
McMaster Divinity College
Fall Semester, 2021



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, 10:00–11:50 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 and spirituality of Jesus.

Specializations: Biblical Studies Church & Culture Pastoral Studies

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.

Lecture Outline and Schedule

Offered in a modified hybrid format, this course will alternate (beginning September 14) between in-person and online meetings. When meeting in person, students are required to maintain social distancing and observe appropriate health protocols, for the safety of all members of the community.

- September 14 (in person)
Backgrounds to New Testament Prayer I:
Prayer in Hebrew Scripture, Synagogue, and Temple
READING: Longenecker, *Into God's Presence*, 3–21, 43–63.
- September 21 (online module + synchronous meeting)
Backgrounds to New Testament Prayer II:
Prayer in the Greco-Roman World
READING: Longenecker, *Into God's Presence*, 23–41.
- September 28 (in person)
"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 5 (online module + synchronous meeting)
"Our Father in Heaven": Prayer as Theological Re-Orientaton
READING: Longenecker, *Into God's Presence*, 132–54.
Exegesis Assignment Due
- October 12 (in person)
"Hallowed Be Your Name": Prayer and the Name of God
READING: Cullmann, *Prayer in the New Testament*, 16–69.
Optional: Knowles, *Unfolding Mystery of the Divine Name*, 27–49.

- October 19 (online module + synchronous meeting)
*"Your Kingdom Come; Your Will Be Done": The Spirituality of God's
 Reign*
 READING: Koenig, *Rediscovering New Testament Prayer*, 40–65.
- October 26 Hybrid Intensive Week (no meeting scheduled)
- November 2 (in person)
 Prayer and Spiritual Disciplines
Resources for Prayer and Spiritual Discipline Due/Class Presentations
- November 9 (online module + synchronous meeting)
 Bread, Debt, Deliverance, and the Challenge of Evil
 READING: Longenecker, *Into God's Presence*, 113–31.
- November 16 (in person)
 Prayer in the Early Christian Community according to Luke-Acts
 READING: Longenecker, *Into God's Presence*, 183–201.
- November 23 (online module + synchronous meeting)
"Pray Without Ceasing": Prayer According to Paul
 READING: Cullmann, *Prayer in the New Testament*, 69–88.
 Longenecker, *Into God's Presence*, 203–26.
- November 30 (in person)
 Praying in the Shadow of the Cross: Prayer in the Catholic Epistles
 READING: Longenecker, *Into God's Presence*, 228–50.
- December 7 (online module + synchronous meeting)
 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 Final date for submission of course assignments (noon)

Course Requirements

Textbooks

Koenig, John. *Rediscovering New Testament Prayer: Boldness and Blessing in the Name of Jesus*. Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse, 1998.

Longenecker, Richard N., ed. *Into God's Presence: Prayer in the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.

Textbooks are available from the McMaster Divinity College book service, READ On Books, located in the Hurlburt Family Bookstore in Cullen Hall. For advance purchase, orders can be placed by phone (416.620.2934), text (416.668.3434), or email (books@readon.ca), with payment by e-transfer, credit card, or cheque; shipping is free for students. Other retailers may also carry these texts.

READ On Bookstore	E-mail: books@readon.ca
5 International Blvd	http://www.readon.ca
Etobicoke, ON	Tel: 416.620.2934
M9W 6H3	FAX: 416.622.2308

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, Michael 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

Assignments

% of Final Grade

Written assignments (submitted via the Avenue to Learn website) are due at 10:00 a.m. on the due date. In completing course assignments, professional degree students are expected to identify and emphasize themes relevant to their chosen specialization, whether Biblical Studies, Church & Culture, or Pastoral Studies, while research degree students will investigate considerations relevant to their respective programmes of research. *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 of reading requirements may be selected from the course bibliography and/or from theological, devotional, and exegetical materials that provide background research for written assignments. Programme standards are as follows:

MDiv/MTS	3,000 pages
DPT	4,000 pages
PhD	8,000 pages

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 Second Temple Judaism) and as a model for the spirituality and/or ministry of Jesus' followers today. Additional requirements are as follows.

