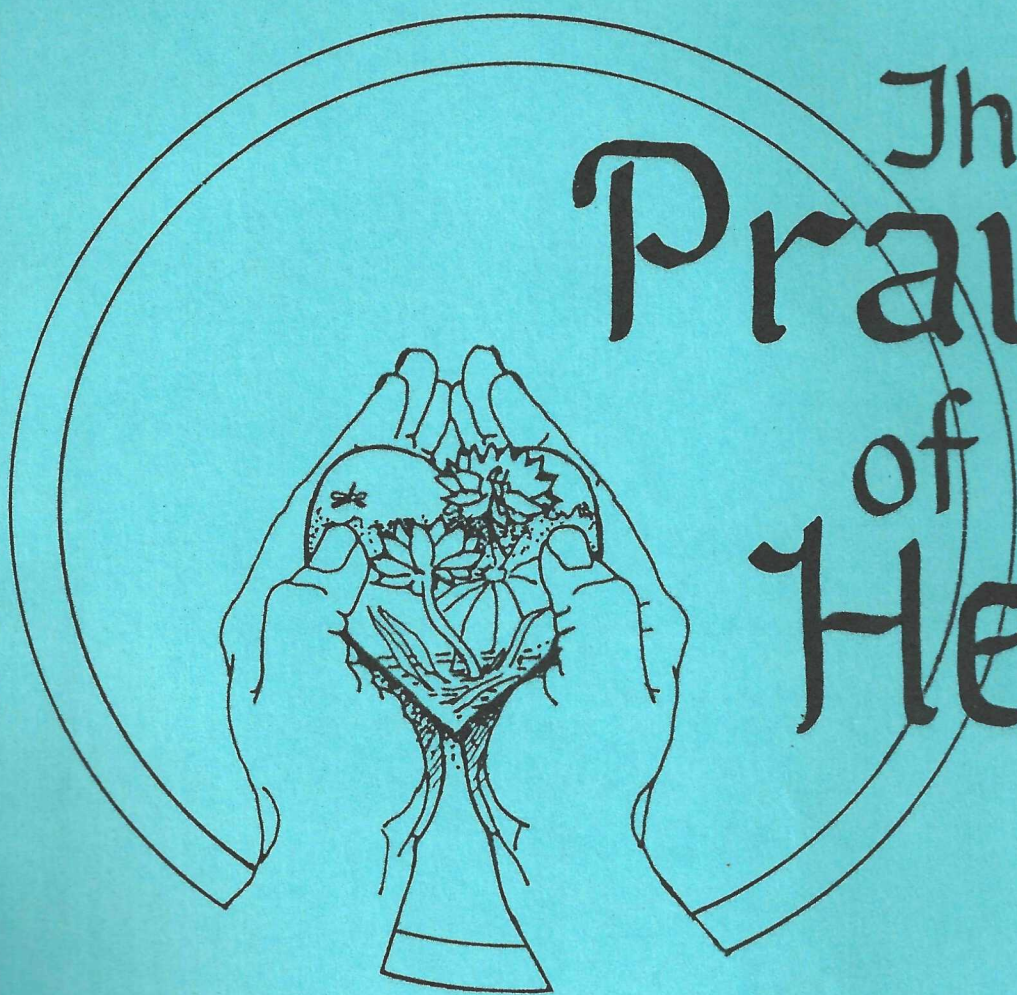


The Prayer of the Heart



By Reverend Carol Ruth Knox, Ph.D.

I am pleased to share with you
this compilation of ideas on prayer.
Prayer as an art form, which gradually
develops to become a constant presence in
one's life, is the core of my personal
spiritual activity. Its potential as a
transformational tool is exciting.

I hope these writings which span
1977 - 1983 will inspire you to use
it actively every moment.

Dr. Carol R. Knox

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SECTION I

THE LORD'S PRAYER

OUR FATHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN

Introduction

The first phrase of the Lord's Prayer is, "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name." When I was preparing to do the writing of these ideas, I sat with myself and wondered what more can be said about, "Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name"? Then I did with myself what I suggest to others, I was quiet, looked deep inside, got me out of the way, and the pressure to produce was switched into another frame wherein I thought about you who would be receiving. I heard the importance of those words as if for the first time, and I know them to be basic to the pursuit in which I have invested my life. I asked three questions as I looked back at those three phrases of the Lord's Prayer, realizing with excitement how Spirit, through me, hooked up practicality with infinity.

The three questions were:

1. What would cause you to want to make God the most important value in your life? (Remember that God is whatever your evolving awareness of God is personally).
2. What would be gained by experiencing God, and where would you search for it?
3. How much time and effort would you be willing to spend in that search?

Then I related those questions to the first three phrases of the Lord's Prayer:

1. "Our Father." What would cause you to want to make God the most important value in your life?
2. "Who art in heaven." What would be gained by experiencing God and where would you search?
3. "Hallowed be thy name." How much time and effort would you be willing to spend in that search?

Main Idea

The book, Passages, by Gail Sheehy, relates to the first question. She begins the book by saying that she had a remarkable experience which caused her to see the core of her being; it frightened her, caught her and made her begin her journey inward. She was in Ireland talking to a young boy at the time of one of the Irish attacks. Suddenly, a gunshot passed between her and the young boy and she watched his face get blown off. The shock caused her to realize in a moment how intimate life was to her when she watched it shattered in another person. This became a life-threatening question to her and changed the course of her life: "To be confronted for the first time with the arithmetic of life was, quite simply, terrifying." She relates much of this book to reaching mid-life in the thirties, yet her words ultimately do not apply only to mid-life. Each of us bounces into these questions that force us to question the essence of our being. She goes on to say, "...as we reach [certain portions] of our life, we become susceptible to the idea of our own perishability. If an accident that interrupts our life occurs at any time, our fears are heightened. We are not prepared for the idea that time can run out on us or for the startling truth that if we don't hurry to pursue our own definition of a meaningful existence, life can become a repetition of trivial maintenance duty. Nor are we anticipating a major upheaval of the roles and rules that may have been so comfortably defined during the earlier years of our life, but they must be reordered around a core of strongly felt personal values. In my case, the unanticipated brush with death in Ireland brought the underlying issues of life forward full force."

The important point in sharing this example with you is that her experience deals with a question for you too. What would cause you to want to make God, as an inner experience of seeking, the most important value in your life? What is it going to be for you to be awakened to the reality that that is where life begins? For this woman it was being faced with seeing another person blown up. Many who come into my office come from a point of desperation: A first child that one hoped would be joyous has caused life to become an experience of upheaval; a biopsy where for the first time doctors are looking for cancer; marital rejection, forcing a person to face emptiness - "What am I gonna' do now?" menopausal distress; boredom with one's present life meaning; a too early pregnancy or a too late one; sexual dysfunction or disinterest; business collapse or firing. Shaken, scared, they are realizing they cannot control everything as they look for something else to help them. In summary, people are forced to face the significance of their life meaning through the core of their being, and they are most often forced there through distress.

