may be in heaven and some upon earth.

- *Celtic Daily Prayer, The shadow of death, p. 226*

God be with us on this Thy day; to us and with us on this Thy day. Grant us forgiveness, grant us Thine own forgiveness, Thou merciful God of all.

- *Celtic Daily Prayer, Finan Readings, Oct. 2, p. 760*

Almighty Father who gave your only Son to die for our sins and to rise for our justification: Give me grace so to put away the leaven of malice and wickedness, that I may always serve you in pureness of living and truth; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

- *Divine Hours - Spring, p. 527*

Let the healing grace of your love, O Lord, so transform me that I may play my part in the transfiguration of the world from a place of suffering, death and corruption to a realm of infinite light, joy and love. Make me so obedient to your Spirit that my life may become a living prayer, and a witness to your unfailing presence.

- *Oxford Book of Prayer, Martin Israel, p. 84*

Lord, hear the prayers of your people and bring the hearts of believers together in your praise and in common sorrow for their sins. Heal all divisions among Christians that we may rejoice in the perfect unity of your Church and move together as one to eternal life in your kingdom.

- *Liturgy of the Hours (1975) Vol. III Appendix III: Additional Prayers 10, p. 1959*

Lord receive from us our prayers in this hour and in every hour. Ease our life and guide us to fulfill Your commandments. Sanctify our spirits. Cleanse our bodies. Conduct our thoughts. Purify our intentions. Heal our diseases. Forgive our sins. Deliver us from every evil grief and distress of heart. Surround us by Your holy angels, that, by their camp, we may be guarded and guided, and attain the unity of faith, and the knowledge of Your imperceptible and infinite glory. For You are blessed forever. Amen.

- *Agpeya*

O God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Savior, the Prince of Peace: Give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions; take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatever else may hinder us from godly union and concord; that, as there is but one Body and one Spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may be all of one heart and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

- *Book of Common Prayer (1979) Collects: Various Occasions 14, p. 255*

Almighty Father, whose blessed Son before his passion prayed for his disciples that they might be one, as you and he are one: Grant that your Church, being bound together in love and obedience to you, may be united in one body by the one Spirit, that the world may believe in him whom you have sent, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

- *Blog from the Core, Book of Common Prayer (1979) Prayers for the Church 14, p. 818*

O almighty God, who didst send thy Son Jesus Christ to break down every middle wall of partition, and who didst create in him one new man by reconciling all men to thyself in one body through the cross: Hear us, we beseech thee, who maintain old walls, and build new ones, so separating ourselves one from the other and bringing the cross to open shame. Remove far from us, we pray thee, all false pride and worldly ambition, that being kindly affectioned one toward another, and in honor preferring one another, we may worship thee in spirit and in truth, one people of God; to the glory of thy holy name. Amen.

- *United Methodist Book of Worship (1964-65) Prayers of Petition and Intercession 5, p. 185*

Almighty and eternal God, you keep together those you have united. Look kindly on all who follow Jesus your Son. We are all consecrated to you by our common baptism; make us one in the fullness of faith and keep us one in the fellowship of love. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

- *Liturgy of the Hours (1975) Vol. III Appendix III: Additional Prayers 7, p. 1958*

O Lord and Master of my life!
Take from me the spirit of sloth,
faint-heartedness, lust of power, and idle talk.
But give rather the spirit of chastity,
humility, patience, and love to Thy servant.
Yea, O Lord and King!
Grant me to see my own errors and not to judge my brother;
For Thou art blessed unto ages of ages. Amen

- *St. Ephrem the Syrian, Diary of an Arts Pastor blog, 14 Feb 2013*

I want to unite my life to your life, my thoughts to your thoughts, my affections to your affections, my heart to your heart, my works to your works, my whole self to your self, in order to become through this union more holy and more pleasing in the sight of your Father and in order to make my life more worthy of your grace and of the reward of eternity.
I want to join your intentions to my intentions, the holiness of your actions to mine and the excellence of your lofty virtues to the lowliness of mine.

- *Hearts on Fire, Jean-Pierre Me'daille*

What I beg for you beside the manger of the Infant Jesus is that he grant you the grace to grow more and more in affection for that holy vocation of yours which is so beautiful, for what can one do more pleasing to our Lord than to be always engaged in making him known and loved.

- *Saint Therese Couderc, Letter to her nephew Adrien Rouvier, from At Prayer with Saint Therese Couderc, 1863*

Lord, give me I pray:

- A remembering heart for the things that have happened
- An attentive heart to what I have heard
- A forgiving heart for what has hurt
- A grateful heart for what has blessed
- A brave heart for what may be required
- An open heart to all that may come
- A trusting heart to go forth with You
- A loving heart for You and all Your creation
- A longing heart for the reconciliation of all things
- A willing heart to say "Yes" to what You will.

