



WCF Prayer:

Chapter 31 - Of Synods and Councils

Gracious Lord and Heavenly Father,

We praise you for the privilege of fellowship and for the joy of worshiping and serving you together within your Church.

We recognize, Lord, that for the better ordering of our worship, the edification of your people and the effectiveness of our service, it is good for us to gather in synods and councils to share biblical wisdom and resources.

We acknowledge that should those in civil government seek counsel on matters of faith, they may lawfully call upon ministers and other fit persons for that assistance and that gatherings may be called by them for that purpose. We know also, Lord, that your officers hold the right to meet for the advancement of your Kingdom whenever necessary—even in times or places where the authorities may be unsettled or hostile toward the Church. We pray for your protection and for divine wisdom in every engagement with the civil powers.

Heavenly Father, you have granted these synods and councils the authority to navigate controversies of faith and matters of conscience. As these committees establish directions for the better ordering of our church life together, we pray that you would lead by your Spirit.

May these gatherings be filled with grace and love as they apply your Word to difficult cases and complaints when they arise. We pray that your Church as a whole would honour and respect the authority that you have vested in these forums. Where decisions made align with your Word, may these decisions be received by the Church with reverence and submission.

Holy God, we humbly acknowledge that all synods, councils and assemblies since the time of the Apostles may and have erred. We thank you that these gatherings are not themselves the final rule of faith or practice. We do recognise that even though fallible, you appoint these synods and councils

as your gracious gift to help your Church discern how best to worship and serve you in a fallen world.

In your wisdom, you have limited the ordinary authority of these synods and committees to the matters of the Church. Sovereign Lord, help your church refrain from meddling in the civil affairs of the state. Yet, gracious Lord, should extraordinary cases arise, may any petition or advice offered to the nation be issued with a deep humility. And Lord God, in the event that the civil authority might seek the Church's counsel on a matter; may your Church respond with rigorous biblical wisdom and Christ-like grace.

All this we ask for the glory of Jesus in his Church,

Amen.