



# Wesleyan Covenant Association Prayer Guide February 2024

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THEME: HOLINESS

From: John Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*

## Pray Without Ceasing

In 1 Thessalonians 5:17, the Apostle Paul exhorts us to “pray without ceasing.” John Wesley in his classic *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* expounds,

*“God’s command “to pray without ceasing” is founded on the necessity that we have of his grace to preserve the life of God in the soul which can no more subsist one moment without it, than a body can without air.*

*Whether we think of, speak to, God, whether we act or suffer for him, all is prayer, when we have no other object than his love, and the desire of pleasing him.*

*All that a Christian does, even in eating and sleeping, is prayer, when it is done in simplicity, according to the order of God, without either adding to or diminishing from it by his own choice.*

*Prayer continues in the desire of the heart, though the understanding be employed on outward things.*

*In souls filled with love, the desire to please God is a continual prayer” (Wesley’s Works 11:438).*

## Suggested themes of prayer for each week of February 2024

Our prayer theme for February is **Holiness**, a central theological motif for John Wesley, early Methodists, and serious Methodists today. I believe that this is what the Holy Spirit is saying to the GMC in 2024. He is calling us to pursue scriptural holiness. With the preparatory season of Lent beginning on Ash Wednesday February 14, 2024, we pray for holiness throughout the month of February. Wesley’s classical work *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* will be used to help guide our prayer.

As we pray for renewal and revival in the GMC, the UMC, and throughout the church and world, we are reminded what ignited the Methodist revival of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and why we are Methodists. Wesley called “**scriptural holiness,**” “**entire sanctification,**” “**Christian Perfection,**” “**perfect love,**” or “**holiness of heart and life**” the reason that God raised us up. It is our “grand depositum” as Methodists. It is our call and mission. I believe a call and return to scriptural holiness needs to be the primary target in our prayer and in our lives for the people called Methodists. It is the key to our renewal and to returning to the doctrine, spirit, and discipline of our original DNA. **This month let us pray for entire sanctification throughout the GMC and the UMC. Let us repent of our sins, consecrate our lives, stand on the promise of holiness, and receive entire sanctification.**

If you choose, under the “Prayer” tap on the WCA website, send Dale an email to request and invitation to the WCA International Intercessory Network Third Monday Zoom Prayer session and join us in the business of prayer at 9:00 AM or 9:00 PM EDT.

- *As we supplicate our Lord, let us direct our prayers for the WCA, the UMC, the GMC, the church of God universal, its leaders, its people, its conferences, and its mission:*

**February 1 – 3 Let us repent of our sin – Matt. 3 (Wesley’s Works 11:376-77)** - In a *Plain Account*, Wesley directed Methodists to repent of:

- **“Evil or sinful thoughts”**- “If therefore, the heart be no longer evil, then evil thoughts no longer proceed out of it: For a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit.”
- **“Evil tempers”** – “Every one of these can say, with St. Paul, ‘I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me’...” and “purifieth himself even as he as he is pure. He is purified from pride; for Christ was lowly in heart: He is pure from desire and self-will; for Christ desired only to do the will of his Father: and he is pure from anger...’ for Christ was meek and gentle... Jesus saves his people from their sins, not only from outward sins, but from the sins of the heart.” Read 1 John 1:7-9
- **“Hardness of heart”** – “O that I now the rest might know, Believe and enter in! Now, Saviour, now the power bestow, And let me cease from sin! Remove this hardness from my heart, This unbelief remove: To me the rest of faith impart, the sabbath of thy love” (WW11:382).

