Theology of Prayer

An Introduction to Spiritual Discipline
Theology of Prayer: An Introduction to Spiritual Discipline

• What is Prayer?
  • To communicate with God
  • Prayer function as daily spiritual food for the soul
  • Is a learning experience
  • Staying in touch with God
  • A personal experience with God
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• What is Spiritual Discipline?
  • A time set aside to pray
  • Keeping the daily rhythm of prayer
    • It could be silence
    • Examine
    • Prayer walk
    • Praying the Scripture
  • Daily spiritual discipline leads to nourishment of the soul
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• What happens when there is no Spiritual Discipline?
  • Spiritual Burnout “Acedia”
  • Spiritual mal-nourish
  • Disconnection with God
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*Historical Views on Prayer: Biblical

- The Old Testament—Abraham, Moses, Nehemiah, Daniel regularly prayed to God
- Established an ongoing relationship
- For strength or energy
- For Lament
- Confession to God
- Supplication to God
- Intercessory—Praying for one another and community
- Adoration
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• Historical Views on Prayer: Biblical
  • New Testament:
    • Jesus disciplines himself with regular prayer-staying connected to God the Father Luke 5:16 “But he would withdraw to deserted places and pray.”
    • Serving as a model of prayer
    • Jesus teachings on Prayer-The Lord’s Prayer-Luke 11:1-6
    • The church community comes together to pray (Acts 1:24-26, 13:2-3
    • The Apostle Paul on Prayer
      • Encourages prayer to maintain the relationship with God (Colossians 4:2)
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- Reformed Views on Prayer
  - Reformed tradition follows Christ’s prayer practices - Prayer to God the Father
    - To deepen our union with God
  - John Calvin
    - Prayer is communion with God
    - Units Humanity with God
    - Calvin’s Six Rules of Prayer
      - 1. pray in reverence to God
      - 2. pray from a sincere sense of want and with penitence
      - 3. pray with confidence
      - 4. pray with confidence and hope
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- Why is Prayer an important Spiritual Discipline?
  - Spiritual discipline shapes the believer’s prayer life
  - To build an on-going relationship with God
  - Function like a good spiritual food and drink for the soul
  - Daily practice and daily food

- C.S Lewis and Prayer- on Prayer, in his book, *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer*, elaborates his view why prayer should be personal journey with God. Lewis believes that prayer is a guide to daily prayer, while extending to individual personal in meditation, and enriching ones’ prayer life.
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• Discussion of Prayer
  • Why do you pray?
  • How do you pray?
  • When do you pray?
  • How often do you pray
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• Sustaining Prayer Discipline
  • Requires commitment
  • Develop a regular time to pray
  • Model Jesus’s prayer practice
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• Have YOU thought about prayer in Advent?
• Using the four themes in Advent to pray
  • Hope
  • Peace
  • Joy
  • Love
• To slow down during the busy season of Advent
• Pray using the Scriptures to enrich your spiritual discipline
• Develop a daily habit
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EXERCISE

SPEND 5-10 MINUTES IN YOUR BREAK ROOMS

• GROUP 1 – PRAY FOR EACH PERSON IN YOUR GROUP, THE FIRE IN CALIFORNIA
• GROUP 2 – PRAY FOR THE CONGREGATIONS AND RE-OPENING
• GROUP 3 – PRAY FOR PEACE IN OUR CITIES
• GROUP 4 – PRAY FOR ESSENTIAL WORKERS
• GROUP 5 – PRAY FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS
• GROUP 6 – PRAY FOR OUR LEADERS

Note: Each prayer begins with adoration, confession
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Bibliography:
• New Reversed Standard Version