I am no different just because I wear the title, "Minister." The title means nothing as an escape from such issues, for life is happening to me all the time too. Life spins its little

fluctuations before my very eyes. I move in and out of these experiences. For me, this process has been significantly occurring since I was 29 years old, when I first realized I could not perform as I always had, as a sterling young adult. Then at 34 years of age it happened again and I faced the torture of my own death and the first realization that I might become physically incapable of continuing to function. Then, just recently, at 37, I began facing anxiety - life-threatening inner attacks that I did not understand nor know how to handle (regardless of my "Truth" upbringing).

In answering the question, "What would cause you to want to make God the most important value in your life?" I find that in every situation I've mentioned, whether it's happening to me or another, we have neglected to remember "Our Father" in our fears. It is always a reminder to me of "Where is the source of your being, Carol? Where is the core of your living dimension? Is it in the outer external events of life? Have you become so fascinated with your talents and your personality and your ability to produce that you have lost sight of where you need to be giving your attention - to 'our Father?'" It is very easy to be duped by that outside world because it is flashy and it has a lot to give you. It is especially difficult for us middle class "wunderkinds." I'm one. Wonderful, marvelous, miraculous. Flash in the pan. It is easy to get lost out there, to be fascinated by it. But whenever I see it happen to me or a cancer-filled victim or a sliding business magnate or a spaced out riddled young adult who has finally found that he too cannot live out his life that way, I want to say to them, "So this is what had to cause you to make God, whatever that is for you, the most important value in your life? So this is what did it!"

Somewhere along the journey we all make the inner value of God come first. You know we all do. Back in the second World War, they said there were no atheists in foxholes. I have found in watching people die, which is a part of my ministry, there are no atheists on deathbeds. They are not necessarily reaching out to the word "God" anymore and saying, "God, save me." But I watch them seek, and sometimes experience a sense, an awareness (through their own desire) of a feeling of peace, security and resolution with life. They slide into It and affirm It. The sadness for me is that they have reached It only in that moment, or they reach for It only when their life is threatened through some health or financial or relationship problem. What could be gained if we did it early? Somewhere along the journey, no matter what our language or what our dignity, we realize that we must, as it says in Proverbs, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not unto your own understanding." Trust in the Spirit within all your being, and do not lean on your own understanding - "Our Father."

If I were to open a school for "trained lifers," I would give one examination question. The question would be: what would cause you to make God the most important value in your life? The one prerequisite for taking the exam would be that you

could not come from a point of desperation. You could answer that question only when you came from a point of clear knowing that God, the Pure Being of your inner life, is the Essence of life: "I know that this is where it begins, I want to begin the journey, and I want to continue the journey." You see, the reason I cannot open that school is because it is not that fully clear inside me. I could not take the examination question. That does not mean that I am not aware of God in much of my life or aware of Life in much of my life or where the Essence of my being is, but I find that I'll come in contact with it, taste it, eat it, consume it, use it to rebuild my forces. Then I begin to get happier, speedier, and further away from It until... suddenly, I'm caught up once again, basing my belief and activities on what is happening outside of me, looking to personality, human abilities, others and events, as the source and circuit of my life. What would cause you to make God, Life, the core of your being, the most important value in your life? - "Our Father...."

The next phrase states, "Who art in heaven." The related question is, "What would be gained by experiencing God, and where would you search for it?" Let me describe a touch of heaven. You need to decide whether this presentation is worth your search. Heaven is maintaining an aerial view of your personal life and all life around you, including the matter, trees, animals, politics, economics and evolution, an aerial view of what is happening - seeing in an even clearer way a spiritual ecology, governed by Divine Principle, all life in harmony. That is heaven. It is a clear relationship with your physical body, so that you would not create sickness or discomfort. Heaven is inner Substance and wealth, the ability to create in the outer world, but with full knowledge of the responsibility for creation. Heaven is an inner bubble, like champagne, which re-creates emotional colorings of blue, red, black or white on the emotional scale. But the bubble stays there, an aliveness, as the changing hues give color to the subtle and dramatic shifts occurring on the surface. Heaven is an ever-expanding knowing of an eternal Fire that does not begin or end; you enter into it and out of it, into it and out of it, always taking on form. That is heaven and what would be gained by experiencing God. "Who art in heaven..."

"Where would you search for it?" There is an excellent story from the Buddhist tradition that tells us where to search for heaven. God and a friend were setting up creation one day when they decided to make man. God, being very wise, wanted to make man in His own image. After he had molded man out of clay and cast him in his idealistic form, the two were talking about sending him down here on earth. God said, "Let's send him down and give him absolutely everything." Now His friend, who was more realistic than God, advised him, "Oh, but don't give him quite everything. Give him a secret that will make his life more exciting. We will make a secret of the Key to Life!" And God asked, "Where are we going to hide the secret?" His friend answered, "I've heard of this place called Africa which is very dark and very big. Why don't we hide it there?" And God said,

"Wait a minute, he's made in my image. He has a fine mind, and he will know to look there." So, the friend sat a little bit longer and finally suggested, "Well, why don't you hide it in the deepest ocean?" God thought a bit longer. "No, he'd know to look there too. I know what his mind is like. It's a three-dimensional mind." Again, the friend suggested, "How about the tallest redwoods?" "No," God replied again, "He'd know to look there." They ran out of good ideas - those keen wizards up there in heaven making up devilry. Suddenly God sat back, a big smile covered His whole face. He had it! He said, "Let's hide it inside man. He'd never think to look there!" Where is heaven? "Who art in heaven..." Very deep inside you.

"Hallowed by Thy Name." Finally, knowing where God, Heaven, is, how much time and effort would you be willing to spend in that search? Let's look at the word, "hallowed." It is a beautiful word. Think right now of falling in love. Have you ever fallen in love with a person, an ideal or a vision? Bring that up inside. Can you remember how much time and energy you were willing to give it? Can you remember how you would put yourself where the object might be so that you might meet and spend your time in the presence of it? Can you remember the adolescent fire that we keep looking for on the outside so we can fall in love once again, so that we can kneel at the feet of it and enjoy the outer form to bring meaning to our life? That is hallowing. Of course, we fall in love with things that are outside, and because they, like all life, keep changing, we get frustrated and angry, we stomp our feet as children and declare, "Never again!" So we give up loving, give up adoring, give up hallowing in the outer. That activity has become mundane, unreliable, trite, like everything else in the outer.

Some of us have an externalized vision of God and God has let us down. We have hallowed churches and ministers and they have let us down. We have even fought with and left these models because they couldn't come through for us. What we have not recognized is that we have been hallowing the outer form. The Lord's Prayer says very clearly, "Hallowed be Thy Name." Name, throughout all religious tradition, has always stood simply for the essence of a thing. When we teach children language, we know that when a child feels or experiences the essence of the thing deep within, the name automatically fits. That is what this part of the prayer says. "Hallowed be thy Name" - the essence of the thing inside. Helen Keller, blind and deaf at birth, struggled as her teacher tried to enable her to understand the relationship of words to things. The knowing finally came through water. Her hand was placed beneath running water, and her whole system inside suddenly made the connection, "Water! It fits!" The essence of a thing. What power of creation might you bring about if you began now to give your falling-in-love energy, your hallowing effort, to your name, your "Our Father" essence. "Hallowed by Thy Name." Honored and beloved - the essence of your Being.

