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McMaster Divinity College  
Fall Semester, 2019



**The Lord's Prayer and Christian Spirituality**

MS 3XL3 (Professional Degree)

MS 5XL5 (DPT)

MS 6XL6 (MA/PhD)

Instructor: M. Knowles

Location: TBA

Schedule: Tuesdays, 9:00–10:50 a.m.

Office: DC 214

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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 foundational model for Christian spirituality in general and Christian prayer in particular. Special attention will be given to John's Gospel, within which Jesus' experience of God provides the foundation for the spirituality of his disciples. 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:** Christian Worldview

Church & Culture

Counselling & Spiritual Care

Pastoral Studies

Doctor of Practical Theology students who wish to apply for this course as an Advanced Elective for their degree program must consult with the Program Director of the DPT and the course instructor in order to develop an Advanced Elective approach to the course that fulfills the specific elements required by the DPT program. Once the elements of the Advanced Elective have been agreed upon by the student, the Program Director, and the instructor, a formal application can be made for an Advanced Elective in connection with this course. Once the application is accepted, DPT students can proceed with the course as part of their degree program.

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## Course Objectives

### *Knowing:*

- ▶ 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, his first disciples, and the early church.

### *Being:*

- ▶ To develop an awareness of spiritual identity and personal spiritual formation as foundational aspects of ministerial leadership.
- ▶ To help students clarify their own spirituality identities and preferred patterns of devotional practice.
- ▶ To function corporately as a community of learning.

### *Doing:*

- ▶ To develop skills in the devotional application of scriptural and theological insight
- ▶ To practise a range of spiritual exercises and models of prayer.
- ▶ To develop greater facility in fostering the spiritual growth of fellow disciples.

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## Lecture Outline and Schedule:

September 10    Backgrounds to New Testament Prayer I:  
Prayer in Hebrew Scripture, Synagogue, and Temple  
READING: Longenecker, *Into God's Presence*, 3–21, 43–63.

September 17    Backgrounds to New Testament Prayer II:  
Prayer in the Greco-Roman World  
READING: Longenecker, *Into God's Presence*, 23–41.

September 24    “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.

October 1        “Our Father in Heaven”: Prayer as Theological Re-Orienta-  
tion  
READING: Longenecker, *Into God's Presence*, 132–54.

*Exegesis Assignment Due*

- October 8      *"Hallowed Be Your Name"*: Prayer and the Name of God  
 READING: Cullmann, *Prayer in the New Testament*, 16–69.  
 Optional: Knowles, *The Unfolding Mystery of the Divine Name*, 27–49.
- October 15      Reading Week
- October 22      *"Your Kingdom Come; Your Will Be Done"*:  
                   The Spirituality of God's Reign  
 READING: Koenig, *Rediscovering New Testament Prayer*, 40–65.
- October 29      Prayer and Spiritual Disciplines  
                   *Resources for Prayer and Spiritual Discipline Due/Class Presentations*
- November 5      Bread, Debt, Deliverance, and the Challenge of Evil  
 READING: Longenecker, *Into God's Presence*, 113–31.
- November 12     Prayer in the Early Christian Community according to Luke-Acts  
 READING: Longenecker, *Into God's Presence*, 183–201.
- November 19     *"Pray Without Ceasing"*: Prayer According to Paul  
 READING: Cullmann, *Prayer in the New Testament*, 69–88.  
                   Longenecker, *Into God's Presence*, 203–26.
- November 26     Praying in the Shadow of the Cross: Prayer in the Catholic Epistles  
 READING: Longenecker, *Into God's Presence*, 228–50.
- December 3      Dwelling in the Divine Presence:  
 Prayer and Worship in the Apocalypse of John  
 READING: Longenecker, *Into God's Presence*, 252–70.  
   *Responding to God Assignment Due*
- December 10     Summary Reflections and Exercises:  
 Prayer as Worldview, Metanarrative, and Praxis
- December 11     Final date for submission of course assignments (noon)

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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. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstore, 5 International Blvd, Etobicoke, Ontario M9W 6H3: phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; email books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

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### Additional reading available on reserve at Mills Memorial Library

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

Foster, Richard J. *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992. MILLS BV 210.2 .F68 1992