- *Kurt Bjorklund, Prayers for Today by Leighton Ford, American evangelist/spiritual mentor (1926 - present day) (found by Randy Shrekengast of AN)*

Gracious Father,
we pray to you for your holy Church.
Fill it with your truth.
Keep it in your peace.
Where it is corrupt, reform it.
Where it is in error, correct it.
Where it is in right, defend it.
Where it is in want, provide for it.
Where it is divided, reunite it.
For the sake of your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ.

- *William Laud, Paulist Prayer Book, p. 408*

Lord Jesus Christ, you prayed:

"May they all be one, as you, Father, are in me, and I in you.

May they be one, so that the world might believe."

We pray that the body of Christ might be united in you, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Break down what stands between us. Strengthen what unites us.

Give victory over what separates us.

Fill us with the power of your Spirit, that we might seek ways to unite with each other.

Bring about the day when

we can praise you together,

in the fellowship of all who believe.

- *Wittenberg 2017, Prayer crafted by the European leaders (English version)*

God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may you give to all Christians, and especially to those entrusted with leadership in your Church, the spirit of wisdom and revelation. With the eyes of our hearts may we see the hope to which you have called us: one body and one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above and through all and in all. This we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

- *Graymoor, Prayer for Christian Unity 2016s*

Dear God, thank you for warm summer nights and candlelight and good food. But thank you most of all for friends. We appreciate the complicated and wonderful gifts you give us in each other. And we appreciate the task you put down before us, of loving each other the best we can, even as you love us. We pray in Christ's name, Amen.

- *Prayer of The Preacher from "Because of Winn-Dixie" by Kate DiCamillo, chapter 22*

Appendix 8 – Pauline Prayers of Thanksgiving

Paul wrote beautiful prayers thanking God for churches he usually was about to take to task in the rest of the epistle! We can “re-pray” these beautiful prayers for the churches in our city, and for different ecclesial communities worldwide. These are also drawn from the 3rd edition of the AHOP Prayer Book.

860) 2 Thess 2:13 & 1:3: Our obligation to give thanks for other bodies of believers

We are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brothers and sisters, the beloved of the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth ...

We are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brothers and sisters, as is fitting, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing more and more ...

Because of this, among the churches of God we ourselves boast of you ...

861) Philippians 1:3-6 Heart-rich thanksgiving for partners in the gospel

I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, each memory a trigger to joyful prayer, **full of thanks for your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.** And I am absolutely confident that he who began a good work in you will be carrying it through to completion up to the day of Jesus. It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart ...

863) Philemon 4-7 Thanks for those who love and refresh other saints

I thank my God always when I remember you in my prayers, **because I hear about your faith in the Lord Jesus and I hear about your love for all the saints ...** For I have derived much joy and comfort from your love, my brother, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you.

864) Colossians 1:3-5: Thanksgiving for the character of the church

We always thank Father of our Lord Jesus Christ when we pray for you, **because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love which you have for all the saints – the faith and love that spring from the hope stored up for you in heaven ...**

865) Romans 1:8 Paul gives thanks for the good reputation of the church

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, **because your faith is being reported all over the world.**

866) Romans 6:17-18 Gratitude for whole-hearted obedience from former sinners

But thanks be to God that, **though you who were once slaves of sin, you have become obedient with your whole heart to the teaching entrusted to you, and having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.**

873) 1 Thess 1:2-3 Continually hold before God the church's faith, hope, and love

We give thanks to God always for you all, **constantly mentioning you in our prayers, continually remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in the Lord Jesus.**

874) 1 Corinthians 1:4-9: Paul gives thanks for the extraordinary grace given to followers of Jesus

I give thanks to God always for you **because of the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, that you were enriched in every way in him with all speech and all knowledge ...** so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift, as you eagerly wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will keep you strong and on track to the end, without guilt or shame on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Appendix 9 – Additional Resources

For some of you, it may be helpful to have multiple perspectives in approaching the topics that are introduced in the Statement of Personal Devotion. While not widespread in the church, compared to other (also important) topics, there are nonetheless wonderful teachings and books available – if you know where to look.

