
On Praying



**WAES
HAEL**

Book eighteen

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Ways of praying

The first time I was asked to pray out loud I was very nervous thinking I might emphasize the wrong thing, and embarrass myself. But after a few tries, I got into the swing of things and could pray with the best of them. But why was I praying aloud at all? The Master said to go into my closet and pray in secret, and he said that people who prayed on street corners were hypocrites, because they were just putting on a show for others.

Someone suggested that group prayer was effective in changing the world. I remember that The Rt. Honorable Sir Hugh Dowding, when

challenged by the Minister for Defense about what he was doing to keep the Nazis from invading Britain, said he was “praying for RADAR and trusting in God.” Probably there were many devout people praying along with him, And it worked for Britain. Though, I rather think that it was his trust in God that paid dividends.

In all the books I have read by devout “religious,” internal prayers were most effective, not spoken at all.

Robin Amis in his book “A Different Christianity,” which was about the Monks on Mount Athos, describes the internal “Noetic” prayers of the Monks.

Pray standing and kneeling

In the Episcopal Church during the Liturgy, the members alternately get down on their knees and stand up for prayer. So it is up-down for much of the service except during the sermon and for the readings from the OT and Epistles. But when the Gospel is read we all stand up. One thing is for sure, we didn't sit down to pray. This has been the tradition of the Anglican Church from its beginnings in England c. 1600. In English churches, and most Episcopal churches here, the pews are hard with no cushions, and the kneeling support has slight padding but not comfortable for more than a few minutes. That's probably why we stand up so often during the hour long service. Another thing: in most Anglican Churches the

congregation faces towards the East when they pray, as does the Priest - at least it used to be that way when the Altar was at the East end of the Church.

But proper prayer doesn't require anyone to get on their knees. If it did, then the elderly, the sick in bed, and the handicapped would not be able to pray properly.

I think that kneeling is to give more honor to God. But I think this is a custom of the Religious group. In Orthodox Churches people stand throughout the liturgy. The liturgy does call for the priest to kneel for certain prayers, even if he is disabled. We had an elderly Priest who was a sick man with heart problems and leg issues, and we all loved him, and if anyone

should have been excused kneeling it should have been him, but he knelt as required, though we expected every Sunday that he would never get back up. There were services three times a week. I know it was a struggle for him. We became friends and I learned something about humility by spending time with him.

In the Anglican liturgy we read prayers aloud in unison. They were the same prayers word for word every Sunday. I wondered, at the time when I was only a beginner, whether God heard us, or was he reading our thoughts which were probably about what we were going to do this upcoming week.

When you pray aloud it is for the benefit of others in the congregation which may be a good

thing, it certainly does help to keep people focussed on holy things. But sometimes I have nodded off to sleep while kneeling with my arms resting on the bench in front of me. It wasn't my fault.

Pray in your closet

The Master always prayed alone, except the one time when he was teaching the disciples to pray. When I was new to Christianity, I wondered how the Greek writers of the NT knew the actual words that The Master said in private.

He taught his disciples that they should pray in private “in their closet” and not pray out loud as did the hypocrites. What he meant, by “in your closet” was to internalize the prayer so

that the spirit within could pass on the message to The Father - spirit to Spirit.

Understand the Readings

For you to understand anything The Master said, requires your spirit to receive an underlying spiritual message. The words you hear when scripture is read aloud, and the words in the sermon, are pointing to some Truth from The Father, not readily perceived. In fact, the words can get in the way of communication with The Father.

When The Master told a spiritual truth that he wanted to bring to his audience, he told them a parable which was very difficult to understand. While people were puzzling over the story, the Holy Spirit went to work passing on the spiritual

truth to disciple's spirits, and because some were blessed of God, their spirits recognized the message. Jesus said those who understood "had ears to hear." Some in the audience were not enlightened, because their "ears" had been made dull.