Knowles, M. P. *The Unfolding Mystery of the Divine Name: the God of Sinai in Our Midst*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2012. MILLS BS 1245.52 .K56 2012

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### Assignments % of Final Grade

Written assignments (submitted via the Avenue to Learn website) are due at 9:00 a.m. on the due date. In completing course assignments, MDiv/MTS students are expected to identify and emphasize themes relevant to their chosen specialization, whether Christian Worldview, Church & Culture, Counselling & Spiritual Care, or Pastoral Studies. *Please note that assignments vary according to degree programme and specialization.*

## 1. READING

- a. Completion of weekly reading assignments (approx. 635 pages total).
- b. The remainder the minimum reading requirements may be selected from the course bibliography and/or from theological, devotional, and exegetical materials that provide research background for the written assignments (below).
  - i. MDiv/MTS 1,000 pages
  - ii. DPT 2,000 pages
  - iii. MA/PhD 3,000 pages
- c. Bibliographies appended to written assignments should indicate the approximate number of pages read in each source listed, along with a cumulative total.

## 2. PRAYER JOURNAL

Students in all programmes are required to keep a prayer journal for the duration of the course. Its form and content are at the discretion of the journalist, but may include prayers, meditations, personal reflections, new insights into or answers to prayer, and quotations from other writers, as well as related deliberations upon the spiritual life. While not submitted for grading by itself, material from the journal should, where appropriate, be incorporated into other course assignments.

## 3. EXEGESIS OF THE LORD'S PRAYER

Weight: 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, preferably with reference to the Greek text. Additionally, DPT students will relate their exegesis to the theory and practice of prayer more generally, while MA/PhD students will situate their reading of the prayer in relation to the history of interpretation, both ancient and modern, and/or the history of Christian spirituality.

Length: MDiv/MTS 1,000 words  
DPT 1,500 words  
MA/PhD 2,000 words

Due: October 1

#### 4. RESOURCES FOR PRAYER AND SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE

Weight: 35%

This assignment is to be conducted in three parts. *First*, review one of the texts from the bibliography of “Classic Works on Prayer and Christian Spirituality” (below). So as to ensure equitable distribution of materials, a sign-up sheet for book selection will be circulated on the first day of class. Instead of reviewing the text in the usual academic format, your study should identify and assess:

- a. the scriptural or theological foundations of its proposals for the life of prayer,
- b. its implications for Christian identity in general, and
- c. the practical exercises that it proposes for a life in communion with God.

According to this text, how does prayer work, and why? How should we pray, when, or for what?

*Second*, explain how the selected resource could be used to teach about Christian prayer and discipleship in the context of your own theological or confessional tradition. Students specializing in Counselling & Spiritual Care or Pastoral Studies should explore the contribution of spiritual disciplines to spiritual direction and/or congregational formation; students specializing in Christian Worldview or Church & Culture should explore the relationship between Christian identity and confession, on the one hand, and the questions, needs, and concerns of contemporary culture, on the other.

Students enrolled at the Research Degree level must also situate the text in relation to its original historical context and/or confessional or devotional tradition. All students are encouraged to make use of additional resources where these are needed to clarify conceptual or practical principles governing the 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 presentation (depending on course enrolment) to explain your findings and indicate ways in which your chosen discipline can be beneficial for the life of Christian discipleship. Creativity and participatory modes of presentation are encouraged: rather than simply talking about prayer and spirituality, facilitate an experience of prayer or some other exercise of Christian spiritual identity.

|         |          |             |
|---------|----------|-------------|
| Length: | MDiv/MTS | 1,500 words |
|         | DPT      | 2,000 words |
|         | MA/PhD   | 3,000 words |

Due: October 29

The primary premise of this course is that Jesus' experience of God is paradigmatic for our own, such that "we are being changed into His likeness, from one degree of glory to another" (2 Cor 3:17). In other words, Jesus personally models mature spirituality and devotional discipline, as well as enabling us to be like Him. The purpose of this assignment is to reflect in greater depth on the assertion that the life, character, and ministry of Jesus facilitate our own encounter with God.