Audio / Video

Foundations of Reconciliation, a 6-part teaching series by Amy & Thomas Cogdell

1. The Unity of the Trinity
<https://soundcloud.com/austin-house-of-prayer/amy-cogdell-foundations-of-reconciliation-01-the-unity-of-the-trinity>
2. Hostility & Reconciliation
http://youtu.be/_6AeimBPMPQ
3. The 3 Arenas of Hostility & Reconciliation
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ljy-f6k6fIY>
4. The 3rd Arena – Person to Person
<https://youtu.be/i66sINhCd44>
5. The 3rd Arena – Stream to Stream
<https://youtu.be/JcUKgG9DKH8>
6. Actions of Reconciliation
<https://youtu.be/bxBLCobr5ac>

George Miley – Learning How to Forgive

1. <https://www.podbean.com/media/share/pb-f27yf-705144>
2. <https://www.podbean.com/media/share/pb-zg42v-6f4824>
3. Notes: <https://eifelfellowship.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/2018-02-16-Manuscript-w-watermarks-20.pdf>

Fr. Peter Hocken – Catholic / Evangelical Reconciliation, from his visit to AHOP in May 2011

- https://w.soundcloud.com/player/?url=https%3A//api.soundcloud.com/tracks/255585030%3Fsecret_token%3Ds-fR1Um&color=ff5500&auto_play=false&hide_related=false&show_comments=true&show_user=true&show_reposts=false

Thomas & Amy Cogdell – The Beauty of Completeability, the final talk from the final Wittenberg 2017 meeting

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iC16L50cU2U>

Richard Harvey – *The First Split in the Body of Christ and Its Consequences*, from the 2012 Volkenroda gathering of Wittenberg 2017, a good overview of the history of anti-Semitism and the hopes of reconciliation and restoration.

- https://w.soundcloud.com/player/?url=https%3A//api.soundcloud.com/tracks/253883853%3Fsecret_token%3Ds-nTHY2&auto_play=false&hide_related=false&show_comments=true&show_user=true&show_reposts=false&visual=true

***Church Divisions*, a 7-part series by Danny Malakowsky on the history & causes of church divisions throughout history, with the first three teachings a great introduction to unity & reconciliation in the church.**

- <http://www.churchdivisions.com/2000-year-history.html>

Ask us for further recommendations of links on any specific topic ...

Books

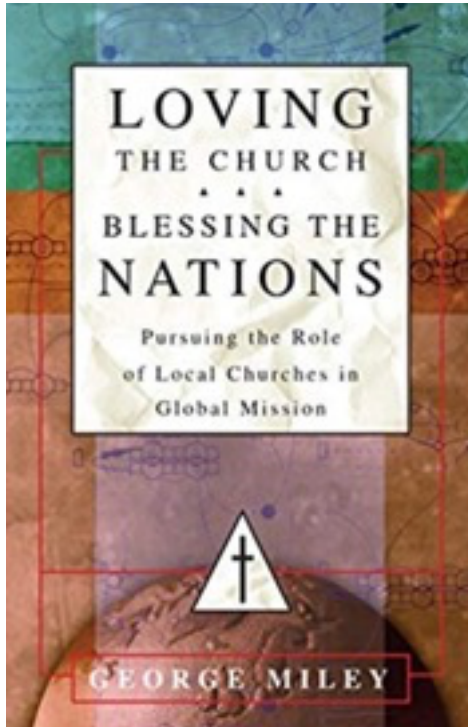
- John 17
- The Upper Room Discourse (John 13 – 16)
- The CTR Study Guide “*Jesus Prays the Upper Room Discourse*”
 - This study guide connects John 17 to the Upper Room Discourse, and is very “prayable” since it’s just scripture, in large font ☺
 - Available from CTR
- The entire Gospel of John
- All of the Gospels
- The New Testament
- The entire Bible

To complement the above mentioned highly recommended books ☺, below is a sampling of good books on the topics that the Statement of Personal Devotion touches on. Grab one or more and dive in!



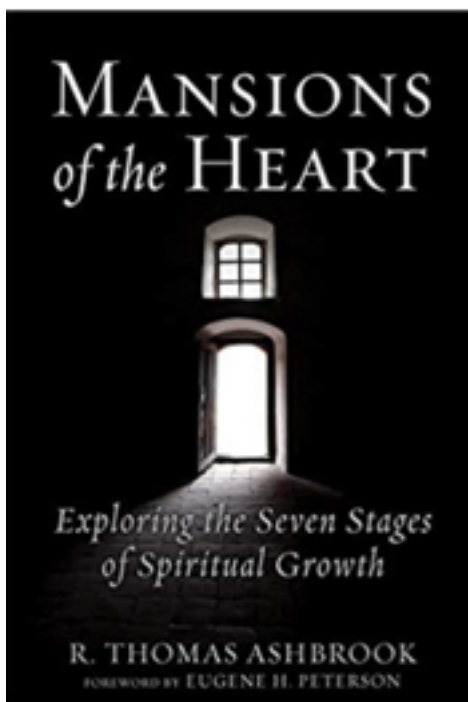
Orna Grinman, “Who’s Knocking On Your Door?”