Reading

I often discussed the Bible passage that had just been read in the service. Usually the laity hadn't recognized the spiritual message, partly due to a poor reading - the reader was often an untrained amateur who didn't understand the meaning, and read in a monotone and didn't emphasize the important phrases.

Whenever I was called to read, I studied the verses the day before and typed up a sheet that

made bold the phrases that were important. Then I listened to a DVD of the Bible by a really good speaker, and tried to mimic his intonation for that reading.

My great grandfather taught Pastors how to read text. He was a professor at Kings College Cambridge, Ely college, Bangor College, and Spurgeon's Pastors college. My Grandfather was an actor, and my Mother was on the stage for a while, so I had lots of good examples to follow. When I read, everyone understood the words.

But in Sunday school after I explained the meaning of the reading, they often didn't take it to heart, just thought it was an interesting way of looking at the reading.

Pray Continually

When you listen to a reading from the text, or you listen to the sermon, you should be in a state of prayer, in which all distracting thoughts have been eliminated from your consciousness. This state is, in fact, necessary for prayer.

The New Testament text states “pray continually,” which means that your thoughts all day long should be communicating with The Father. Easy to say for a Monk who doesn’t have to work at a job, or take care of children. But for most people their attention is focussed on getting through the days obligations. There hardly seems any time for The Father at all. But this is only because they don’t understand what it means to be in prayer continually.

I am a writer and a teacher of theology, and I spend many hours each day thinking, reading and writing about The Father, just like right now while I am writing these notes to you.

Last night, I started thinking about prayer. I opened a book on prayer by Origen, fell asleep with the book on my chest, and finally went to bed with his writing on my mind. I woke this morning to study something else, fell asleep thinking about that, made lunch, and now I have the energy to type.

I have been in prayer since last night. I have taken time to sleep, to feed the dogs, make breakfast and lunch. Even when I was doing those jobs, I was looking for inspiration. Godly thoughts were seldom out of my brain.

Don't worry, be happy

I have learnt how to deal with worry. God told me in the text, but the answer was hidden and I had to ponder on it a lot. I eventually wrote seven pages of understanding of these few verses. If you read my article on the storm in the Sea of Galilee, you will understand.

So, one of the purposes of prayer is to get rid of worry. You can't just get on you knees and ask God to stop you worrying!

Doing your part?

Anthony De Mello told an illuminating story which will make you laugh. Here it is:

A religious prayed to The Father to win the lottery. He prayed every day for six months and

nothing happened, so he thought he must be doing his prayer wrong. He doubled his effort, stayed on his knees twice as long and prayed for another six months. Finally he could stand it no longer and he raised his fist to God and said God, God, where are you? I have been praying now for a year and still haven't won the lottery.

A deep voice came from Heaven. "You idiot, you have to buy a lottery ticket first!"

His message was that there is something you must do before your prayer can be answered. But I have found that prayers can be answered without you doing anything at all. The Grace of The Father sometimes takes over and makes things happen, anyway.

Ask for spiritual gifts, not objects

Now, don't think you can ask The Father for toys - He doesn't have any to give. You have to ask for Grace to help you deal with any problem. The best thing you can do is let The Father know your problem; remove it from your mind, and get back to thinking about doing work for The Father. That is how you eliminate the worry. While you ponder on the teaching of The Father, He will work on a solution for your problem. It will always be a spiritual work. The Father may communicate with someone else via the Spirit, and that someone will do something unexpected. That is they won't understand why they are doing it at first and you will benefit from it. I have used this method for many years. Finally in July 2012, I was able to point out

where in the Bible it describes this method. I have many examples to tell you, many of which are on my web site. The key to this method is that you have to understand who causes you to worry in the first place, and why. Read the PDF the [Storm in Galilee](#).

In England I have a friend, who is a Buddhist, who passed on a book to me called the Universal Ordering System. The author suggests that you can get anything you want through this spiritual method, by making a firm request for something to happen at a very specific time. Then just wait and it will happen at the time you requested. She gives an example in her book:

She wanted a man to enter her life on a Tuesday the following week, and he would have to match her list of ten attributes for the perfect

mate. She prayed her request and waited. She was in a pub on the Tuesday, and a man walked in and chatted with her. She quickly discovered he met all ten of her criteria!