How much time and effort would you be willing to spend in this search? How can you do it? You hallow the name in meditation. Joel Goldsmith said, "When you think you've got it all together, meditate more, not less." Sri Aurobindo, in The Adventure of Consciousness, says that when you practice meditating, and you don't get anywhere, practice some more. Gradually, you will get the externals out of the way so that the internal rhythm, heaven, can take over from inside to direct your life. It only comes through attention and practice, through contacting the Inner, daily. You simply must do that. Sometimes the spiritual life leads us to such freedom, to such delight, that we leave the tools and the discipline. Yet, we need to be doing the contacting continually so that we will have that heaven, that bubble of security, that ongoing feeling of life. We must meditate. We must spend time with that Spiritual consciousness every day, so that we will come to know It.

Hallow the name as well in listening. Look for a moment at the amount of time you are willing to spend each day listening to someone else. You are willing to listen to TV, sometimes for hours; you are willing to listen to some co-worker tell you of his/her problems or give you advice during the whole of your lunch hour; you are willing to listen to your children, your parents, your stereo, and even to your minister. Then when someone comes along and says, "Hallow the name," the essence of the thing, through listening, you ask, "What do you mean, 'Listen?'" Listen means, take the same time and energy to listen to your own Inner Life. You are all used to listening to what is outside. Place the same value, energy and time on listening to the Inner Life, to discover heaven.

I first began practicing this deep listening when, as a part of the ministry, someone would call in literally bleeding to death or desperate because someone else had walked out. I had to listen, listen to the clarity and direction that came from deep inside my being. As I listened, I heard the words come in. You can learn to listen and speak from inside. If a person brings out a tortuous problem, you learn to step back inside and listen to some other Power come through you. As you practice it, you will get to know it. You may be saying right now, "How do I know if it is the Inner Voice or some conditioning?" Don't worry about that. Just get that silent place going inside, and hallow His name. Know that Spirit speaks through you. Listen - before you speak. Listen - before you give punishment to your child. Listen - before you send out the dictate as an executive to all those who will have to move because of you. Listen. Hallow the name by listening. Be aware. It's there. You could start this listening by tithing maybe 10% of your time to Spirit - six minutes an hour? Can you give two hours a day of combined meditation and inner listening to Spirit?

Finally, hallow the name through action. We put too much holiness into altars and crosses and do not realize that the very action of our hands is Spirit. I am hallowing His name by spinning a potter's wheel or making a bed or kissing the one I love

or sharing a meal or lifting my foot or bathing my body or raking the leaves or driving my car.

Hallow the name, the Essence within, through the process of meditation, listening and action! What a high ideal!

"Our Father." What could cause you to make God the most important value in your life? What is it going to be for you? "Hallowed be Thy Name." Falling in love with God through meditating, inner listening and action.

THY KINGDOM COME, THY WILL BE DONE
IN EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

The essence of this section of the Lord's Prayer is in the word, will. As an avid football fan, I read an article on the Super Bowl written in Time Magazine in 1977. "Super Bowl is the great American time out. It is a three hour pause on a Sunday afternoon in January that is a sheer unadorned spectacle, an interval unique." The article states that in 1976, during the Super Bowl game in Pennsylvania, the number of long distance telephone calls was reduced by 50% from any other Sunday afternoon at that time; there are only nine countries in the world that have more population than the numbers of people who watched Super Bowl; productivity in this country went down; the amount of money that was poured into that Super Bowl was astounding - in TV's, cameramen, special kinds of experiences, etc. Look at the power in this experience. What further caught my attention in the Time Magazine article was, "Super Bowl was born a mere decade ago, the child of technology, a combination of slick and schlock, with no history at all; a profound connection to a taproot of the human psyche; to play, to compete in or look on struggle as an instinct that stems from an early branch of man's evolutionary tree."

I am using this discussion of Super Bowl to introduce the element of our fascination with watching the struggle. If we project it into the world in this massive form, then how much more subtle is that movement in us, in our deeper parts, as a taproot of our human psyche, to enjoy looking on or competing in the struggle.

Now, let's observe this example within our nature. We do become involved in or enjoy looking at the struggle. I am sure you recognize that you engage in the struggle, the taproot of human psyche. We struggle with our children; we go through hours of pain and agony over how they should behave, what they should do. We struggle with our business decisions; what are the right ones, what will make the most money? We struggle incessantly with our spouses, spending hours of energy looking at and competing in that scene, that Super Bowl. We have Super Bowls every day. The minute we awake in the morning we tend to engage in the struggle. We engage in our political aversions, economy, gas prices, sniffing in too much bad air. We may be struggling with

decisions on house operations; who should take out the garbage, who should make the beds and how clean the rooms should be kept. We struggle with our employees, and they struggle with us. We struggle with nagging personalities, financial affairs and with an order we want carried out. If we bring this even closer into our internal operations, we struggle with our damning series of thoughts, with ongoing pain in our bodies. We struggle with recurring self-personality traits that keep laboring us and taking our time and energy.

I got up to prepare these ideas early on a Saturday morning, and as I sat in meditation, an earthquake hit. I had the awareness that there was no earthquake in the earth that could ever compare to the earthquakes that are ripping my being internally at times. A friend told me later that he realized, as it happened, that he was really a part of this experience, and I too, know that I was a part of the creation of that earthquake. Even though I was in a very lovely, beautiful place when it hit, my awareness, too, was - "Oh yes, this is all a part of the consciousness of mankind working on the earth." The realization was quite profound.

In presenting the idea of will in relation to our struggles, it is important first to look at will as we handle it humanly and then, as this part of the Lord's Prayer suggests using will. As you read these thoughts and consider yourself, remember that the struggles you experience become obvious to you at the point in time when it is possible for it to be faced, resolved and freed. Participating in that resolution is an act. You can take that action humanly which will free you, and if you take that action spiritually, the cleansing can be even more complete. Maybe one of our greatest awakenings is to see that Super Bowl will disappear as man frees himself from inner struggles and discovers a way to live without conflict. This is a long term evolution for all of us to participate in, if we so determine.

There are two ways to use our will in a human manner. The first is to use our will to hold on to a belief we have been taught and as always there is rightness to this side of will. Oftentimes, will is taught in religious experiences as something to be damned or given up. Although will can be dangerous when misused, we also need to appreciate the rightness of whatever belief we are holding on to, as it comes to our attention to pass away. We need to appreciate our having put so much energy into holding on to that belief. Each of us has put a lot of time into our beliefs, we now possess them and they possess us. What you think, what you believe, is important to you and naturally you want to hold onto that ...even though you can see it does you no good. We have used those beliefs to protect ourselves and to give ourselves security. If we don't have those beliefs on how to rear our children, what good are we as a parent? If we don't have those beliefs on what we should think, what good are we as a person? They have been right as a way of functioning in our everyday three dimensional world, and yet we can see they harm us

when we hold onto them. The law of change clearly shows us that with everything we only invest to let go.