- A wonderful, practical, short study on personal forgiveness & reconciliation from a Messianic Jewish friend
- Includes a companion Study Guide that can be used while reading the book
- <https://ornagrinnan.com/who-is-knocking-on-your-door/>
- Also, we have copies at CTR that can be checked out
- Bonus! Cover art by Jim Janknegt!



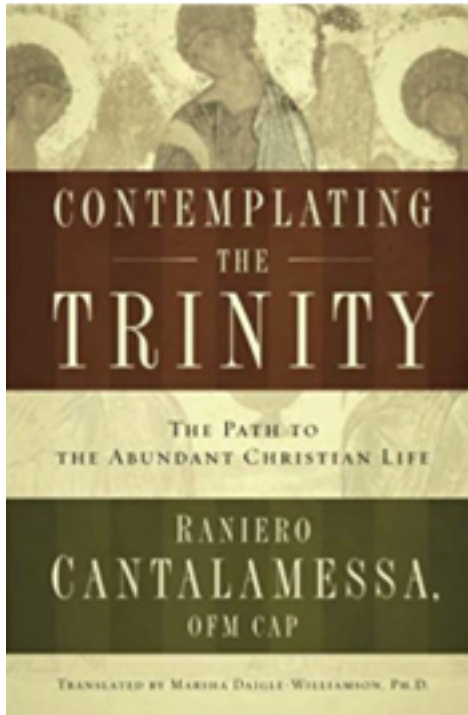
George Miley, “Loving the Church, Blessing the Nations”

- Addresses the topic of how to have a love for the church, while pursuing a specific calling broader than the local church, while also working in / with the local church
- This is focused on the context of working in missions, but the principles apply very well to unity & reconciliation as well
- <https://www.amazon.com/Loving-Church-Blessing-Nations-Pursuing/dp/0830856994>
- Also available for free at CTR



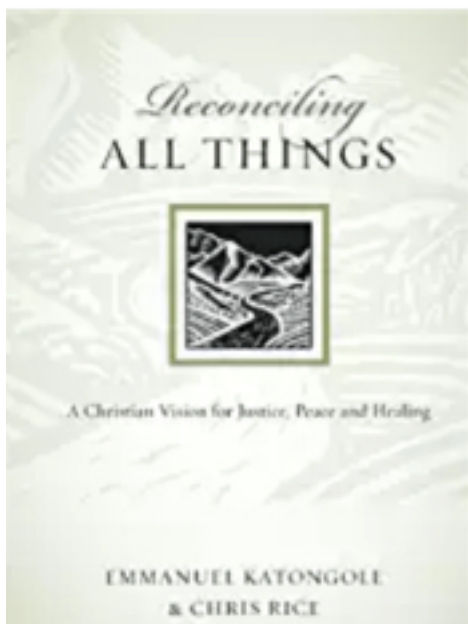
R. Thomas Ashbrook, “Mansions of the Heart”

- A roadmap of spiritual formation as a progression into the unity of the Trinity, based on the writings of St. Teresa of Avila & St. John of the Cross
- Written by a Lutheran pastor, who came to love and appreciate Roman Catholic spirituality as he sought a deeper walk with Jesus
- https://www.amazon.com/Mansions-Heart-Exploring-Stages-Spiritual/dp/1506454852/ref=sr_1_1_sspa



Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa, “Contemplating the Trinity”

- Good for diving deeper into contemplation of the unity of the Trinity
- Written by the preacher to the Papal Household – yes, Fr. Cantalamessa is the person who preaches to the Pope!
- [https://www.amazon.com/Contemplating-
Trinity-Path-Abundant-
Christian/dp/1593250975/ref=sr_1_sc_1](https://www.amazon.com/Contemplating-Trinity-Path-Abundant-Christian/dp/1593250975/ref=sr_1_sc_1)



Chris Rice & Emmanuel Katongole, “Reconciling All Things”

- Co-written by a Presbyterian from Mississippi and a Catholic from Uganda.
- Has a wonderful focus on the importance of lament in the process of reconciliation.
- [https://www.amazon.com/Reconciling-
All-Things-Christian-
Reconciliation/dp/0830834516](https://www.amazon.com/Reconciling-All-Things-Christian-Reconciliation/dp/0830834516)



John Armstrong, “Your Church is Too Small”

- John Armstrong is an evangelical with a deep calling to work for the unity of the body of Christ.
- He recounts his story from dogmatic fervor to a broader appreciation for the wider body of Christ.
- <https://www.amazon.com/Your-Church-Too-Small-Christ/dp/0310520991>

Ask us for further book recommendations on any specific topic ...