Professional degree specializations:

- ▶ *Biblical Studies*: compare and interpret the Matthaean and Lukan versions, preferably with reference to the Greek text
- ▶ *Church & Culture*: address the counter-cultural identity implied by the Lord's Prayer
- ▶ *Pastoral Studies*: discuss the rôle of the Lord's Prayer in pastoral care and congregational development.

Research degrees:

- ▶ DPT students will relate exegesis of the Lord's Prayer to the theory and practice of prayer and Christian spirituality in general, citing relevant background literature where appropriate.
- ▶ MA/PhD students will situate their reading of the prayer (in both versions) in relation to the history of interpretation, both ancient and modern, and/or the history of Christian spirituality.

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

Due: October 5

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 made available on the Avenue to Learn course website. Instead of reviewing the text in the usual manner, your study should identify and assess:

- a. the scriptural and/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 or spiritual discipline function, and what (if anything) does it achieve? How should we pray, when, why, 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. All students are encouraged to make use of additional resources where needed to clarify conceptual or practical principles governing the practices in question.

Professional degree specializations:

- ▶ *Biblical Studies*: discuss the use of Scriptural resources in conjunction with this text and its proposals for prayer and discipleship.

- ▶ *Church & Culture*: address the relationship between Christian confession, on the one hand, and the questions, needs, and concerns of contemporary culture, on the other.
- ▶ *Pastoral Studies*: explore the contribution of spiritual disciplines in general and this resource in particular to spiritual direction and identity formation

Research degrees:

- ▶ DPT students will examine the work in question from the perspective of Practice Led Research, proposing amendments to their own spiritual theology, devotional practice, and/or pedagogy, in discussion with appropriate background literature.
- ▶ MA/PhD students will situate the selected text in relation to its historical context, confessional setting, or devotional tradition, citing relevant theological resources that inform its theology and practice.

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 their findings and indicate ways in which their 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 discipline.

Length:	MDiv/MTS	2,000 words	Due: November 2
	DPT	2,500 words	Class presentations: November 2
	MA/PhD	3,500 words	

5. RESPONDING TO GOD Weight: 40%

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, and practical relevance to Christian discipleship.

a. Professional Degree

i. *Biblical Studies*

In Psalm 56:13, the psalmist writes, “You have delivered my soul from death and my feet from falling, so that I may walk before God in the light of life.” Select one biblical book (from either Testament) and explain how you would use it to help fellow disciples “walk before God in the light of life.” What does this book say about life in the presence of God, and how does it help followers of Jesus to live day by day in the presence of God?

ii. *Church & Culture*

Making use of both primary and secondary resources, describe a contemporary source of personal or social identity (e.g. nationalism, ethnicity, gender, fashion, finance, sport/health, technology, 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.

iii. *Pastoral Studies*

Offer a theological assessment of a specific spiritual discipline within Christian tradition. Topics may include (but are not limited to) those discussed 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 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 confessional tradition and ministry setting.

Length: MDiv/MTS 2,500 words

Due: November 30

d. DPT

This assignment consists of two parts. First, identify and explain what you perceive to be the most pressing *spiritual* need or concern within contemporary Canadian (or American) society, citing a wide range of cultural artefacts and resources to make your case. Second, discuss appropriate forms of Christian response, giving particular attention to 1) prayer and spiritual discipline; 2) the rôle of Jesus in addressing this need; and 3) your own ministry setting or context.

e. 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). Essays may focus on a specific theological or existential concern (theodicy; social justice; global poverty; sources of hope, etc.) or examine the contribution of a particular theologian, mystic, or theorist (Mikhail Bakhtin; Julie C. Ma; Teresa of Ávila; John Zizioulas, etc.)