We use tremendous will power to hold onto those facets of our life which are being taken from us - the greater the belief, the issue, the greater the hold! Look again at the football field. The bigger the brute, the harder the defense has to be to fight him. We will kick it in the shins, play dirty, do anything in our power to get rid of it, to resist the thing and fight it off. A person needs to see that when he experiences revenge, which is the extreme expression of will, that revenge is an expression of a big factor in one's self that has to go. Through using our will to hold on, we finally rationalize a case for our own self-rightness. In these situations, object, the feeling, the situation, the person, the body state. We want to prove that we are more knowledgeable, more right than the one who has made the decision and vice versa. We have facts and reasons which explain to us why we are right and someone else is wrong. We keep talking about justice on some scale and believe we are looking for justice. But let's not kid ourselves... we are ultimately wanting to have the scales tip on our behalf. We do not want a balanced scale; we want to come out the winner.

This use of will to hold onto beliefs or positions is all right if you wish. But, note well, even in football, if one holds on there is a penalty. Players are well trained to block properly - they have to use their arms, but they cannot grab on and hold, even in football. In hockey, a player cannot trip or kick or play dirty. We play dirty inside ourselves. If we think physical holding is strong, we need to see clearly that mental holding is even more tenacious. Be aware of it - it is fierce. You can spend hours a day holding onto facts, reasons, rationale, all the proofs. But in football or any sport, if a player does this, he is penalized. How do we hold on? We hold onto symptoms, facts, gossip, support from people and information to prove that we are right. We hold onto feelings. We live in an age where it is all right now to get angry, and it is. Yet holding on to the anger is where we get penalized. We hold onto names that someone has called us or how someone has treated us. We hold on to our being appreciated. Again, such behavior is all right. We are out to prove we are right, that the other is wrong. Yet, the only thing any one of us needs to realize is that none of this is doing us any good. You are paying the penalty in energy, frustration, worry and anxiety. With this awareness, ask yourself what you want to do with your life. Is this how you want to spend it? This is a decision you need to make!

The second dynamic of will, besides using it to hold on, is using will to determine where you want to be. What you are holding onto is what you have been taught, and where you want to be is also what you have been taught. You can put as much energy into where you think you want to be. You think you want the body well and functioning; you want Johnny to be doing it this way because that is the way it has always been done; you want a

business action to go through, and some young upstart has another idea that he is throwing back; you want someone to return to your life, yet there is something there moving against you.

Your concept of how it should be done, carried through your will, is still a limit. Your human mind is limited by its prior conditionings, by its dependence upon data provided by the senses, by beliefs unconsciously accepted as truth from any past moment or period in your life. The moment you think you know, you are already limited and trapped. The work - and effort of Spirit - is to keep us open to each moment and its revelation. All I can teach you is to keep yourself open to Spirit and its every moment new creation in you. How can you receive new ways of raising children, operating businesses, living your life, working with the environment, lessening earthquakes, building new formats for relationships, unless you give up holding onto the past and what you think the future should be?

Now, having presented these two facets of human will, let's move to a Spiritual treatise. "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." This statement states that the seekers of a new dimension, believing that it is there, must transcend the football field. It asks a commitment, a commitment of action in living.

Thy Kingdom come - that Kingdom is heaven, that possibility, that unknown, that asks for other ways of working than clashing or asserting will. It is asking of parents, teachers, workers, leaders of businesses, of those who work and those who don't work, those who lead and those who follow, to accept a new source of creation. That new source is not in what you believe now or what you think ought to be. The source of creation is in another dimension. The Super Bowl is alright for here, but there is another way to function as well! "Thy Kingdom come." There is something more than winning or losing. There is something more than getting that big deal. There is something more than proving you are right and the other is wrong. There is something more than being in the body or out of it. There is something more than the present perfect relationship we thought we had found. That is what the potential of the Kingdom has to offer.

"Thy will be done." I have never liked that idea. I have never wanted anyone else's will. I used to believe that the most shattering thing I could do would be to give up what I thought was right. I could feel myself shaking inside because I did not want to give up ME. Whenever someone said, "Let the will of the Kingdom come true - give up - let go and let Spirit," I always figured I would lose: I'll die or someone else will take over, or my emotions will strip me and all hell will break loose. I always figured that! Yet, I know that I am in this life for that Kingdom, Thy will, to become first. In every one of life's situations, I am giving up me. I am practicing being an instrument. I have come to gradually lessen Carol and allow more of Spirit to come through. So, "Thy will be done" merely says, give up - let go. It isn't saying, give up the Kingdom; it isn't

saying, give up hope or the new way; it isn't saying, give up so you will be blasted, so that your personality can be smashed and walked on. I do not teach that. It is merely saying, give up your emotional/mental hold - you will be penalized. Give up the mental reverberations, the quickness of that energy that defies and fights. Give up all your proofs, your controls, your rightness over another.

I keep having to learn it and learn it and learn it; "But I have all my proof... I am a parent or a minister or a leader or I am an employee and those guys..." That's how we hear it inside. Give that up. Thy will be done. Give up resistance. Give up the personal. We know through biofeedback studies, that when a person gives up and lets go, the brain waves change. Instead of being very close together, as in beta waves, they spread out into theta waves. When they spread out, there is more space. What happens with more space? There is more room for the Kingdom to come through.

This leads to the last phrase of this part of the Lord's Prayer, "In earth as it is in heaven." The moment you think you know what heaven is, you are already lost in the past. This vision is a vision of now, opening - opening - opening. As you allow it to open, the kingdom protrudes through and manifests in earth, as it is in heaven.

GIVE US THIS DAY... OUR DAILY BREAD
AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS AS WE ALSO HAVE
FORGIVEN OUR DEBTORS"

"Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors."

Are you at this moment desiring or needing? Are you struggling with a problem? You could be needing anything from a healing, to a new job, to money, to a new outlook on life, to finding a way to relate anew to some person who is important, to relate to the Universe anew. When we really see the message of "Give us this day, our daily bread," we will not want anything any more because the Universe will become so internally a unity rather than a duality that there will be no thought about our needs. BUT we are not there yet, and the value of a message is to be able to lead you in terms of your everyday life to the Spiritual inner realization of this. So, let's aim in that direction.

No matter what your situation or struggle, in order to provide what you want in the outer life, you must first consider how you are seeing. The origin of the problem is in how you are seeing. That's all. The business of your work is to see anew. Remove yourself from thinking of seeing as being with they eyes. Seeing is behind the mind, behind the eyes, and way back inside. You might think of it as being the light that sees through the camera. The amount of light that you can bring into your seeing is what seeing is about. You are being expanded and stretched. In the book, Rhythms of Vision, Lawrence Blair cites this incident concerning how we limit or create our external reality through our capacity to see. "When Ferdinand Magellan's expedition landed at Tierra Del Fuego, the Fuegians, who for centuries had been isolated in their canoe culture, were unable to see the ships anchored in the bay. Those ships were so far beyond the Fuegian's experience that, despite the bulk of them, the horizon continued indefinitely. The ships were visible. It was learned later that when the Shaman had first brought to the villagers' attention that the strangers had arrived IN something - something which, although preposterous beyond belief [which is like something that you want that is preposterous beyond belief - the miracle has been taken away from us through the way that we are taught to see] could actually be seen if one looked very carefully." You and I ask how they could not see the ships. They

were so obvious, so real. Yet, my question to you is more, how can we not see things just as obviously real? The key here is that everything we see, even in the physical world involves a not-seeing of something else.

