

## LEARNING FOR LIFE

January 16<sup>th</sup> 2011

### 1. THE THEOLOGY OF PRAYER

#### Introduction.

- a) Purposes and expectations
- b) A subject which tests our honesty and humility

#### WHAT IS PRAYER?

- a) Assumed by the Scriptures
  - A basic dimension of godly living
  - Answering speech
  - Relational reflection
  
- b) Generated by the gospel
  - Expression of the new nature
  - Enjoyment of its central blessing
  
- c) Defined by the theology
  - 'An offering up of our desires to God for things agreeable to His will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins and thankful acknowledgement of His mercies.' ( Westminster Shorter Catechism)
  - Response which is shaped by faith
  - Response which shapes our believing. Prayer is talking to God about God in His Presence.
  - Response which develops our discipleship.

## 2. WHY PRAY?

a) For the sake of our relationship with God ( Isaiah 40:27-31)  
-expression of love, source of joy, ground of peace.

b) For the sake of our salvation, receiving the good gifts of the gospel (Matt. 7: 7-11)

‘Nothing is promised to be expected from the Lord, which we are not also bidden to ask of Him in prayer..... We dig up by prayer the treasures that were pointed out by the Lord’s gospel, and which our faith has gazed upon’ (Calvin Inst. 111. xx. 2)

b) For the glory of God, since He moves us to pray  
How? - The revelation of His character  
The riches of His promises  
The dimensions of our needs  
The ministry of the indwelling Spirit

## 3. WHY BOTHER?

a) Is God ignorant?

b) Is God concerned?

c) Is prayer necessary?

d) Is prayer productive?