**February 4 – 10 Pray for cleansing and deliverance from inbred sin – 1 John 1:7-9, (WW 11:385-87)**

- **“Redeem from all iniquity”** – “Saviour from sin, I wait to prove that Jesus is thy healing name; To lose, when perfected in love, Whatever I have, or can, or am; I stay me on thy faithful word, ‘The servant shall be as his Lord.’ Answer that gracious end in me for which thy precious life was given; Redeem me from all iniquity, restore, and make me meet for heaven. Unless thou purge my every stain, Thy suffering and my faith is vain.”
- **“The carnal mind”** – “Purge me from every sinful blot, My idols all be cast aside: Cleanse me from every evil thought, From all the filth of self and pride. The hatred of the carnal mind, Out of my flesh at once remove: Give me a tender heart, resigned, And pure, and full of faith and love.”
- **“Inbred sin”** – “From this inbred sin deliver: Let the yoke now be broke: Make me thine forever. Partner of thy perfect nature, Let me be Now in thee, a new sinless creature.”

**February 11 – 17 Let us pray for entire consecration (laying our all on the altar) – Romans 6, (WW 11:366,368, 382)**

- **Dedicate your life fully to Christ** – “I resolved to dedicate all my life to God, all my thoughts, and words, and actions; being thoroughly convinced, there was no medium; but that every part of my life (not some only) must either be a sacrifice to God, or myself, that is, in effect, to the devil.”
- **A Living Sacrifice** – “the living sacrifice of the heart he has chosen. Let it be continually offered up to God through Christ, in flames of holy love. And let no creature be suffered to share with him; for he is a jealous God. His throne will not divide with another; he will reign without rival...Let your soul be filled with so entire a love to Him that you may love nothing but for his sake.”
- **A Rest (trust) in His Love** – “Lord I believe a rest remains. To all thy people known; A rest where pure enjoyment reigns, and thou art loved alone. A rest where all our soul’s desire is fixed on things above; Where doubt and pain and fear expire, cast out by perfect love.”

**February 18 – 24 Claim the promise of entire sanctification (WW 11:367, 378, 388, 394) – 1 Thess. 5:2-24**

- **What is it?** – “It is that habitual disposition of the soul which, in sacred writings, is termed holiness, and which directly implies, the being cleansed from sin, from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit; and by consequence, the being endued with those virtues that were in Christ Jesus, the being so renewed in the image of our mind, as to be perfect as our Father in heaven in perfect.”
- **And** – “Christians are saved in this world from all sin; from all unrighteousness; that they are now in such a sense perfect, as not to commit sin, and to be freed from evil thoughts and evil tempers.” “The loving God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. This implies that no wrong temper, none contrary to love, remains in the soul; and that all the thoughts, words, and actions are governed by pure love.”
- **Entire Sanctification is** – “to be renewed in the image of God, “in righteousness and true holiness” -Eph 4:22-24. The loving God with all our heart , and mind, and soul (Deut. 6:5). Saved from all our uncleanness (Ezek. 36:29). God will save Israel from all his sin (Ps 130:8).

**February 25 – 29 Receive the Baptism of Fire that purges from all sin and fills with all love (Matt. 3:11)  
(WW 11:385, 401)**

- **Death to Sin. Renewal in Love** – “When, after being fully convinced of inbred sin, by a far deeper and clearer conviction than that he experienced before justification, and after being experienced a gradual mortification of it, he experiences a total death to sin, and an entire renewal in the love and image of God”
- **Pour out your Sanctifying Spirit** – “The sanctifying Spirit pour, to quench my thirst and wash me clean. Now Saviour let the gracious shower descend and make me pure from sin.”
- **Send the Fire** – “O thou Who camest from above, the pure celestial fire to impart, Kindle a flame of sacred love on the mean altar of my heart.” “Come Holy Ghost, all quickening fire, Come and my hallowed heart inspire, sprinkled with the atoning blood: Now to my soul Thyself reveal; Thy mighty working let me feel, and know that I am born of God.” “ “He shall fill you with the Holy Ghost, inflaming your hearts with that fire of love which many waters cannot quench.”

Let us spread the fire of the Holy Spirit who sanctifies us from all sin and fills us with holy and perfect love!

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