The business of "give us this day your daily bread" is the business of realizing inside you, that your bread is there. If you cannot at present see this reality, your work is to increase your capacity to see internally and come to realize that it is all inside you. I worked on experimenting with this concept one day at the ocean while playing with my dog, Cindy. I was feeling estranged, and I took sticks to throw in the water for Cindy to chase. Since Cindy is not overly courageous, a tiny little thing, I did not throw the sticks too far. She would go in, get them, shake them off and bring them back to me. As I watched this panoramic scene, I made a decision: I would stay right there at the water's edge, and experience the Universe as a part of me from a different perspective. I got down on my heels and leaned back. I must have sat there for twenty minutes, just watching. Staying in that one place of physically seeing and its related consciousness, I trusted that the ocean would keep bringing me its life, that the sun and the earth would keep bringing me changes, that the birds and all life would keep sharing the Universe with me. I became aware of all those little life creatures which a person gradually sees as they look more closely. As I trusted and waited, people gradually moved into my scene, love came into my scene, and movement and changes led me to move in the right time.

I gained a larger sense of the idea, give us this day our daily bread. It doesn't come from a point of pleading or give me this day my daily bread because I don't really believe it is there. Rather, it comes from that deep internal realization that as we step into the still center, we can be sure that all will be provided for us because we are never separated from the ALL. You are never separated from your good. The separation is only in thinking you are. The teaching is to know more that your wholeness, your life, the ALL is IN YOU. Know it, and you will see it. Know the ships are there; they will gradually form on the horizon. There is a beer advertisement that expresses the same attitude. A man is sitting in the middle of the ocean, in a chair at a table. He sits there blithely, as sharks nip off the table and the chair. The man floats through the whole experience. Eventually, some lovely mermaid appears and hands him a Colt 45, and it is all there, provided for him. The man has stayed there, rested, believed in his wholeness (I would assume) and his Colt 45 has come through.

In the book, The Tao of Physics, Fritz Capra states that at one time in the thinking of humankind, there was no word for separation of matter for Allness, no two words for two supposedly different substances, matter and Spirit. This was a belief in early Greek thought, about 500 years before Jesus. If you realize that Jesus was a part of this same thought, then you can understand more clearly why he could make this statement, "Give

us this day our daily bread." There was no word for matter, for the belief that there was something outside that is not harmonious which could be against you, did not exist. Only your belief that you are separate is going to give matter that power. It states in this book that sometime, after Jesus, in the evolution of Western philosophy, a teaching came that there was matter and there was Spirit, and when that happened there had to be a God outside to go to in order to re-connect with our original unity or good. Because of this philosophical belief in separation, science has given power to the theory that there is something outside that can work against us. Now science is beginning to return to the realization that there is only a total, a WHOLENESS, a sense of "give us this day, our daily bread." It is all within us, and only as it is in us, does it get created in the events and experiences outside us, regardless of what they are or how hard it is to believe. Atoms were first thought of in the mind of man about 500 years before Christ. Not until about 2,000 years later, were they actually discovered. Our present science says that it is impossible to go faster than the speed of light, because to do so one will slow down. Scientists are beginning to believe, however, that maybe a particle called a tachyon, can go faster than the speed of light. Once a part of our belief system, once created in consciousness, tachyons will no doubt be discovered as actually external data.

Eastern thought, which is unitive thinking, has taught that our ignorance is in believing that we are separate from any event or experience in our life - as if we were not a part in causing it to come into form so we can see and/or experience it. That belief, acceptance and living our life from that perspective, is called Avidya. It says that the mind is only confused when it thinks there is diversity between what has occurred and what was intended. Its whole effort and our effort here at Unity, is to teach that to have a feeling of Inner Wholeness and Peace about our life, we must discover that what is occurring outside us is a statement of what has been or is occurring inside. We are not separated into external events and the internal meaning or direction of our lives - it is all one. If the outer events, personalities, occurrences, and experiences do not fit with what you thought you intended, recognize first that they absolutely do - and do this without judgment. Then watch more closely what you are projecting through you and discern whether it truly fits your external experiences. As you watch, both will alter. As you come to know this, the outer will lose its power and may even disappear as something separates. The more I study the founders of these beliefs, the more I really accept that, as long as I believe that I am separate, separateness will be seen by me. But as I come closer to the ALL in me, that is ALL I will know. Jesus is saying in "give us this day, our daily bread," WHOLENESS, ALLNESS is there... It is provided for you. Give it power - dwell there, and the outer will change and its meaning will change as well for you.

A part of our limited understanding of give us this day, our daily bread is the thinking that we know what the bread is. I

was trained to believe that through imagination I could create anything I want - I could become a concert pianist; I could bring scholarships to me; I could bring money to me. And I did.

It was a very important teaching in my evolution. But, I got blocked there. It has taken some time to unblock me (and I am not finished) because there were times when I could not always create what I wanted. What I did not know at the time, was that I was defining the bread. Symbolically, bread means manna from heaven. I have shared enough about heaven to define it as the inner awareness behind human thought, the consciousness, the wider seeing, the coming to know that there are ships on the horizon which you cannot see. However, if we define what the bread is, then we will say HOW the body must heal, WHAT the job must be and WHAT the relationships will be. The deeper teaching is to say, do not try to define the bread. Do not define from your own will or human mind conceptions because, once you do, you keep zeroing yourself into your limited seeing, and the necessary experience always happening is to expand that seeing. Trust in the more expanded Universal concept of bread constantly unfolding itself.

When you hear this phrase, "give us this day, our daily bread," it is saying the whole Universe is already in you. Know that deeply. And, as for the bread, don't define it. You may be impelled to reply, "But I want a job, I know that's my bread. I want to keep my marriage. I know that's my bread. Don't take it away from me." Do not perpetuate the thought that you know what your bread is. Let go of calling the bread by what you want it to be, and study the WAY Spirit moves through you. The way wholeness and Allness will come through you is to expand your inner reality. As you expand inwardly, it will manifest outwardly.

The second line of this section of the Lord's Prayer is, "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors." If you are hearing me, you are recognizing that our only debt is in maintaining our limited seeing. That is our harm against ourselves. Thinking that we know what the answer is and holding on to that through our behavior is our debt against ourselves. Keeping our focus outside, holding on to that through our behavior is our debt against ourselves. Keeping our focus outside, holding on to what we want to make happen, is the debt that we project on the outside world, the belief that there is an activity happening to us which is not from a place other than the deep spaces of our inner Universe.

