



# Theology of Prayer

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An Introduction to Spiritual Discipline

# Theology of Prayer: An Introduction to Spiritual Discipline

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- **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 on-going 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
  - Unites 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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- Wright, N. T. The Lord and His Prayer. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1996.
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