The format for this assignment will vary by specialization and degree programme. In formulating your response, be specific about the various assumptions, traditions, and denominational norms that inform your thinking, citing (where appropriate) material from your Prayer Journal. Submissions will be graded on the basis of theological acuity, creativity, practical relevance to Christian discipleship, and evidence of the investment of time and effort.

a. MDiv/MTS

i. Christian Worldview/Church & Culture

Making use of both primary and secondary materials, select and describe the contours of a particular source of contemporary personal or social identity (e.g. nationalism, ethnicity, gender, fashion, finance, sport/health, popular music, gaming, etc.). Compare and contrast this approach with specifically Christian identity, noting points of consonance/dissonance and proposing ways in which prayer and spiritual discipline can foster mature Christian discipleship that is modelled on and enabled by Christ.

ii. Counselling & Spiritual Care/Pastoral Studies

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):

a. *Inward Disciplines*

- i. Meditation
- ii. Prayer
- iii. Fasting
- iv. Study

b. *Outward Disciplines*

- i. Simplicity
- ii. Solitude
- iii. Submission
- iv. Service

c. *Corporate Disciplines*

- i. Confession
- ii. Worship
- iii. Guidance
- 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? Offer concrete and constructive proposals for the definition and conduct of Christian discipleship within your own theological or confessional tradition.

Length: MDiv/MTS 2,000 words

Due: December 3

d. DPT & MA/PhD

Formulate a comprehensive account of prayer and the spiritual life, outlining relevant resources, methods, and goals for spiritual development, whether in relation to personal maturation, congregational development, or ministerial competency. As appropriate to your area of research interest, the assignment may take the form of an exegetical, theological, or historical essay, but must discuss both conceptual and practical dimensions of Christian spirituality, identifying relevant resources and proposing solutions to customary difficulties (e.g. unanswered prayer).

Length: DPT 3,000 words  
MA/PhD 4,000 words

Due: December 3

*Auditing*

In order to facilitate full participation in class sessions, auditors are asked to complete the assigned readings and to maintain a prayer journal.

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Style

All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses (<http://mcmasterdivinity.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/mdcstyleguide.pdf>).

Failure to observe appropriate style and formatting will result in grade reductions.

To assist with prose composition, students are encouraged to make use of [grammarly.com](http://grammarly.com), along with the Writing Support Services provided by McMaster's Student Success Centre (<http://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/students/academic-skills/writing-support-services.html>). See also "CRITERIA FOR GRADING OF WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS," below.

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## 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 <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/rules-regulations>

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## Inclusive Language

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all its publications. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected, but you will need to use gender-inclusive language for humans, and you will need to quote from a gender-inclusive version such as the following: NRSV (1989), NCV (1991), TEV/GNB/GNT (1992), CEV (1995), NLT (1996), TNIV (2005), and the Common English Bible (CEB 2011).

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## Cell Phone/Computer Policy

Students are asked 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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## 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).

Graded essays will be available for retrieval from the Student Records Office (Room 210) for 30 days after the end of the semester (calculated as the day on which grades are due), following which they will be discarded.

*The final date for submission of all course assignments is the last day of classes,  
December 11  
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.

| <b>Summary of Assignments and Grading</b>     |            |                       |                        |
|---|------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
|   | Due        | Length                | Percent of final grade |
| Professional Degrees (MDiv/MTS)               |            |                       |                        |
| Prayer Journal                                | n/a        | n/a                   | n/a                    |
| Exegesis of the Lord's Prayer                 | October 1  | 1,000 words (~4 pp.)  | 25%                    |
| Resources for Prayer and Spiritual Discipline | October 29 | 1,500 words (~6 pp.)  | 35%                    |
| Responding to God                             | December 3 | 2,000 words (~8 pp.)  | 40%                    |
| DPT   |            |                       |                        |
| Prayer Journal                                | n/a        | n/a                   | n/a                    |
| Exegesis of the Lord's Prayer                 | October 1  | 1,500 words (~6 pp.)  | 25%                    |
| Resources for Prayer and Spiritual Discipline | October 29 | 2,000 words (~8 pp.)  | 35%                    |
| Responding to God                             | December 3 | 3,000 words (~12 pp.) | 40%                    |
| MA/PhD  |            |                       |                        |
| Prayer Journal                                | n/a        | n/a                   | n/a                    |
| Exegesis of the Lord's Prayer                 | October 1  | 2,000 words (~8 pp.)  | 25%                    |
| Resources for Prayer and Spiritual Discipline | October 29 | 3,000 words (~12 pp.) | 35%                    |
| Responding to God                             | December 3 | 4,000 words (~16 pp.) | 40%                    |

