

CHARLES FILLMORE



TEACH US
TO PRAY

THE NEW THOUGHT ARCHIVES

Teach Us To Pray

Charles Fillmore

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www.jazzybee-verlag.de
www.facebook.com/jazzybeeverlag
admin@jazzybee-verlag.de

Teach Us To Pray

Introduction

When Jesus' disciples asked Him to teach them how to pray He warned them against making a display of their praying in order to be seen of men. They should retire to their "inner chamber" and pray to the Father who sees in secret and rewards openly. Then He said, "After this manner therefore pray." The Lord's Prayer was given as a sample: not to be followed literally. It is a petition according to the American revision; but according to Fenton's translation it is a series of affirmations, as follows:

"Our Father in the Heavens; Your Name must be being hallowed;

"Your kingdom must be being restored;

"Your will must be being done, both in Heaven and upon the Earth.

"Give us to-day our to-morrow's bread;

"And forgive us our faults, as we forgive those offending us, for You would not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from its evil."

As in all matters where we seek divine help we are free to use any words we choose or no words at all.

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,

Uttered or unexpressed."

Prayer in man is a conscious expression of the upward trend of nature found everywhere. So every impulse or

desire of the soul for life, love, light, is a prayer.

Eliphaz repeated a prayer formula when he said, "Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee."

Jesus put the same idea in these words: "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do."

All growth and unfoldment from atom to sun is based upon this law of soul urge.

What you earnestly desire and persistently affirm will be yours, if you "faint not."

When we frame our desires in sound words and place them before our indwelling Lord, we are using intelligently the supreme law of God in bringing into manifestation that which He has implanted in us.

A prayer without desire in it, a prayer without sincerity in it, a prayer without soul in it, a prayer without Spirit in it is a fruitless prayer.

But above all practice the presence of God in prayer. Divine Mind has given us all potentialities, in prayer we recognize it as the source of these, and with a right understanding of our relation to it our soul grows great with infinite capacity, all potentiality. "With God all things are possible." "All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine."

We have been so persistently taught that prayer consists in asking God for some human need that we have lost sight of our spiritual identity and have become a race of praying beggars. God is Spirit in whom we "live, and move, and have our being." We are the offspring of this Spirit and can

make conscious contact with it by turning our attention away from material things and thinking about Spirit. As we practice this kind of prayer our innate Spirit showers its life energies into our conscious mind and a great soul expansion follows.

Jesus described this in the following words:

"But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee."

This "inner chamber" of the soul has been variously named by Scripture writers. It is called the "secret place of the Most High" and the "holy of holies," and Jesus named it "the Father . . . in me" and "the kingdom of God . . . within you." What we need to know above all is that there is a place within our soul where we can consciously meet God and receive a flood of new life into not only our mind but also our body.

This understanding shows us that prayer is more than asking God for help in this physical world; it is in its highest sense the opening up in our soul of an innate spiritual umbilical cord that connects us with the Holy Mother, from whom we can receive a perpetual flow of life. This is the beginning of eternal life for both soul and body, the essential teaching of Jesus, which He demonstrated in overcoming death.

We have earnestly sought to know and tell others how to pray, and this book is our very best exposition of the subject. Language has not yet been invented to tell all the wonders that we have found since we began opening our minds to the Spirit in prayer. We have discovered enough to

convince us that the body can be so charged with spiritual life through prayer that it will overcome death, as promised by Jesus Christ.

Do not enlarge the defects of this book until they darken its truths, but accept the urge to begin the practice of prayer and through it make contact with the source of your being. Thus you will prove that, as Job wisely taught,

"There is a spirit in man,

And the breath of the Almighty giveth them understanding."

The God to Whom We Pray

Earth's crammed with heaven, And every common bush
afire with God; But only he who sees takes off his shoes,
The rest sit round it and pluck blackberries.

--Elizabeth Browning

OMNIPRESENCE, omniscience, omnipotence are verities of Being and are facts of existence.

The Mind of God, creative Mind, is perpetually moving upon supermind ideas and through them bringing man and the universe into existence.

Creative Mind is everywhere present; yet while it is within the mind of man it lies beyond the consciousness of sense.

Omnipresence is that spiritual realm which can be penetrated only through the most highly accelerated mind action, as in prayer. Thus in unfolding this inner kingdom

we are dealing with a reality beyond the ordinary comprehension of man.

To the superbly tuned mind and brain of Jesus Divine Mind was a soil eager with vibrant life and light and substance, which He used to produce the finest of materials for both character and body building.

Spiritual character building is from within outward.

Spiritual character lives in man; it is what God has engraved on man's soul, ready for development through man's spiritual efforts. It is a reserve force of organized victory over carnality.