If you want to work with this idea, take the word "forgive" and turn it around. Think about forgiving as "giving something for." If you give something for and you owe the debt, the giving has to be to yourself. Have you ever tried to tell your child that you love him and see him so held in that he would not hear you? I have watched people whom I have wanted to love, who could not even look at me. I have watched myself, paranoid, scared, resentful, resistant, and I have had many around me saying, "I

love you," while I would not hear. In one of those moments at the ocean, I sat and looked at the ocean, and I could hardly see any of it. It could not speak to me. And then I heard inside me, "Wait a minute, love yourself. Open up. Receive." As I did, it was as if my whole capacity to see outwardly expanded... and expanded... and expanded. Jesus knows what he is talking about, "Forgive us our debts." Give something to yourself for what you are in your limits. That has to be total giving. That has to be loving yourself for being a "drug addict," loving yourself for being a "lousy" personality, loving yourself for making an abominable mistake that affected your life and the lives of others, loving yourself for being you through disease. And you start this by saying, "I love me for all I am." What a great message Jesus gave us in that one and how few of us have lived it out, because we have only loved what we thought was lovable.

Have you recently watched how love works on a little animal? I watch Cindy's eyes go soft and warm. Have you recently watched yourself love another person, watched them flow in your arms, into their wholeness and in the midst of their horror? Have you recently watched yourself love a flower or stroke another being? The message is to love yourself for what you are and thereby you will become receptive to what is available within you and around you. Then you will see more. You start it by thinking it to yourself, loving yourself as you might another, and recognizing your wholeness... recognizing your wholeness... recognizing your wholeness - now. As you do this, It will unfold.

The last part of this section states, "As we also have forgiven our debtors." Now I believe you all are so advanced in awareness that I do not have to spend any more time saying, forgive someone outside you. I hope you live so far within - so knowingly how you attract and create your outer experiences - that you know there is nobody out there to be forgiven. They have done nothing wrong to you. In this statement, "as we also have forgiven our debtors," Jesus is saying, please remove your focus from the solution you think is right. Hear it! Remove your focus from the solution you think is the answer. Many of the writings I have referred to in this material state that the key to the greatest discovery is that those who are doing the research do not have the answer. They do not try to put their focus on an answer. Many breakthroughs come when the seeker walks on the beach or gets quiet or goes into some deep inner place. Somewhere in there a shock comes through which is like enlightenment or a breakthrough or an "Ah ha!" experience. We hear about it all the time. Something else has come through.

If you keep your focus on what you think the solution is, you will stay in your limited sight. Thinking you know what the solution is has done you no good up to this point anyway! Get your focus off the answer you know; you need to have a person act a certain way, you think you know what the right job is. Take your focus, will, energy off your designated solution. When you remove your focus from the problem and the solution, you will

find that you will spend more and more time, even when you are moving and talking and walking, with a wide open space inside you. Center all your energy in meditation, quiet, and still your mind which thinks it knows. As you go deeper and deeper within, you will find that there are new ways of behaving, new ideas for saving, new ways of relating new ideas that give you a new way of functioning - and gradually beliefs break and wash away. Sometimes the waiting is the most frustrating part of the experience. I have waited for months, and I want to say, "For heaven's sake, when is it going to come, when is it going to come?" But during the waiting, you are opening up, and, as stated in the beginning, the whole effort is that I might see more.

In summary, be involved in "forgive us our debts;" love yourself so you can receive more, and forgive your debtors, take your focus off the answer and get internalized. Then the response from the Universe, I guarantee, comes through!

When I began my ministry at Unity Center of Walnut Creek, we were about to build a new building. At that point in our financial history, we had not had to pay any rent on this property. Suddenly, we were looking at having to come up with \$660 per month. I had no idea where it was coming from. I spent a lot of time affirming and loving myself. I would say, "I need to know that I am doing the best I can." I lived that out for a week, and it still would not take away my fear. Then, on a Monday morning, as I awoke and looked out the window at a dark sky, something spoke to me, "You know, it's okay to be a failure, Knox." For a 32-year-old woman trying to prove herself in the ministry, that was quite a statement. I held it. Success, failure, did not matter. Life was my teacher. At 3 o'clock that afternoon, a woman came in who had never heard me speak, but had come to the Center the Sunday before and had seen our program. She said that morning at 10:00 a.m. a large amount of money had come to her and she wanted to give some of it to this work. She asked, "Would you like it?" I said, "Yes." She announced, "I would like to start by giving you \$10,000." Tears poured from me and then she said, "Well, I could really give you \$15,000. There will be more coming." That "more" has continued to come to support this work. I came to know that it was ALL - all right in me, however it manifested itself externally. Because of that, the Universe clicked at 10:00 and then at 3:00 without my personal involvement in it, brought what the Universe wanted this place to have. That is an actuality. It is there for all of us.

LEAVE US NOT IN TEMPTATION

As I begin this portion of the Lord's Prayer, I invite you to recognize that Charles Fillmore very consciously changed these words from "Lead us not into temptation," to "Leave us not in temptation." Think about that. There is no way that Spirit would lead you into temptation; our request of ourselves is that we not remain there when we find ourselves there.

Temptation, in a profound sense, is not the temptation of having a drink or kicking someone in the shins or adding an aspirin to your present dose of vitamin pills. It is much more subtle than that. Temptation is the belief in evil which means the belief in duality. You are in temptation when you experience that what is happening to you or others is bad, thereby continuing or perpetuating the thought of duality - that there is anything other than Spirit. Temptation is believing that there is anything other than God, Spirit, Universal Process unfolding at every moment, and whenever you begin to move into that place, you will find that you become not centered. You will find yourself moving off target and pulled out of center into a place that feels strange, uncomfortable, distant, and not quite where you want to be. Temptation is believing that the Universe is not expanding - especially in you. We read in science that the Universe is expanding - whether outwardly or into the new "black hole." That black hole is expansion. Yet, isn't it amazing that when we feel not centered, disoriented, we say the Universe is expanding everywhere except in our individual Universe, so we separate ourselves again. Temptation is believing that what is happening is not God, judging, and thereby separating yourself from it, and causing you to believe that something is being done to you. The idea of separation says separation is a calamitous outer force that somehow can take direct action and attack you. There is something out there that is moving against me, I begin to feel separated - that is temptation.

Remember, there is no problem when there is no temptation in you. That is so simple it sounds like poppy-cock, but it's true. There is not temptation when you do not experience it, so remember my suggestions here are aimed at the experience of feeling pulled off center and feeling shaky, use these ideas. That is what this part of the Lord's Prayer speaks to: How can I not leave myself in temptation - feeling disoriented, not centered, separated? How do I bring myself back to center?

In order to make these ideas more visual, when I first delivered them as a lesson on a Sunday morning, I used a team of hand puppets to represent how we experience life. These little puppets are all present in us at some time or another to different degrees. In no way am I condemning any of these ways of experiencing life.