The only problem was: she didn't like him!

Be careful what you ask for. Now you know that even Buddhists pray to a God.

Whatever you think about who is The Father, you don't know the half of it.

Humility

You have to pray, but not to ask for a solution to the problem. You have to pray to ask for knowledge and understanding, which are two of the seven graces from The Father - you know

what I mean, those graces you were supposed to get with the laying on of hands during baptism or confirmation. Perhaps you haven't yet responded to these gifts. Okay, so one of them was humility which is to teach you how to fear God. Fear God? Who wants to be afraid of God? But that's not what the phrase in the KJV means. If you had studied the scriptures and read some good commentaries, you would know what it means to fear God. If you allowed the grace of humility to work in you would be poor in spirit .

The fear of God is the first virtue that is received as a blessing to those poor in spirit. This fear is not something to make you afraid, it is a blessing to make you consider God in everything you think and do. You may imagine that God is not only watching and listening to

you, but that God is present all the time, advising you and chastising you. You could silently think about him while you are loading the dish washer, or making dinner, or watching your dogs play.

When you respond to this grace, in such a manner, you are in prayer, and The Father knows it. Strangely, you will be unable to worry while you are doing this. You may think that it is because you are distracted by domestic chores that you don't think of other "problems." But that isn't what happens. If you did the same chores and did not think of The Father, your other problems would still keep popping into your head, and you would worry.

For those of you who clicked on the link "the Storm in Galilee" and read it through you

already know what causes worry. I'll leave the rest of you to go back and read it, while I move on to other facets of prayer.

Humility but put The Father first

Being humble also means that you don't make any decisions without The Father. Do you ask The Father what to do? No, that doesn't work. The Father's greatest gift to man was the freedom to make his own choices, and we have inherited this gift. Some people call it free agency, some call it free will. Some people don't even believe in it at all and blame The Father for everything that befalls them, or the "devil."

So, you must make the decision, but only after you have studied everything you can lay your hands on that speaks to this thing you have

to choose. You have to “buy the lottery ticket” first. As you study the material, you will come across ideas that excite you, and this is The Father influencing you. I call it God “interfering with my life.” A good idea is confirmed by your conscience, and you will “know” when something is a “good” idea.

If you study the etymology of the word “good” you will find that it comes from the word “god.” In the middle ages “godly thoughts” were “goodly thoughts.” Anything “good” was of “God.” The meaning of good has changed in modern writing, and even a chocolate bar is called “good.” Of course chocolate originated with God, so good would still be appropriate!

Important! Don’t jump to conclusions that a warm fuzzy feeling in your “bosom” means it is

the best choice for you. Marriages have been wrecked on such flimsy evidence.

When your conscience speaks, you question it, ponder on it, and sleep on it. Ask if this idea from God or not? How can you be sure? Now is the time to ask God directly whether or not this idea comes from God. How to do this?

Let go your desire for attachments

Next step: Tell The Father that you don't really care about the thing that is worrying you. If it happens it happens, no matter, and you aren't going to be unhappy if the worst comes to the worst, because you will always have The Father with you.

Okay, so the house burnt down, you family snaps are gone, you hard drives have melted,

and everything you have worked on for the last year has gone up in smoke.

Thank The Father that you, your spouse, the children and dogs are safe, and don't worry about it. The Father will take care of everything through other people. They will come out of the woodwork to help you. Because all good people recognize their brethren and sisters in Christ and they are required by The Father to help them. And you will be able to make a fresh start. All those issues with the house, computer, the plumbing and what to do with your summer clothes are now history.

Believe me, I have had similar things happen to me twice, and things just got better and better, and I didn't worry about anything,

because I put the whole mess into The Father's hands, and carried on with my piety.