Man builds spiritual character by consciously functioning in God-Mind, where, laying hold of spiritual ideas, through Christ he realizes the Truth they contain; and as he thus weaves them into his soul consciousness they become a part of his very nature.

Our most effective prayers are those in which we rise above all consciousness of time and space. In this state of mind we automatically contact the Spirit of God. Indeed when we elevate our consciousness to that of Jesus Christ, the God presence becomes as meaningful to us as it was to Him. It is in this state of at-one-ment that we truly become aware of His sublimity and power.

"I go to prepare a place for you." By getting acquainted with the one Mind as integral substance, we move with it and it moves with us, and thus are established within us new spiritual states of consciousness, a "place" where we are aware of the God presence as reality.

Jesus said: "My Father is the husbandman." "I am the true vine." "Ye are the branches." "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in me."

"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit."

In this scripture Jesus is revealing to us that through Him we are born anew, born of God, and that through Him we may be consciously attached to God--as the branch is attached to the tree--so that we may not wither and be cast away.

Through Christ we are consciously attached to the parent stem. It behooves us to retain this attachment so that we may go forward in spiritual unfoldment and be crowned with eternal life.

Many good people think that God is a person located in a place in the skies called heaven. They pray to Him for what they want and are satisfied. This is the prayer of the primitive, personal man, and it meets his needs; but this is not direct communion of the Father and the Son, the communion with reference to which Jesus said, "I and the Father are one." We must have this more intimate acquaintanceship or communion with creative Mind if we are in all ways to do His will.

God presence establishes us in ideas of honesty, strength, intelligence, spiritual manhood, perfect womanhood, all needed factors in the unfoldment of the redeemed man, all builders of the indestructible body temple.

Thus we must understand the nature of the God to whom we pray and awaken in ourselves that divine nature through which we effect our union with God.

God is power: man is powerful. God is wisdom: man is wise. God is substance: man is form and shape. God is love: man is loving. God is life: man is the living. God is mind: man is the thinker. God is truth: man is truthful.

Many people pray to God in the same manner as they talk to some distant friend over the telephone. We talk too much about God, too much as though He were a third person in the God-man relationship instead of the first. It is unthinkable that the Creator should cause to exist a creation so inferior to Himself as to remove it beyond the pale of fellowship with Him. In his saner moments man knows that this is not logical or true. It is man's exalted ideas of God and his disparaging ideas of himself that have built the mental wall that separates them.

In our prayers we must meet God face to face and realize that we are getting that inner assurance which is the real answer to our petitions.

A minister, after twenty years of faith preaching, once was persuaded by a friend to try the Truth way of prayer, the way of scientific silence. Afterwards he confessed that when he touched God and found Him alive he was startled.

To Jesus the God presence was an abiding flame, a flame of life, of life everlasting that He felt in every cell and fiber of His being, making Him more and more alive, cleansing and purifying until He became every whit perfect. During our higher realizations of Truth we are often conscious of this abiding flame working in us and through us.

To Jesus God-Mind was a treasure field within Him in which could be found the fulfillment of every need He could possibly have. The Spirit of God in Him was constantly working, yes, steadily and persistently working, to transmute every natural impulse of mind and soul into a spiritual realization of life. To Him the Spirit of God was working to satisfy His inner craving with living substance and intelligence, thus rounding out soul and body consciousness into the perfect expression of Divine Mind itself. What a glorious satisfaction God must feel in His perfect Son Jesus who acknowledged His inner consciousness as one with, and as consciously expressing, God's will and wisdom. God Spirit, God-Mind, is not in any way confined or limited; it is everywhere present. The "ether" of science corresponds to "the kingdom of the heavens" taught by Jesus. Light and other forms of radiant energy, the objective expression of the invisible spiritual forces, compose an omnipresent world more marvelous than the old-time heaven. All the forces of modern scientific discovery are but parts of "the kingdom of the heavens" described in the many parables of Jesus. Science recognizes the physical phases of the kingdom, ignores the mental, and utterly fails to comprehend the spiritual.

The announcement of Jesus to the obtuse Nicodemus, "Ye must be born anew," gives us a clue to the shortsightedness of physicists. They have not developed the faculties of mind necessary to the discernment of the spiritual intelligence that moves the physical universe, consequently they see its material aspects only. A new school of science must be developed in which the mind of the Spirit will be given first place.

True Prayer

Truth is within ourselves; it takes no rise From outward things, whate'er you may believe.

There is an inmost center in us all, Where truth abides in fulness; . . . and, to know, Rather consists in opening out a way Whence the imprisoned splendor may escape, Than in effecting entry for a light Supposed to be without.