The first puppet, representing one of the ways we experience life, is the clown. We are beginning to realize that this three dimensional reality would not exist unless we created it. More and more scientists are questioning whether what we call physical reality is something already out there, independent of and separate from us. Physicists are beginning to say that we first create in consciousness what then takes on form. That can be one of the most exciting realizations - to totally realize how we create the moving, illusory clown of the three-dimensional world. In my reading, I was overwhelmed with the statement that we even give color to our world. The world of color only comes to us because of our capacity to expand our receptivity to vibration. The reason that animals don't see it, we think is because they have not expanded their consciousness to pick up vibrations that are available. We create color. We also create form and shape. So look at the clown - it is the present way we create our three-dimensional world and a way of experiencing reality. Our question is, "Is it indeed the only one? Are there others? What kind of power do we want to take back which we are beginning to realize we create?"

The second puppet is called "Goofy" and Goofy experiences life in this way: He watches the outer - that is where his focus is directed most of his lifetime. His energy is put into looking at the outer, the externals. He sees life as entirely separate from himself. Its doing its thing to him; people are hurting him; situations are knocking him over the head, affecting him. When things go wrong, he looks at the Universe, the three-dimensional world, as out there and sees it as hostile. He sees other people and situations as cause, that reality is separate, and out there. He does not have the sense yet, deep within, that he is helping to create it. Thus, he is separated from the inner reality. Reality is all out there. He does not know that his existence has anything to do with creating the external so he spends most of his time looking outward. Tremendous gifts have been given to the world through this kind of behavior. It is a fine way to deal with parts of our lives, but we don't want to function this way when working with our own inner turmoil. Goofy is on the circumference of our relationship with life. We all live much of our lifetime in that place and it has its function. Notice that Goofy's name is right because he tends to goof up things and that is all right.

The next puppet is "Dopey." Dopey, with his mind and emotions, is a watcher of self. He spends much of his time looking at "me," whoever that is. He may think there is an inner, deeper space, but he spends most of his life energy thinking about

himself. That doesn't mean that he is selfish or any of those old, cryptic phrases. We can, however, get totally absorbed in this state, immersed, and lose sight of the larger picture. Dopey spends nearly all his time looking at self. He sees some involvement with what is happening out there as being a part of his own being; he realizes that he also creates from what is inside him, but he is not really too sure. He shifts from the outer to the inner and thinks and thinks that the inner means looking at oneself. The distinction is important: even when you are self-aware and absorbed in how you are functioning in relationships with people, as well as judging, analyzing and trying to clean yourself up - that is not at all the pursuit of the inner. So, this puppet goes about pursuing how he relates to others, looking at the past, judging, analyzing, comparing. He works very hard at dredging up the subconscious, and feels responsible for his own self in creating his own life which is tremendously important in his evolution.

Remember, we each live in all these areas for certain periods during the day; gradually we begin to realize how much of our life's energies are devoted to them. Dopey still feels separate from reality as his own creation and then when the Universe comes along and jumps on him, he thinks maybe it is the Universe, maybe it's me - yet it is not quite clear which way to go with that life energy. Dopey tends to dope himself up with his self, looking toward self with his life energy.

The next little person in us is the wondrous puppet called, "Jiminy Cricket." Jiminy Cricket is rightly named, for he lives in the now and because he is in the now, he is terribly excited. As everything passes before him, he keeps saying, "Exquisite, Jiminy Cricket, Jiminy Cricket, so exciting, wow!" No matter what happens to him, he is centered and poised in the realization that he is in the midst of Eternity - there is no beginning or end - there is an infinity around him, beyond him, behind him. He is there inside himself without judgment or even self-observation. He does not compare; he does not see himself as separate. Jiminy Cricket is IN life. Life happens and he participates. He participates right NOW. Be aware of the difficulty in living this out. The other three stages have tremendous power in our lives; they are well taught, and, as I hope I have shown in this sequence, they are right and have their function. Yet, in our education, not much time has been spent on this NOW state.

The other aspect of Jiminy Cricket is something that Bertrand Russell stated, using the example of a table as "physical reality." "We are only immediately aware of our sense data, and the real table, if there is one, is not immediately known to us but must be by inference." Now Bertrand Russell loves to play, and what he is saying is that the only way to know something is immediately. However, there is no way to know anything immediately because by the time we pick up the sense data about that outside world (if there is one out there), it has already come by inference to us, through our eyes or other senses, via their connectors to the brain. Let me bring this down to the

practical. By the time something reaches you, it has already been delayed and you do not experience life directly. It is an art, to be with life happening right now. You cannot experience me, for instance, directly. By the time I "get" to you, I have already been delayed by light and sound. By the time I "get" to you furthermore, you have already given me shape and color, and by the time I "get" to you, you have already done some analytical job on me emotionally and mentally as to who I am. You cannot experience, Russell is saying, the NOW in the instant. It is almost impossible because as I snap my finger, you have already gone beyond what has happened at that moment. An analogy would be to say that we are going through life, to a certain degree, like the person who travels across country with his movie camera. He takes many pictures and then comes home to see what he saw. However, you live out Jiminy Cricket, you are here, now, experiencing.

The fifth puppet is Peter Pan. Peter Pan is the Walt Disney creation who was able to enter other realities and live them out. He is not opposed to flying, so he flies and takes people to Never-never Land; he convinces them so well that it is so, that they bring it back with them and live it as well. The world Peter Pan represents is inside us; it is a world that is not taught often. It is real, and as you discover it more, it can be brought into the world. It is so profound and real, that we want to devote more and more of our lifetime to it. We have spent most of our lifetime in the other states. But when we enter the inner, it is a non-mental, non-emotional, non-visual or even knowing place. I have been there dramatically three times in my life. When I was there I did not know I was there, but when I came back, I knew I had been. There is a huge place in human consciousness which is being proven more and more and given more and more power in our society. Peter Pan invests in, as a part of his living, a life pursuit of those inner realities, those other domains, for the evolution of human consciousness.

Let's return to the lesson title and how these figures relate to temptation as the experience of being not centered. How do we return to center? How can we stop worrying "while walking" or how can we keep from making a monster of whatever is happening in our life? Philosophy is beautiful - what is happening is right. Right? How can I live that out when I don't believe it yet fully? Here are some suggestions for not leaving yourself in temptation. My first suggestion is that you let go of Goofy and Dopey in these moments. In doing this, let go of before and after. We need to let go of the past and the future in order to become centered now. There is a marvelous story about how eagles, which are very wise birds, bear their young. They build their nests by building in thorns, sharp bits of jagged branches and stone. Then they cover all this with leaves and grass. The eagle then lays its eggs, they hatch and when it is time for the young birds to leave the nest, the eagle scratches away the leaves and grass exposing the thorns and thistles and thereby forcing the young birds to abandon the nest. We have all felt the sharp jagged rocks of experiences of life.

Practice in these moments letting go of the past and not putting yourself in the future. Right now there is no past and there is no future - there is only NOW. Practice being it.

