



**MS / NT 3XL3**

**MS 6XL6**

THE LORD'S PRAYER AND CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

Monday, 3:30 – 5:20 p.m.

Location: **TBA**

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### Course Statement

This course will explore Jesus' experience of and teaching about prayer (above all the "Lord's Prayer") as the primary paradigm both for Christian spirituality in general and for Christian prayer in particular. Special attention will be given to John's Gospel, according to which Jesus' experience of God provides the model and foundation for the spirituality of Jesus' followers. Students are encouraged to examine their own understanding and practice of Christian spirituality on the basis of this perspective. Consideration will also be given to prayer as it is presented and practised throughout the remainder of the New Testament, in relation to the identity of Jesus.

**Specializations:** Biblical Studies  
Christian Worldview  
Pastoral Care & Counselling  
Pastoral Studies

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### Course Objectives

*Knowing [Cognitive]:*

- ▶ To explore the theological foundations of Christian spirituality as a reflection of the spirituality of Jesus.
- ▶ To examine New Testament evidence regarding the prayer and spiritual practices of Jesus and the early church.

*Being [Affective/Experiential]:*

- ▶ To develop awareness of spiritual identity and personal spiritual formation as foundational aspects of ministerial leadership.

- ▶ To help students clarify their own spirituality identity and preferred patterns of devotional practice.
- ▶ To develop and function corporately as a community of learning.

*Doing [Practical/Functional]:*

- ▶ To offer opportunities for exploring various spiritual exercises and models of prayer.
- ▶ To develop skills in the devotional application of scriptural and theological insight.

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**Lecture Outline and Schedule:**

January 6 Backgrounds to New Testament Prayer I:  
Prayer in Hebrew Scripture, Synagogue, and Temple  
READING: Longenecker, *Into God's Presence*, 3–21, 43–63.

January 13 Backgrounds to New Testament Prayer II:  
Prayer in the Greco-Roman World  
READING: Longenecker, *Into God's Presence*, 23–41.

January 20 *"I in them and You in me"*: Prayer in the Gospel of John  
READING: Cullmann, *Prayer in the New Testament*, 89–111.  
Longenecker, *Into God's Presence*, 155–79.

January 27 *"Our Father in Heaven"*: Prayer as Theological Re-orientation  
READING: Longenecker, *Into God's Presence*, 132–54.

*Exegesis Assignment Due*

February 3 *"Hallowed Be Your Name"*: Prayer and the Name of God  
READING: Cullmann, *Prayer in the New Testament*, 16–69.

February 10 *"Your Kingdom Come"*: The Spirituality of God's Reign  
READING: Koenig, *Rediscovering New Testament Prayer*, 40–65.

February 17 Reading Week

February 24 Prayer and Spiritual Disciplines

*Theological Analysis Due/Class Presentations*

- March 3 Bread, Debt, Deliverance, and the Challenge of Evil  
READING: Longenecker, *Into God's Presence*, 113–31.
- March 10 Prayer in the Early Christian Community according to Acts  
READING: Longenecker, *Into God's Presence*, 183–201.
- March 17 “Pray Without Ceasing”: Prayer According to Paul  
READING: Cullmann, *Prayer in the New Testament*, 69–88.  
Longenecker, *Into God's Presence*, 203–26.
- March 24 Praying in the Shadow of the Cross: Prayer in the Catholic Epistles  
READING: Longenecker, *Into God's Presence*, 228–50.
- March 31 Dwelling in the Divine Presence: Prayer in the Book of Revelation  
READING: Longenecker, *Into God's Presence*, 252–70.
- April 7 The Lord's Prayer in Christian History *Responding to God Assignment Due*

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## Course Requirements

### Textbooks

- Koenig, John. *Rediscovering New Testament Prayer: Boldness and Blessing in the Name of Jesus*. Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse, 1998. MILLS BV 210.2 .K58 1998
- Longenecker, Richard N., ed. *Into God's Presence: Prayer in the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001. MILLS BS 2545 .P67I58 2001

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 145, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. Other book services may also carry the texts. For advance purchase, you may contact:

