

February 8, 2016

- *The relationship of prayer, words, and thoughts*

God, who is the light that you seek, indeed illuminates and educates and inspires and directs, listens, and always responds through love.

The questions that you have relate ultimately to the desire for clearer connection to God, a clearer understanding of that connection by whatever means it is achieved—prayer, meditation, dreams, insight from so many sources. You are all seekers. You seek the light. You seek the warmth of that light. You seek the capability of issuing a light that will give warmth that will ultimately give care and healing, balance, to others.

Prayer is merely a term. It is simply a word, and yet so much has been written about it: how to pray, what to pray for, what condition of the human presence is most conducive to prayer, to whom to pray. There is a kind of overload of importance given to process, as you identified. We say to you, process is insignificant. There is no one way to pray. There is no pathway that prayer must follow in order to reach God or your guides or the spirit of someone else or your own inner spirit. Process is insignificant for the simple reason that it often becomes a barrier. It often becomes a tool by which institutions control and direct. Prayer can become the objective rather than a facilitation.

Much energy is spent by organized religious groups directing others on how best to instruct God, how best to implore God to act, how best to describe the ways through which God's love is received and understood. All that needs be said regarding what prayer is can be summed up as intentional love. How that intentional love is brought to reality will differ among all people and all doctrines, but in the end, intentional love is love that is directed toward the self or toward another, whether that other is an individual or a mass number of people.

When you think however briefly of another, that is prayer, even when those thoughts are not characterized as being immensely positive. Thinking of individuals with whom you have differences is bringing those into your own life experience. In so doing, what is good within you will illuminate what is good within the other. You do not have to pray, "Please, God, protect my adversaries," or "Please, God, make my adversaries be as I would wish them to be." The mere recognition of those adversaries invites those guiding spirits to be with you. Simply thinking of another has an impact that is of benefit.

When you experience intense dislike or other negative thoughts directed toward someone else, those negative thoughts of course have their own resonance or ripple effect. But those influences are minimized and have less impact than the positive energy that is part of the simple recognition of another, for when you criticize another in thoughts, you are also at a deeper level wishing that those actions, those behaviors, are more in keeping with what you hold dear. It is that unvoiced connection that overpowers the negative energy that is sent out toward someone else.

February 8, 2016

You could say, then, that in its unique way, even the act of being critical is in itself a kind of prayer. How that criticism is expressed can either be godly in its reflection or not. When you are openly, verbally, visibly critical of others, there is of course hurt that is transmitted, but the connection that you all share because you are all creatures of God is such that in the end there is nothing you can do that can in any profound way destroy another. You may abandon a relationship, you may abandon a friendship, but the individual that is separated is not truly abandoned, for that person receives the illumination that you also benefit from, and those thoughts that you have are an intentional recognition that another is indeed significant.

There are moments in your life when you experience guilt, and that guilt of course means a criticism of self. But in acknowledging yourself, you are also acknowledging the validity, the importance of self, for if self were of no significance, self would never enter your conscience.

All whom you think of, whether you know them personally or merely know of them, benefit from your thoughts acknowledging that they are significant, that they do have value. Even when you are judgmental, you are acknowledging their validity.

Prayer as a specific form of acknowledgment, therefore, is of little importance as a formal activity. Of course, you can consciously utter words that are reflective of your support, your compassion, your love, and those have real benefit because they clarify for you the importance of another. From God's perspective, however, your words do nothing to make God respond with greater intensity.

You are loved because you exist. All are loved because all has been created, and because all has been created, God is connected to that creation with a love that is full and all-embracing. Words, therefore, in themselves are not necessary to place God in motion. They can, however, deeply impact your own personal sense of what it means to support, what it means to be compassionate, what it means to listen. If there is any benefit specifically for voicing prayer, it is the benefit for the person who prays. It is God who understands your acknowledgment of others, whether shrouded with criticism or praise. It is your acknowledgment that connects you to another. Your responses of praise or criticism are your issues. They are not God's issues.

We always urge you to pray. We urge you to understand the importance of prayer, because that increases the connection you have with others. When you pray for those who have joined our form of life, you are connected to entities, and that connection has great light. When you pray for those who have joined us with whom you may have been in considerable disagreement, those entities benefit. They benefit because they are in your conscious thought. They are in your intention, and your acknowledging of their existence is in itself the exercise of love.

In your human lives you can love someone with whom you disagree. The disagreement is not what is important. It is the love that remains. Agreements,

February 8, 2016

disagreements are ultimately only surface noise. What really matters, what lies deep within remains strong and remains the subject of love acknowledgment.

There is no difference, therefore, in terms of benefit to another between your praying quickly for someone or spending much time in deep thought and prayer. The difference in benefit is yours, not the other's. We do strongly urge you to take time for prayer, because that opens a channel more clearly between you and those for whom you pray. But what you pray does not engage God in a deeper or more shallow way. The individual for whom you pray benefits equally.

Your lives are truly about your own spiritual growth, and as you grow in spirit you are more capable of exercising that strength as reflected in the loving relationships you establish with others and with yourself. There is no need for judgment because judgment is superficial, and judgment affects the judge, not the object of that judgment. Yes, the recipient feels judged, but that is superficial. That individual still grows through your very thoughts of that person. Thoughts are powerful because thoughts connect. Thoughts bind together and empower and strengthen. Your connection with all of creation is deeper when your awareness is broadened.

Using our example of light coming through a window, opening the window does not change the intensity of the light, but it does impact illumination upon yourself. It is precisely this reality that addresses the question of meditation, for meditation is opening the window. You can open the window through effort, but that window also opens when you stand before it and not hide from it. The window responds to your presence. The window does not require your personal engagement enforcing it to be open. All that is needed is that you be present.

If you are engaged in meditation to intentionally open the window through your own efforts, that effort helps you become more aware of that window being opened. But even when you stand before the window without making an attempt to open it, the window will move. The light will come in. The light will illuminate because you are present.

Therefore, seek inspiration through being present. Seek the benefit of prayer through being present. Don't dwell on how to pray unless it is of specific meaning for you. Don't dwell on the intention of meditation unless it is of benefit to you. You will be guided. You will be illuminated. All that is needed is to be present. It is being open. It is being receptive.

There is no effort to prayer. There is no great effort to intentional meditation. There are ways of praying that may have meaning. There are ways of meditating that may have meaning. For each individual, those ways will be different, but again, those differences impact you rather than the specifics of either insight or prayerfully benefitting another.

February 8, 2016

The best prayer is being silently present. The best meditation ultimately is being silently present. What you do to be so present is what is best according to your own wishes. There is no way that is better than another.

Be present, be open, be aware, be blessed.

Amen.