

**The Practice of Piety—  
a Puritan devotional manual, directing a Christian how to live,  
that he may please God**

**How to Begin the Morning  
with Pious Meditations and Prayer**

By [Lewis Bayly](#)

As soon as ever you awake in the morning, keep the door of your heart fast shut, that no earthly thought may enter, before God comes in; and let him, before all others, have the first place there. So all evil thoughts either will not dare to come in, or shall the easier be kept out; and the heart will more savor of piety and godliness all the day after. But if your heart be not, at your first waking, filled with some meditations of God and his word, and dressed, like the lamp in the tabernacle (Exod 27:20-21), every morning and evening, with the oil-olive of God's word, and perfumed with the sweet incense of prayer (Exod 30:6-7), Satan will attempt to fill it with worldly cares or fleshly desires, so that it will grow unfit for the service of God all the day after, sending forth nothing but the stench of corrupt and lying words, and of rash and blasphemous thoughts.

Begin, therefore, every day's work with God's word and prayer; and offer up to God upon the altar of a contrite heart, the groans of your spirit, and the calves of your lips, as your morning sacrifice, and the first fruits of the day (Psalm 51:17; Rom 8:22; Hos 13:2; Psalm 130:6;) and as soon as you awake say to him thus: My soul waits on you, O Lord, more than watchmen watch for the morning! O God, therefore be merciful unto me, and bless me, and cause your face to shine upon me! Fill me with your mercy this morning, so shall I rejoice and be glad all my days.

**Meditations for the Morning.**

1. The Almighty God can, in the resurrection, as easily raise up your body out of the grave, from the sleep of death, as he has this morning wakened you in your bed, out of the sleep of nature. At the dawning of which resurrection day, Christ shall come to be glorified in his saints; and everyone of the bodies of the thousands of his saints, being fashioned like unto his glorious body, shall shine as bright as the sun (2 Thess 1:10; Jude 14; Phil 3:21; Luke 9:31;) all the angels shining likewise in their glory; the body of Christ surpassing them all in splendor and glory; and the Godhead excelling it. If the rising of one sun makes the morning sky so glorious, what a bright shining and glorious morning will that be,

when so many thousand thousands of bodies, far brighter than the sun, shall appear and accompany Christ as his glorious train, coming to keep his general session of righteousness, and to judge the wicked angels, and all ungodly men (Acts 17:31; 1 Cor 6:3; Jude 15;) and let not any transitory profit, pleasure, or vain glory of this day, cause you to lose your part and portion of the eternal bliss and glory of that day, which is properly termed the resurrection of the just (Luke 14:14.) Beasts have bodily eyes to see the ordinary light of the day: but you endeavor with the eyes of faith, to foresee the glorious light of that day.

2. You know not how near, the evil spirit which night and day, like a roaring lion, walks about seeking to devour you (1 Pet 5:8; Job 1:7) was to you while you were asleep and not able to help yourself; and you know not what mischief he would have done to you, had not God hedged you and your with his ever-waking Providence, and guarded you with his holy and blessed angels (Job 1:10; Psalm 121:4; Psalm 34:7; Gen 32:1-2; 2 Kings 6:16.)

3. If you hear the cock crow, remember Peter, to imitate him (Luke 22:61-62;) and call to mind that cock-crowing sound of the last trumpet, which shall waken you from the dead. And consider in what case you were, if it sounded now, and become such as you would then wish to be; lest at that day you should wish that you had never seen this; yes, curse the day of your natural birth, for lack of being newborn by spiritual grace (Jer 20:14; Job 3:1; Titus 3:5.) When the cock crows the thief despairs of his hope, and gives over his night's enterprise: so the devil ceases to tempt, or attempt any further, when he hears the devout soul wakening herself with morning prayer.

4. Remember that Almighty God is about your bed, and sees your down-lying, and your uprising; understands your thoughts, and is acquainted with all your ways (Psalm 139:2-3.) Remember likewise that his holy angels, who guarded and watched over you all night, does also behold how you wake and rise (Gen 31:55; Gen 32:1-2.) Do all things, therefore, as in the solemn presence of God, and in the sight of his holy angels (Psalm 91:5,11; Acts 12:11.)

5. As you are putting on your apparel, remember that they were first given as coverings of shame, being the effects of sin; and that they are made but of the offals of dead beasts. Therefore, whether you respect the clothes, you have so little cause to be proud of them, that you have great cause to be humbled at the sight and wearing of them, seeing the richest apparel are but fine covers of shame. Meditate rather, that as your apparel serves to cover your shame, and to fence your body from cold, so you should be as careful to cover your soul with that wedding garment which is the righteousness of Christ (because apprehended by our faith), called the righteousness of the saints (Matt 22:11; Rom 13:14; 1 Cor 1:30; Phil 3:9; Rev 19:8; Eph 4:24;) lest, while we are richly appareled in the sight of men, we be not found to walk naked (so that all our filthiness be seen) in the sight of God (Rev 16:15.) But that with his righteousness, as with a robe, we may cover ourselves from perpetual shame;

and shield our souls from that fiery cold that will procure eternal weeping, and gnashing of teeth (Matt 22:13.) And withal consider how blessed a people were our nation, if every silken suit did cover a sanctified soul. And yet a man would think, that on whom God bestowed most of these outward blessings, of them he should receive greatest inward thanks (Luke 12:48.) But if it proves otherwise, their reckoning will prove the heavier in the day of their accounts.

6. Consider how God's mercy is renewed unto you every morning, in giving you, as it were, a new life (Lam 3:23; Psalm 19:5), and in causing the sun, after his incessant race, to rise again to give you light. Let not, then, this glorious light burn in vain; but precede rather (as oft as you can) the sun rising to give God thanks (Luke 12:48;) and kneeling down at your bedside, salute him at the dayspring with some devout morning soliloquy: containing a humble confession of your sins, seeking the pardon of all your faults, a thanksgiving for all his benefits, and a craving of his gracious protection to his church, yourself, and all that belong to you.

This article is provided as a ministry of [Third Millennium Ministries](#) (Thirdmill). If you have a question about this article, please [email](#) our *Theological Editor*.

#### **Subscribe to *Biblical Perspectives Magazine***

BPM subscribers receive an email notification each time a new issue is published. Notifications include the title, author, and description of each article in the issue, as well as links directly to the articles. Like BPM itself, *subscriptions are free*. To subscribe to [BPM](#), please select this [link](#).