READ On Bookstore  
304 The East Mall, Suite 100  
Etobicoke, ON  
M9B 6E2

E-mail: [books@readon.ca](mailto:books@readon.ca)  
<http://www.readon.ca>  
Tel: (416) 620-2934  
FAX: (416) 622-2308

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Additional reading available on reserve at Mills Memorial Library

Barth, Karl. *Prayer*. 2nd ed. Ed. Don E. Saliers from the translation of Sara F. Terrien.  
Philadelphia: Westminster, 1985. MILLS BV 210 .B3313 1985

Cullmann, Oscar. *Prayer in the New Testament*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995.  
MILLS BS 2545 .P67 C8513 1995

Foster, Richard J. *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*. San Francisco:  
Harper and Row, 1978. MILLS BV 4501.2 .F655 1978

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Assignments % of Final Grade

In completing course assignments, students are expected to identify and emphasize themes relevant to their chosen specialization, whether Biblical Studies, Christian Worldview, Pastoral Care & Counselling, or Pastoral Studies.

#### 1. READING

- a. Completion of weekly reading assignments.
- b. The remainder of a minimum total of 1,000 pages (2,000 pages for Research Degree students) may be selected from works on the "Additional Reading" list and/or from theological and exegetical materials that will provide research background for the written assignments (below).
- c. Bibliographies appended to written assignments should indicate the approximate number of pages read in each source listed.

#### 2. PRAYER JOURNAL

Students are required to keep a prayer journal for the duration of the course. Its form and content — which will remain (for the most part) confidential — are at the discretion of the journalist, but may include prayers, meditations, personal reflections, new insights or answers to prayer, and quotations from other writers, as well as related deliberations upon the spiritual life. While this assignment is not formally graded, it is expected that material from the journal will be incorporated into assignment 5, "Responding to God."

3. EXEGESIS OF THE LORD'S PRAYER

25%

Provide a brief exegesis of the Lord's Prayer, both against the background of the spirituality and ministry of Jesus (in the specific context of his day) and as a model for the spirituality and/or ministry of Jesus' followers today. You may focus on the Matthaean or Lukan versions, or both.

Length: Professional Degree 1,250 words  
Research Degree 2,500 words

Due: January 27

4. THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF A SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE

35%

The assignment is to be conducted in three parts. *First*, offer a theological assessment of a specific spiritual discipline as practised within the Christian tradition. Such disciplines may include (but are not limited to) those discussed, for example, by Richard J. Foster in *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1978):

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|------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| a. <i>Inward Disciplines</i> | b. <i>Outward Disciplines</i> | c. <i>Corporate Disciplines</i> |
| i. Meditation                | i. Simplicity                 | i. Confession                   |
| ii. Prayer                   | ii. Solitude                  | ii. Worship                     |
| iii. Fasting                 | iii. Submission               | iii. Guidance                   |
| iv. Study                    | iv. Service                   | iv. Celebration                 |

What experience of God does this discipline offer, or what consequences or implications for discipleship does it suggest on the basis of the way it represents God? In what way (whether theoretical or practical) is the life of Jesus presented as a model, instrument, or agent for the life of faith? How does this discipline convey spiritual benefit to the practitioner? *Second*, on the basis of your own reflection and research, as well as what you have learned so far in this course, offer concrete and constructive proposals for the definition and conduct of Christian discipleship within your own theological or confessional tradition. Students specializing in Pastoral Care & Counselling or Pastoral Studies should explore the place of spiritual disciplines in personal and congregational formation. Students enrolled for credit at the Research Degree level must include discussion of a particular discipline in a specific period of church history, denomination, or confessional tradition. All students are encouraged to make use of additional resources where these are needed

to clarify conceptual or practical principles governing the practices and traditions in question.

While only the first two components of this assignment are graded, each student will also offer, *third*, a ten to fifteen minute class presentation to explain your findings and indicate ways in which your chosen discipline can be beneficial for the life of Christian faith. Creativity and participatory modes of presentation are encouraged.