So let The Father know that you have no desire for attachments to anything worldly, just to Grace. This is the key to happiness. This also is prayer.

Of course, you may think that the prospect of abandoning your work ambitions, the desire for a bigger house, a new car, and a nice holiday in Europe, would be the end of the world. Why are you working so hard if not to buy those things? Well, of course that is the Western world's ambition for you. They hope you will consume more food, spend more money at Wal-Mart, or Macy's, burn more gasoline, use more electricity, pay more interest and so on. 'If you

don't fall in with the others, you will be ruining the US economy,' so they preach. You have to talk to The Father about this, read the scriptures. Did The Master teach anybody to live like you do? No, He said to his disciples: trust The Father for everything, he will provide what you need. How can anyone worry about anything as long as The Father is providing what you need? Jesus taught us that there is no need to save for a rainy day, no need to buy stuff just in case. Okay, things may fall apart with the world, you may go broke, but keep The Father in the loop Jesus said, and don't worry about it.

Humility Simplify your life

You can live very simply and be very happy. I have spent years with people who had absolutely no source of income, except what they could

earn doing odd jobs. You never saw people with so many friends, because they had time to spend with people. If you are a good person, doing the will of The Father, people will want to help you, as long as you love God and people know it. Guess who tells them?

I left a job making \$100,000+ a year and learned to live on \$1,000 a month in Mexico. I did it again, retired from a job making over \$100,000+ and sailed to Grenada BWI. I didn't drink, didn't smoke or do drugs, just loved the people and the environment. And The Father loved to watch me enjoy it. I took The Father sailing, to foreign countries, we ate unusual foods, and I introduced The Father to lots of good people, and The Father saw it all through my eyes, and ears, and touch because The

Father has no body parts, and if it hadn't been for His creation he wouldn't have understood joy. Joy is prayer because you are showing The Father how much his creation means to you.

Doing for others

Another form of prayer is helping other brethren. Now, I am not talking about mowing the lawn for a friend, that is not prayer.

But holding someone's hand during recovery from surgery, reading scripture to someone who is blind, having lunch while talking about The Father, with someone who has just lost a wife, or helping someone understand The Father, is all prayer.

The Master said you must love one another that was his commandment to the brethren. It

also applies to members of our own congregation, which means you must care enough about them to educate some of them, and help anyone if they stumble spiritually.

For many years I met with people four days a week to talk about The Father. This consumed eight hours of my time, and I enjoyed every minute of the conversations. This was The Father's idea to keep me from being a recluse, and to sharpen my mind. And God has picked people who keep me on my toes intellectually. I didn't know such people even existed in my town.

Yet, though this is not prayer, I still offer financial and support to friends in need. Whatever you do for others you are really doing

for your own satisfaction, and that's okay, but don't count it as work you are doing for God. It is not prayer unless you are teaching at the same time.

The Gospel of the kingdom of God that The Master taught to his disciples which is summarized in the New Testament, is prayer. Whether you are doing it, or teaching it, or just writing about it, you are in prayer, and The Father knows you because of it. Remember: God is within you.

Prayers for health

I have learned from people who know, that many health problems are caused by worry, and that if you understand this, you can get better if you can find the cause of the worry.

I read a book by an orthopedic doctor whose job it was to help people recover from surgery through therapeutic exercises. He wrote that 90% of the patients were suffering back pain because of some sort of worry, and nothing to do with their physical condition. You see, the pain was caused by the brain in order to disguise a real concern. When you worry about something that you don't understand, and it begins to affect your wellbeing, the brain finds something else to occupy your consciousness that distracts you from the real cause, which it assumes you can't handle without being really upset. Back pain is a good distraction and easy for the body to instigate.

