



Today's Lesson

A Matter of Prayer

PowerPoint notes available at:
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A Matter of Prayer

The late Unity minister and author, Dana Gatlin once wrote:

If I were asked to name life's greatest blessing, I would have to answer, "The blessing of prayer." What else can be compared with that peculiar comfort, that indefinable calm that comes stealing over you when, perplexed and confused, you have turned to God, simply dropped your burdens and problems, and flung yourself into His protecting arms?

A Matter of Prayer

There are those who say that religion is an outgrowth of humanity's fear; that all prayer is an act of human fear. Possibly prayer originated in fear. But if the act of prayer can lessen or nullify this human fear, if a sense of communion with a power mightier than ourselves can comfort us and renew our strength, then is it not a wise and profitable procedure for human beings?

There are numerous books on the activity of prayer. Every religion has its own set of rituals and doctrines that instruct the followers on how to pray.

A Matter of Prayer

Even Jesus had his way of praying and shared it with the world:

"And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you." Matthew 6:5-7

A Matter of Prayer

Someone once said, "every thought is a prayer." In other words you are constantly in contact with the Universal Creative Mind and the thoughts you hold near and dear to your heart, your belief system, will be answered in some form or another. Prayer works because it's a process of the law of mind action.

A Matter of Prayer

After working at Silent Unity for three years I noticed that people only call when there is a dire need of some kind in their life. The prayer request usually follow certain stages.

The first stage comes from the emotions of worry and fear.

Someone once said that worry is prayer in reverse. When we find ourselves praying from an attitude of worry and the emotion of fear we end up creating and experiencing the very thing we don't want in our lives. The story of Job...

A Matter of Prayer

The second stage of prayer involves the unconscious mind which is the activity of unconscious prayers. When acting from this stage of prayer is usually because something is going on in your life that you have finally realized you don't want anymore. You may even experience pain, suffering or hardship, and through this experience you decide that this is not what you want. It is the beginning of a call for help. And a call for help is a prayer. Unconscious prayers may not even use the word God.

A Matter of Prayer

The third stage of prayer is conscious prayer. This is when we move from *"there's got to be something better"* to *"I have found a better way, I have found someone or something to help me with this challenge in my life."* It is in this stage that we find that there is power greater than ourselves at work in the universe and in our lives.

A Matter of Prayer

The fourth stage of prayer is the petition stage. This is the most common of all prayers uttered by us. In this stage of prayer people pray for God to give them this or that. Prayers of petition are prayers that focus on things rather than essence and quality of life which lies behind them. For example: Why would you want a BMW? Is it because it would remind you of an abundant universe? Then the prayer should not be for a BMW but for an increased awareness of the essence behind the BMW.

A Matter of Prayer

The fifth stage is the affirmative prayer. When praying affirmative prayers you are praying with an attitude of mind that says, "I have all ready received it." Think about it...every time we say, "God, please give me this or that" we are internally and subconsciously saying we don't have it.

Affirmative prayers are prayers that help us to focus and bless what we do have while waiting for more of the same blessings to manifest in their lives.

A Matter of Prayer

The sixth stage of prayer is giving thanks. Prayers of thanksgiving are the highest form of prayer. As Jesus would often say, "Thank you, Father for hearing me." When you pray from an attitude of thanksgiving, from an attitude of gratitude, two things happen. One, your heart is open and receptive and because it is you find yourself entering a state of being and awareness that all is right with the world. Two, as you give thanks, the Universe starts to act on your activity of faith and creates more of what you are giving thanks for.

A Matter of Prayer

The seventh stage of prayer is what is known as the golden silence. As Joel Goldsmith has said, "Prayer is talking to God and meditation is listening." It is in the silence that the "still small voice" of God can be heard. As you sit in the silence and allow God to be God through you, as you surrender yourself to the awareness of the presence of God within you, you become a tuning fork and vibrate in God's energy field.

A Matter of Prayer



In the Revealing Word, Charles Fillmore explains that prayer is the most highly accelerated mind action known, for it is how we communion with God in the innermost part of our being. Then he gives a list of what he believes to be the seven necessary conditions for true prayer:

A Matter of Prayer



1. God is to be recognized as First Cause.
2. Our oneness with God must be acknowledged.
3. Prayer should always take place within the secret place.
4. The door must be closed to all thoughts and interest in the outside world.

A Matter of Prayer



5. When you pray it must be with the mind-set that you have already received it.
6. That the awareness of God and the consciousness of the kingdom must be desired about all things.
7. The human mind (ego) must let go of all unforgiving thoughts.