

Disciplined Disciple series: Prayer and Meditation

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Prayer definition

- Making an appeal in a humble manner to talk to God with confession, adoration, supplication and/or thanksgiving.

Importance of Prayer

- “Whatever varying religious exercises we may practice, without the two basic ones of Emmaus—prayer and Bible reading—the others are empty and powerless.” –Richard Foster
- “We must come to grips with the fact that to be like Jesus we must pray”

Misconceptions of Prayer

- Misconception: Prayer mainly involves asking things from God. – Communion is prayer. Spending time with God is the key element of prayer. “He walks with me and He talks with me.”
- Misconception: Prayer must always be a struggle. Prayer is difficult. Yes, we have an awe of the Savior but there is not a getting it right with prayer. Prayer is an opportunity of joy comfort, and serenity. We are friends of God. We make prayer more difficult.
- Misconception: Why do I pray if God already knows the end. – We are working with God in the determination of the outcome of things.

Misconceptions of Prayer continued

- Misconception: The Fear that our faith will crumble if our prayers are not answered the first time everytime. suppose I walk into my office and turn on the light and nothing happens. Would I say, “I never believed in electricity anyway”? No, I would assume something is wrong, and I would set out to find out what it is: perhaps the bulb is burned out or the wiring connections are faulty. The same is true with prayer, and very often I have found the problem is indeed a faulty connection on our end. Maybe my will doesn't match God's will. Maybe I was saved from danger through my prayer not being answered.
- Misconception: Only pray once about an issue, praying more than that shows a lack of faith. Keep at work in prayer. Spending time with God lets us flow in God's light during situations.

Purpose of Prayer

- JESUS demonstrates: (Matthew 6:9-13)
 - To praise God, expressing adoration
 - To pray that God's will be done
 - To make request for our daily necessities
 - To confess our sins, seeking God's mercy
 - To ask of God's provision and care

Practice of Prayer

- Secret Prayer (Matthew 6:5-6)
- Simple Prayer (Matthew 6:7)
- Steadfast Prayer (Luke 11:1, 5-10)
- “Prayer is the spiritual gymnasium in which we exercise and practice godliness.” - V. L. Crawford
- “...Prayer is educative. The man who prays grows; and the muscles of the soul swell from this whipcord to iron bands.” - Frederick B. Meyer
- c. The opposite is also true: “Seven days without prayer makes one weak.” - Allan E. Bartlette

Meditation definition

Christian Meditation is the ability to hear God's voice and obey God's word. – Richard Foster

Getting involved in a mental exercise (to concentrate on your breathing or reiteration of your mantra). Its purpose is to reach an amplified stage of spiritual awareness.

“Deep thinking on truths and spiritual realities in Scripture for the purposes of understanding, application, and prayer.”

Purpose of Meditation

- Enables us to hear God more clearly.
- Passive Discipline (It is more reflecting than studying, more listening than thinking, more releasing than grabbing.
- Meditation is something we are all called to do not just yoga or some mystical culture.
- *Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Joshua 1:8*

Examples of Contemplative Life

- David focused his meditation on three things:
 - The Lord Himself - Psalm 63:6
 - God's wonderful Works - Psalm 77:12
 - God's revealed Word - Psalm 119:15,23,48,97-99,148
- Paul mentioned things that possess virtue and are praiseworthy - Philippians 4:8

Philippians 4:8, ESV:

- "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."

Difference between Prayer and Meditation

- The key difference between prayer and meditation is: prayer is making your requests known to God and opening up to God like you would a best friend, whereas meditation is taking the time to listen to what God has to say to you through reading and digging deeper into the Bible.
- Meditation is taking what you learn and hear through prayer and intentionally thinking about it and all that you know of God to grow in God.
- Meditations like in and prayers look up.
- Both life around for the better. GROWING US CLOSER to GOD!

Jesus the bread of our daily life, Let Jesus work through us.

- Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe. All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. John 6:35-40
- When we apply meditation and prayer to our daily lives we will be more full spiritually because we are practicing making Jesus our daily bread.

Breathe on me, Breath of God

- 1 Breathe on me, Breath of God,
fill me with life anew,
that I may love the way you love,
and do what you would do.
- 2 Breathe on me, Breath of God,
until my heart is pure,
until my will is one with yours,
to do and to endure.
- 3 Breathe on me, Breath of God,
so shall I never die,
but live with you the perfect life
for all eternity.
- Psalter Hymnal, 1987