Back Pain

So many people have back pain in the USA, and most of it is psychosomatic. Oh, it is a real pain for sure. But what causes the back to hurt? This doctor discovered that the nerves will scream for attention if oxygen is not getting to them, because without oxygen the nerves will quickly die. So, to create back pain all the brain has to do is shut off the flow of oxygen for a few minutes. Sometimes it is a muscle that is deprived of Oxygen, and the pain is less severe but often longer lasting as muscles can go for some time without oxygen, unlike nerves. Nerve pain is very sharp, and muscle pain, like a cramp, can be dull in comparison. So how do you get the oxygen back in? We know that deep massage will give temporary relief as if squishes

the blood flow into the affected part and provides oxygen, but the effect doesn't last. What you have to do is find out what is the source of the worry. It make take a few days to find it.

In the meantime here is what religious have done for thousands of years.

Pray this prayer often.

“Every day in every way, I am getting better and better.”

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“Every day in every way, I am getting better and better.”

The Jesus Prayer

Another Prayer that has always worked since the beginning is the Jesus Prayer

“Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me, a sinner.”

The Monks would say this frequently so that it became almost automatic, and they would repeat this while they worked.

Specific health issues

You can also talk to The Father directly relating to the health issue. God is within you, as Jesus promised, “if you keep my words.” So, what I do is to tell my body to fix a specific problem by touching the body part and talking to The Father at the same time, telling him to

get it fixed within a few minutes. The DNA, which is probably busy replacing cells on other parts of my body, responds to the request and switches its attention to the place you are pointing to. You have to describe exactly what you want to happen such as “release the tension in this muscle.” This often works for me.

This is autosuggestion, according to some people, maybe it is, but The Father has to be involved.

I had two friends who were Christian Scientists and the religion recommends that they seek only God for the cure for any illness, that all illness is caused by the mind. Instead of doctors that have practitioners who will help you to overcome your lack of faith, which is why you haven't been cured yet. I talked at length with a

world famous practitioner and came away with more confidence in the idea that God fixes everything.

Try it, next time you have a backache.

Underlying causes of pain

Now back to the underlying cause of your pain for people whose backs are not physically damaged. Here is my example:

I had back pain so severe that I could not get in and out of bed without excruciating sharp pain, and could not walk anywhere. It was several weeks before I could get to a chiropractor, and I had to take pain killers to function at all. The Chiropractor didn't help much, in fact the pain seemed to get worse. I suffered for several months with on and off back

pain until I finally convinced myself that something was wrong with my back. I had strained in moving a heavy Mac Pro, you know the ones with nine fans, and built like a tank. It was under a table and I leaned down to move it and the pain started from that moment. Little did I know that was not what caused the pain, but the timing was perfect so I thought that was the cause.

It wasn't until I read the book I mentioned that I began to think about what might be the underlying cause. By this time I had a CT scan of my back. It was done by a Radiologist I knew and trusted, and he let me watch the scan being reconstructed in 3D on the monitor. He said something about the images which brought the two techs to the monitor. He said: 'It's amazing,

you're 69 years old and have the spine a 35 year old would be envious of. There is nothing wrong with your spine, there is loads of calcium in your ribs, none in your arteries and your liver and kidneys are clear. Go home there is nothing wrong with you.'

I was in pain when I came in for the scan, but now the pain temporarily vanished. So what was going on here?

After praying for some inspiration, I was reminded of how I spent my days alone during the week because my wife travelled all the time.

I was lonely.

That was the cause of the pain.

I was lonely. To stop me realizing it, my body gave me something else to worry about that was

less traumatic! Well, as soon as I understood the cause, we made changes to our lives. We moved 250 miles away to a more central location for her work, and she could be home more often. It's been two years since we made the change, and no more back pain.

My Doctor said that the back is so strong it is very hard to damage it. Most back pain comes from psychological trauma. So, I don't worry about hurting it - but I still am careful not to lift heavy objects!

So, praying for health wasn't the answer. What I needed to pray for was insight and understanding, as to the cause. I had to "buy the lottery ticket" which was to read that book, and pray for an understanding of what might be

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causing me so much concern that it needed severe back pain to distract me.

Enough on prayer?