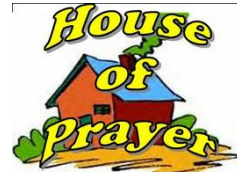




Today's Lesson
The ART of Prayer
Power Point notes available
at:
www.unityofbakersfield.org

The ART of Prayer



All prayer begins within each person where our hearts, minds, and souls are housed. It is here that the ART of prayer is learned and applied in our lives.

The ART of Prayer



Unity was initially a prayer ministry. It started out first as The Society of Silent Help a correspondence ministry headed by Myrtle Fillmore who hand wrote prayer responses to those who wrote her asking for help in answering their prayer needs. This work would later become Silent Unity.

The ART of Prayer



The late Eric Butterworth, Unity Minister & author, in his book Discover the Power Within You had this to say about the activity of prayer:
A study of the prayer practices within the Christian framework gives us an interesting commentary.

The ART of Prayer

There are prayers of flattery to exult God, as if God were so vain he needed to be reminded of how great he is; there are prayers of pleading and supplication, believing that if we show God how much suffering we are enduring God will grant us a reprieve; then there are prayers of bargaining and coaxing, as if making a deal with God will bring about the miracle we are looking for;

The ART of Prayer

...and then there are the repetitive prayers said over and over again, sometimes in a very loud voice, as if saying them over and over again will get God's attention.

Albert Einstein, a great master in the field of science, believed in the power of prayer. He saw the power of prayer imbedded in the one law of mathematics and physics. He discovered that this law is a positive force for good and that we tune in on its perfect outworking by the power of our thoughts and prayers.

The ART of Prayer

This personal discovery by Einstein lead him to understand his unity with the Divine and the limitless life, substance, and intelligence that was available to him through the art of prayer.

Prayer is not something we do to God but to ourselves; It is not a position we take but a disposition we develop; It is not flattery but a sense of oneness; It is not asking but knowing; It is not words but feeling; It is not will but willingness.

The ART of Prayer



“Prayer is not something we do to God but to ourselves.” The Master Teacher understood this concept and taught it to others.

The ART of Prayer



“But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you” (Matt 6:6).

The ART of Prayer

Jesus understood that prayer was an important part of the Jewish life, however the people were being taught that it was better to be seen by others as a means of shaming those who did not give or pray. This was ego based prayer and not spirit based prayer. This activity continues today in many areas of our lives and activities. Case in point: A family gathering at a hospital...

The ART of Prayer

The following list is a guide that can be used to help people understand what prayer isn't, and help them answer the age old question, *“Why hasn't God answered my prayer?”*

1. We start with the basic premise that prayer is not something we do to God but to ourselves. When we enter into the activity of prayer, it must be done with the understanding that prayer is for us, not God.

The ART of Prayer

2. Prayer is not a position we take but a disposition we develop.

When we think that “it must be this way” and turn to prayer in that type of mind-set, we limit the power of our prayer. Who are we to say what God can and can not do.

The ART of Prayer

3. Prayer is not flattery but a sense of oneness.
 The activity of prayer is for us to rise up our consciousness to a point where we might be impressed by the awesomeness of God and His Spirit. Not the other way around.

4. Prayer is not asking but knowing.
 This activity of prayer requires that we trust God and the process of surrender. It's part of our prayer activity where we just know without seeing, without hearing, without touching.

The ART of Prayer

5. Prayer is not words but feeling.
 Emerson once said that prayer is the contemplation of life from the highest point of view. It is the spirit of God pronouncing to us on an individual basis that everything is good.


The ART of Prayer

6. Prayer is not will but willingness.
 The human will (EGO) will do its best to edge God out whenever it can, even in our prayers. To develop the art of prayer to a point of us getting past the will to be willingness requires practice. We practice the ART of prayer by remembering these three simple activities:
 Affirm, Release, and Thanksgiving.

The ART of Prayer

When we affirm: *I am open to all possibilities that God has for me;*
 Then release: *I now let go knowing what I seek for my highest and best is now seeking me;*
 With an attitude of thanksgiving: *Thank you, God for knowing what is in my heart. It is done.*

The ART of Prayer



Someone once said, *"Prayer is the key that unlocks the storehouse of God's infinite good."* The key represents our attitude of mind and the door can only be found in the secret place within us.

The ART of Prayer

A minister dies and is waiting in line at the Pearly Gates.
 Ahead of him is a guy who's dressed in sunglasses, a loud shirt, leather jacket and jeans. Saint Peter addresses this cool guy, "Who are you, so that I may know whether or not to admit you to the Kingdom of Heaven?"
 The guy replies, "I'm Peter Pilot, retired Air Canada pilot from Winnipeg." Saint Peter consults his list.

The ART of Prayer

He smiles and says to the pilot, "Take this silken robe and golden staff and enter the Kingdom." The pilot goes into Heaven with his robe and staff.

Next it's the minister's turn. He stands erect and booms out, "I am Joseph Snow, pastor of Saint Mary's in Pasadena for the last 43 years."

Saint Peter consults his list. He says to the minister, "Take this cotton robe and wooden staff and enter the Kingdom."

The ART of Prayer

"Just a minute," says the minister. "That man was a pilot and he gets a silken robe and golden staff, and I get only cotton and wood? How can this be?"

"Up here, we work by results," says Saint Peter. "While you preached - people slept; while he flew - people prayed."