

Equip: Contemplative Christianity
The Axis Church
Sept 14, 2019 | 9-11AM

Session One: PRAYER

Why Contemplative Christianity?

What is your honest answer to these questions?

- Why are you here this morning?
- What frustrates you about prayer?
- Is prayer becoming more and more natural and satisfying?

*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.*

1. The Purpose of Prayer

2. The Posture of Prayer

3. The Pattern of Prayer

Silence...

Session Two: PATH

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What Prayer is not...

What Prayer is...

God is the first and only object of our needs and desires.
But first, coming to the end of yourself.

What would it look like to order my life around the Divine?
What do we normally order our lives around?
How do we prioritize our days?
What determines our schedules?
What makes us set our alarms?
What makes us anxious?

“Surely I have stilled and quieted my soul; like a weaned child with his mother, like a weaned child is my soul within me.” Ps 131:2

“I lift up my eyes to you, to you who sit enthroned in heaven. As the eyes of a servant look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maiden look to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, till he shows us his mercy.” Ps 123:1-2

“My heart is fixed, O God; my heart is fixed. No wonder I can sing your praises! Wake up, my heart!” Ps 57:7-8

Inhale: For you alone, O Lord
Exhale: My soul in silence waits. (Ps 62:1)

Inhale: The Lord is my Shepherd
Exhale: I need nothing more. (Ps 23:1)

Inhale: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,
Exhale: Have mercy on me, a sinner (The Jesus Prayer)

Inhale: Lord have mercy (Kyrie eleison)
Exhale: Christ have mercy (Christus eleison)

Stillness...

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Session Three: PRACTICAL

daily, weekly, and annual rhythms

daily:

Prayer is your real job, everything else should revolve around it

Prayer is an appointment, so know the schedule and be prepared

Prayer elevates God above his gifts and protects against idol-blindness

He speaks first
Silence and stillness follow
Pray along with Jesus

Reading the Scripture is more important than eating

Reading the Scripture is your weapon in the fight

weekly:

Spiritual fasting is a weekly reset and a reminder of Christ's Passion

The Thanksgiving Feast snaps us back from the drift every week

annually:

The Christian Calendar is how we Gospel our annual rhythms...

adhering to Advent
celebrating Christmastide
contemplating Epiphany
observing Lent
celebrating Easter
embracing Pentecost
accepting Ordinary time

Giving, Serving, and Sharing the Gospel are very effective idol grinders

Retreating is a powerful opportunity for Him to increase and me to decrease

the contemplative Christian life is “a long obedience in the same direction”

Stability...

Primary Resources:

- The Rule of Saint Benedict by St. Benedict et al.

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- Seeking God: The Way of St. Benedict by Esther de Waal
If you don't read anything else, read the Rule and the book above.
- Path of Life, by Cyprian Smith OSB
- How to Be a Monastic and Not Leave Your Day Job: A Guide for Benedictine Oblates and Other Christians Who Follow the Monastic Way, by Br. Benet Tvedten

Prayer Books:

- The Glenstal Book of Prayer: A Benedictine Prayer Book, by Monks of Glenstal Abbey
- Work Of God: Benedictine Prayer, by Judith Sutura OSB
- The Divine Hours (Volume One): Prayers for Summertime: A Manual for Prayer, by Phyllis Tickle
- The Divine Hours (Volume Two): Prayers for Autumn and Wintertime: A Manual for Prayer by Phyllis Tickle
- The Divine Hours (Volume Three): Prayers for Springtime: A Manual for Prayer by Phyllis Tickle

Divine Reading Resources:

- Lectio Divina: How to Pray Sacred Scripture, by Dan Korn
- Praying the Word: an introduction to Lectio Divina, by Enzo Bianchi
- Online Lectionary: BibleGateway.com/ReadingPlan/BookofCommonPrayer
- App Store: Book of Common Prayer: Daily Office Readings

Honorable Mention Resources:

- A Long Obedience in the Same Direction: Discipleship in an Instant Society, by Eugene H. Peterson
- The Way of the Heart: Connecting with God Through Prayer, Wisdom, and Silence, by Henri J. M. Nouwen
- Answering God: The Psalms as Tools for Prayer, by Eugene H. Peterson
- Psalms: The Prayer Book of the Bible, by Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- A Praying Life, by Paul Miller
- The Benediction Option, by Rod Dreher
- The Prayer of Jesus, by Hank Hanegraaf
- Union with Christ, by Rankin Wilbourne