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CLASSIC WORKS ON PRAYER AND CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

- Barth, Karl [1886–1968]. *Prayer*. 2nd ed. Ed. Don E. Saliers from the translation of Sara F. Terrien. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1985. MILLS BV 210 .B3313 1985
- Benedict of Nursia [480–543]. *Saint Benedict's Rule*. Trans. Patrick Barry. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Mahwah, NJ: HiddenSpring, 2004. MILLS BX 3004 .E6 2004
- Bernard of Clairvaux [1090–1153]. *On Loving God*. Trans. Robert Walton. Washington: Cistercian, 1974. alternative edition: MILLS ebook
- Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection [1614–1691]. *The Practice of the Presence of God*. Tr. John J. Delaney. Garden City, NY: Doubleday/Image, 1977. MILLS BX 2349 .H42 1977
- Catherine of Siena [1347–1380]. *The Dialogue*. Trans. Suzanne Noffke. Classics of Western Spirituality. New York: Paulist, 1980. MILLS BV 5080 .C2613 1980
- Forsyth, P. T. [1848–1921]. *The Soul of Prayer*. London: Independent, 1949. MILLS Storage BV 210 .F56
- Foster, Richard J. *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992. MILLS BV 210.2 .F68 1992
- Grou, Jean Nicolas [1731–1803]. *How to Pray: The Chapters on Prayer from The School of Jesus Christ*. London: Clarke, [1955, 1964]. MILLS BV 210 .G752 1964
- Guyon, Jeanne Marie Bouvier de La Motte [1648–1717]. "A Short and Easy Method of Prayer Which All Can Practice Very Easily and Through Which All Can Arrive in a Short Time to a High Perfection," in *Jeanne Guyon: Selected Writings*. Trans. and ed. Dianne Guenin-Lelle and Ronney Mourad. Classics of Western Spirituality. New York: Paulist, 2012. MILLS BX 4705 .G8A3 2012
- Hallesby, Ole [1879–1971]. *Prayer*. Tr. C. J. Carlesen. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1959 [1931].
- Ignatius of Loyola [1491–1556]. *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola*. Resources in Religion 3. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1987. MILLS BX 2179 .L7 E5 1987

- Julian of Norwich [1342–1416]. *Showings [=Revelations of Divine Love]*. Trans. Edmund College and James Walsh. Classics of Western Spirituality. New York: Paulist, 1978. MILLS BV 4831 .J8 1978
- Kelly, Thomas R. [1893–1941]. *A Testament of Devotion*. New York: Harper & Row, 1941. MILLS Storage 242 .K29
- à Kempis, Thomas [1380–1471]. *The Imitation of Christ*. Trans. William C. Creasy. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1989. MILLS BV 4821 .T47 1989
- Lewis, C. S. [1898–1963]. *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer*. London: Geoffrey Bles, [1964]. MILLS .248 .L6733
- Merton, Thomas [1915–1968]. *Contemplative Prayer*. New York: Doubleday Image, 1969. MILLS BV 4813 .M43
- Murray, Andrew [1828–1917]. *With Christ in the School of Prayer: Thoughts on Our Training for the Ministry of Intercession*. Westwood, NJ: Revell, 1953. MILLS 264.1 .M891 A
- Origen (184/185 – 253/254). “On Prayer.” In *Origen*. Classics of Western Spirituality. New York: Paulist, 1979. Pp. 81–170. MILLS BR 65 .O52 1979
- Rahner, Karl [1904–1984]. *On Prayer*. New York: Paulist, 1968. MILLS BV 210.2 .R32 1968
- Rolle, Richard [1290–1349]. *The Fire of Love*. New York: Penguin, 1972.
- Smith, Hannah Whitall [1832–1911]. *The Christian’s Secret of a Happy Life*. Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, 1952. MILLS BV 4501.2 .S533 1952
- Underhill, Evelyn [1875–1941]. *Worship*. [New York] Harper , 1937. MILLS Storage 264 .U55

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+<br>85–89 A<br>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+<br>73–76 B<br>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+<br>63–66 C<br>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+<br>53–56 D<br>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                         |   |   |  |