--Robert Browning

ALL DOWN the ages man has been making the spiritual effort to realize conscious union with that innermost center where Truth in all its glory abides eternally. This realization can be accomplished only through true prayer.

The disciples of Jesus earnestly importuned, "Lord, teach us to pray." Today, as disciples of the Master, we are asking of Him to be taught the way of unifying our consciousness with God-Mind. We would find that inner Truth which sets us free.

His instructions to the disciples were "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee." It is difficult to improve upon this simple method. Quietly entering the inner chamber within the soul, shutting the door to the external thoughts of daily life, and seeking conscious union with God is the highest form of prayer we know.

The purpose of the silence is to still the activity of the individual thought so that the still small voice of God may be heard. For in the silence Spirit speaks Truth to us and just that Truth of which we stand in need.

Prayer is man's steady effort to know God. There is an intimate connecting spirit that logically unites man and his source. This connecting spirit is the divine Logos, the Word of God, which in truth reveals the logic of Scripture. Because of this fact man instinctively feels and knows whence his help comes.

God-Mind, composed of radiant ideas, vibrant life, glorious new inspiration, is ours to use. Since we are the I will man in the supreme Godhead, let us through Jesus Christ realize our spiritual importance. Let us think deeply on the divine Logos, the Word of God! In it is the living impetus that is bound to vitalize the soul of man and enable him to develop his latent powers.

When we awaken even a very slight consciousness of this co-operative spirit, we become cocreators with God, and we find we can adjust any condition that comes into our life. Jesus was so completely unified with God-Mind that He could claim the words He spoke to be not His but those of the Father dwelling within Him.

Through prayer we gain the intimate relationship with God that Jesus must have enjoyed when He said, "I and the Father are one." Jesus Christ is our teacher and helper. In prayer what should be our attitude, our interest, as we approach the divine presence? If we knew that right now we were about to be ushered into the presence of Christ, to what extent would our spiritual expectancy be aroused? No doubt we should be thrilled through and through at the mere thought. Let us feel this same intense interest, this same concern, as we approach the divine presence within ourselves. It will add much to the readiness with which we receive Truth.

ENTERING THE SILENCE

When entering the silence, according to Hosea, the command is "Take with you words, and return unto Jehovah." After many centuries this instruction still stands approved today. To the metaphysician it means to close the eyes and ears to the without, to go within and hold the mind steadily on the word "Jehovah" until that word illumines the whole inner consciousness. Then affirm a prayer such as "Thy vitalizing energy floods my whole consciousness, and I am healed."

Think what the mighty vitalizing energy of God, released through Jesus Christ, really is. Penetrate deeper into God consciousness within you and hold the prayer steadily until you attain spiritual realization and the logic of your own mind is satisfied.

To realize an idea in the silence is to clothe it with life, substance, and intelligence. To realize a prayer is to actualize it. To realize it is to clothe it with soul, to know there is fulfillment.

The word of prayer has in it a living seed that is bound to impregnate the soil of the mind and cause it to bring forth fruit after its kind.

Through Christ man has the power to realize that as I AM or I AM "vitalizing health" he is the great central magnet functioning in omnipresence, around which all the healing powers of Spirit revolve. He has the power to realize this truth until the most sacred ethers respond, and he beholds himself as powerful, peaceful, perfect: healed through and through. It is after this fashion that we engraft the healing word into our very souls.

When we were in Florida a few years ago a citrus fruit grower told us many interesting things about the growth of his orchards. There are many swamps in Florida. He had instructed his men to go out into these swamps, into the muddy black waters infested with creeping things, there to dig up the wild-lemon saplings with their strong, vigorous roots, to transplant them into well-prepared soil, and then to graft into them buds from his prize domestic fruit trees. Thus new trees laden with golden fruit appeared in due time. The strong, vigorous root of the wild lemon gave the new fruit added flavor and quality.

Metaphysically the law is "If the root is holy, so are the branches." At least the branches are potentially holy. We find that the natural man is usually physically strong and vigorous just as the root of the wild-lemon tree is. The natural man also struggles in a murky, negative, swampy atmosphere without power to bring forth spiritually, just as the wild-lemon sapling does.

But the natural man can take a word of Truth and through "one-pointed" mind concentration can penetrate into the invisible, can unite his consciousness with the mind of God, and can hold a realizing prayer until the truth it contains is engrafted into his very soul. Thus just as the citrus fruit is developed through the grafting process, so man, through the engrafted word, becomes a strong, positive spiritual character.

There is only one God, only one ruling power in all the universe; and the highest avenue through which God can express Himself is man. The hungering for God that is felt by man in his soul is really God hungering to express eternal life through man. God is always seeking to awaken man's very soul to His mighty presence. He thus expands