Length: DPT 3,500 words
MA/PhD 5,000 words

Due: November 30

Auditing

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

Summary of Assignments and Grading			
	Due	Length	Grade %
Professional Degrees (MDiv/MTS)			
Prayer Journal	n/a	n/a	n/a
Exegesis	October 5	1,500 words	25%
Resources	November 2	2,000 words	35%
Responding to God	November 30	2,500 words	40%
DPT			
Prayer Journal	n/a	n/a	n/a
Exegesis	October 5	2,000 words	25%
Resources	November 2	2,500 words	35%
Responding to God	November 30	3,000 words	40%
MA/PhD			
Prayer Journal	n/a	n/a	n/a
Exegesis	October 5	2,500 words	25%
Resources	November 2	3,500 words	35%
Responding to God	November 30	5,000 words	40%

Academic Honesty

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>.

Gender 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 all assignments submitted for academic credit.

Style

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: <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/resources-forms/mdc-style-guide>. To assist with composition and completion of assignments, students are encouraged to make use of [grammarly.com](https://www.grammarly.com) (<https://www.grammarly.com>), along with the academic support services provided by McMaster's Student Success Centre (<https://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/academic-support>). Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions. See also "CRITERIA FOR GRADING OF WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS," below. All course assignments are to be submitted to the appropriate section of course page on the Avenue to Learn website.

Cell Phone/Computer Policy

Students are to refrain from conducting cell phone conversations while class is in session. Should 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 all computer-generated sound schemes, pagers, or other electronic annunciation systems.

Deadlines and Late Submission Penalty

Assignments are to be submitted to the course website on Avenue to Learn, and are due at midnight on the date specified, after which they will be considered late and penalized 1% per calendar day (in whole or in part). The final date for submission of all course assignments is December 10, 2021. Assignments submitted after this date cannot 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 revisions up to and including the first day of class.

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.
- Benedict of Nursia [480–543]. *Saint Benedict's Rule*. Trans. Patrick Barry. 2nd ed. Mahwah, NJ: HiddenSpring, 2004.
- Bernard of Clairvaux [1090–1153]. *On Loving God*. Trans. Robert Walton. Washington: Cistercian, 1974.
- Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection [1614–1691]. *The Practice of the Presence of God*. Tr. John J. Delaney. Garden City, NY: Doubleday/Image, 1977.
- Catherine of Siena [1347–1380]. *The Dialogue*. Trans. Suzanne Noffke. Classics of Western Spirituality. New York: Paulist, 1980.
- Forsyth, P. T. [1848–1921]. *The Soul of Prayer*. London: Independent, 1949.
- Foster, Richard J. *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992.
- Grou, Jean Nicolas [1731–1803]. *How to Pray: The Chapters on Prayer from The School of Jesus Christ*. London: Clarke, [1955, 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.
- 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.

- Julian of Norwich [1342–1416]. *Showings [=Revelations of Divine Love]*. Trans. Edmund College and James Walsh. Classics of Western Spirituality. New York: Paulist, 1978.
- Kelly, Thomas R. [1893–1941]. *A Testament of Devotion*. New York: Harper & Row, 1941.
- à Kempis, Thomas [1380–1471]. *The Imitation of Christ*. Trans. William C. Creasy. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1989.
- Lewis, C. S. [1898–1963]. *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer*. London: Geoffrey Bles, [1964].
- Merton, Thomas [1915–1968]. *Contemplative Prayer*. New York: Doubleday Image, 1969.
- Murray, Andrew [1828–1917]. *With Christ in the School of Prayer: Thoughts on Our Training for the Ministry of Intercession*. Westwood, NJ: Revell, 1953.
- Origen (184/185 – 253/254). “On Prayer.” In *Origen*. Classics of Western Spirituality. New York: Paulist, 1979. Pp. 81–170.
- Rahner, Karl [1904–1984]. *On Prayer*. New York: Paulist, 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.
- Underhill, Evelyn [1875–1941]. *Worship*. [New York] Harper , 1937.

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			

MS 3XL3 **THE LORD'S PRAYER AND CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY** **Fall, 2021**

Student Name	Exegesis 25% Oct 5	Resources 35% Nov 2	Responding to God 40% Nov 30	Final 100%	
				0	
				0	
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	Audit				
Averages	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	

MS 5XL5 DPT THE LORD'S PRAYER AND CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY **Fall, 2021**

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				0	
Averages	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	

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