Length: Professional Degree 2,500 words  
Research Degree 5,000 words

Due: February 24

## 5. RESPONDING TO GOD

Weight: 40% of final grade

The purpose of this assignment is to explore the primary premise of the course (that Jesus' experience of God is paradigmatic for our own) more personally and in greater depth. In a format — or combination of formats — of your choice, explore/discuss/reflect on the assertion that the life and character of Jesus facilitate our encounter with God, and that Jesus therefore both models and enables Christian spirituality and devotional discipline. Be specific about the various assumptions, traditions, and denominational practices that inform your thinking, citing (where appropriate) material from your Prayer Journal. Among the possible formats for this assignment are the following:

- a. Exegetical, theological, or historical essay;  
*Mandatory for the Biblical Studies specialization and for Research Degree students*
- b. A series of sermons, bible studies, or other Christian education resources;
- c. An outline for a weekend congregational retreat;
- d. Original drama, poetry, graphic art, or musical compositions.

Submissions will be graded on the basis of theological acuity, imagination or creativity, relevance to Christian discipleship, and evidence of the required investment of time and effort. For options (a) through (c), submissions are to be 2,500/5,000 words in length (for professional and research degree students, respectively). In the case of option (d), the student must append a theological analysis or commentary (minimum length: 2,000 words) that explains the intended meaning of the piece. Material submitted for grading must represent at least 25 hours of work.

Due: April 7

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#### D. Style

All assignments are to be typed in double-spaced format, with footnotes and bibliographic references conforming to the *McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses* (<http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/sites/default/files/documents/MDCStyleGuideMarch0413.pdf>). Failure to observe appropriate format will result in grade reductions. See also "CRITERIA FOR GRADING OF WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS," below.

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#### E. Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty: <http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>.

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#### F. Inclusive Language

McMaster Divinity College is committed to employing inclusive language for human beings in worship services, written materials, and all publications. With regard to biblical texts, the integrity of original expressions (including references to God) should be respected; the NRSV and TNIV provide appropriate examples of the use of inclusive language for human subjects. With the exception of direct quotations from historical documents, inclusive language is to be used in chapel services and in all assignments submitted for academic credit.

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#### G. Cell Phone/Computer Policy

Students are to refrain from conducting cell phone conversations while class is in session. If you need to maintain contact with family members and/or your church or ministry, please turn off the ringer so as to avoid disturbing others; upon receipt of an urgent call, you may discretely excuse yourself from the classroom. The same policy applies to sound generated by computers or other electronic systems.

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## H. Late Submission Penalty

Assignments are due at the beginning of the class session on the due date. The penalty for late submission of assignments is 1% per calendar day (without limit). Electronic submission of assignments will not be accepted.

*Final date for submission of all course assignments is the last day of classes, April 9  
Assignments received after this date will not be accepted for grading or credit*

### Disclaimer:

This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class.

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CRITERIA FOR GRADING OF WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

Grading of written materials will be based on the following general criteria

Grade Range	Content	Argument	Presentation
90–100 A+ 85–89 A 80–84 A–	Mastery of subject matter; creativity and individualized integration of insights and their relationships; exceeds required elements	Clear, logical structure; with comprehensive introduction, persuasive argumentation, and innovative conclusions	Detailed adherence to relevant style for formatting of text, notes, and bibliography; no errors of grammar or syntax; elegant presentation
77–79 B+ 73–76 B 70–72 B–	Above-average grasp of principles and concepts, and their inter-relationship; completion of all required elements	Coherent structure and consistent argumentation; well-stated introduction and conclusion	General adherence to relevant style and format; few errors of grammar or syntax
67–69 C+ 63–66 C 60–62 C–	Adequate understanding of theoretical foundations; minimal completion of required elements	Rudimentary structure; minimal introductory and concluding statements	Significant errors of grammar, syntax, or style
57–59 D+ 53–56 D 50–52 D–	Low level of comprehension; required elements incomplete or missing	Lack of coherence or structure in argumentation; no introduction or conclusion	Abundant grammatical, syntactical, and stylistic errors
0–49% F	Inability to grasp basic concepts; required elements missing	Incomprehensible or illogical structure and argumentation	Failure to follow stylistic guidelines; incomprehensible syntax
Comments			