Another way of dropping Goofy and Dopey is to suggest that you not reflect, observe, compare or analyze. Those ways have functions at different moments in our life and with different things in our life, but in these moments of worry and fear, cut them out. You can reflect only if you are looking at the past, so if you remove the past, you cannot reflect. You can only observe if you are feeling separate from what is happening. Be aware of that! I am aware many times that when I get dis-oriented, I begin to move out and start looking at me; I start judging how I am, what's wrong, right, where I think I should be, how I was yesterday, what I think I may be tomorrow. I also suggest that you aim to stop comparing - comparing yourself on whether you are better or worse, etc. You are no better or worse, you are what you are right now. You are no better or worse than another human being or another stage; you are different. You are always in a different slot in time and space than anybody else and will be completely different in that slot. Give up comparing. Get rid of analyzing. We have been raised in a culture of analyzing (and remember my context, I am saying only when you get off center, give up analyzing); you cannot analyze if you are with yourself in the now. That is the first suggestion. Give up Goofy and Dopey.

The next suggestion is that you spend time consciously getting outside yourself. At times like this, we get so absorbed in ourselves we can only see the world coming at us, and we get overwhelmed with it. Consciously, when you are walking and you don't want to worry, get into the outside. Get into other people. Invest your focus, your energy on them for a while. Why do I suggest this? So that you get your life energy off yourself and give yourself time to rest, to rebuild, to redevelop the energy for the inner work. I have even studied warts on people's noses just to get out of myself as a way of saving me. This is the reason it is suggested that we "get into" sports, or work with anything in the outer in order to find a way of releasing energy. Another way of getting outside is found in hypnosis, the trance, and affirmations taught in Unity teachings. In a movie on Sigmund Freud and his work with Dr. Sherlock Holmes, I was impressed by the fact that when Freud took Holmes off cocaine, he used hypnosis with a gold watch. Freud knew what he was doing; he was holding something outside to get Holmes off the terror inside and get him on the outside focus. When he did, Holmes would move into it and put its pieces together again until, gradually, wholeness began to come through again. That is what hypnosis can do for you - it's a trance. Our affirmations are ways for you to focus, while the rest of you stabilizes and rests. You say THE LIGHT OF GOD IS WITHIN ME and think on that while the rest of you quiets and gets a sense of the affirmation.

This leads to the last two suggestions. First, get to the Source as a way of helping yourself. Second, get rid of Goofy

and Dopey. Then, remember Jiminy Cricket. Practice spending more and more time being right here, right now, centered and poised in the Universe, walking with It, being in It, letting It live in you, letting you live in It. The more you do that, the less you will have to work on some of the other suggestions made earlier. Practice letting that Presence be a constant force through you. When I move into this place, I feel solid, as if a beam of light is throbbing through me, and I am just my life. The reason we are taught systems like Tai Chi and Yoga and the theory of Dharma in the Eastern tradition, is that they give us a way of being in the movement of the moment. For instance, Dharma is to be with one's work - pick up a hammer, mold something, and be with the total movement. Thereby, you are practicing being in the Now.

Finally, pursue the Inner Life. Always realize that our purpose in life is to expand the Inner seeing. As each of us expands the inner place, it broadens and is able to move itself into everyone of the other areas symbolized by the puppets.

As I was putting my final brush strokes on these ideas, a little poem came through me:

The Creative Life Movement never knew
what we know,
It never conceived we could separate so,
Its plan was for us to be life, It
To move and Search, create bit by bit.

Somewhere, only we know how, I guess
we pulled away from life and caused distress.
I long to return to the movement of Spirit
To blend its being and always be in It.

That comes from leaving all sense of separation
Only in that, is there really temptation
I know how to get there - you do too
As always, go Home for a vaster view.

FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM AND THE POWER
AND THE GLORY FOREVER

Imagine for a moment what it must have been like for the author of the Lord's Prayer to realize that he had said it all, and then to have to bring it to a conclusion. My sense is that when Jesus finally reached the epitome of this statement, all he could say was, "For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever." It was a culmination, an affirmation of oneness. We can relate it to the chorale in the 9th Symphony of Beethoven, to the great domes of Western Civilization's temples. This is a final, magical statement of someone's surety.

In the Book of Revelations, Chapters 21 and 22, a similar vision is shared:

"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; and I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God, Himself, will be with them. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.'

And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God, the Almighty and the lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the lamb. By its light shall the nations walk; and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it, and its gates shall never be shut by day - and there shall be no night there; thy shall bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations."

John, the writer of Revelations, had a similar experience to Jesus. He recognized that the new city would be formed from the inner temple of humanity. To share these closing ideas, please enter your own Inner Kingdom.

Have you ever entered a Kingdom? In the outer world I don't suppose you ever have; the inner kingdom you are in now is a total kingdom. Jesus said, "For thine is the kingdom." The kingdom is yours, in you. But just for a moment, let's look at the outer world for all of the kingdoms it is showing us. Every moment you look out, you are looking at a kingdom - a microcosm of the macrocosm. Whether you look at a drop of water, reflecting light rays, or look at a flower in its evolution, or a tree in one of its states, they are all total kingdoms in the miniature. Pick up a chambered nautilus sometime and you will find in there cavern after cavern after cavern of circular movement showing the multi-dimensions of its kingdom. Look at the under wing of a butterfly and you will find there a magnificent kingdom. Look down on a tide pool or at the ocean, and you will see there a never ending kingdom. Look at a human being's eyes and there you will see a kingdom. Look at a person's life and you will see a kingdom. It seems to me that God has given us the Universe so that when we open our eyes and look out, we can keep a reminder that the kingdom is always being show to us, if we ever had any doubt.

The new kingdom that John speaks of, the New Jerusalem, in which there is "no need for light, no need for pain nor death, for God Himself is with men and the former had passed away," is a vast inner world in you and it is not your mind, your body or your emotions alone. As Jesus is saying, the Temple is the Lord God Almighty. As you sit inside your Temple now, you need to realize that Jesus' words, "In my Father's house how many mansions must there be," states that those mansions are internal, eternal and that the business of life is to explore those mansions to find that they really do exist. The bringing of a New Jerusalem here is going to come by our finding it inside, as redundant as those words get to be. "For thine is the Kingdom"! The mansions are in you just as there are multi-lives in tide pools, just as there are multi-swirls in a spiral shell, just as there are multi-mansions in us. The bringing of Jerusalem is to find them, explore them, and bring them out. That temple is there in you; the kingdom is there in you.

"...and the Power." The power will come as we enter in and explore. Have you ever wondered how different we are because our eyes face outward? Have you ever thought about how many hours you spend exploring the earth looking at people? As trite as this may sound, how different would it be if our eyes were focused only inward? According to John's statement, it is possible to function without eyes, for there is no need for sun or moon, the light is the light of the informal - the light of God. As it says in the phrase in Revelations, this light is so powerful it leads the nation and it draws kings to its gates. This City, this New Jerusalem that John is talking about, [and I think Jesus is affirming when he says, "For thine is the kingdom and the power,"] will have to be pursued internally. There is no other new ground outside of us. Part of our disturbances, our environmental problems, is that we have so concentrated outside

that there is no where to go. The building of the New Jerusalem, its power, will have to come from an inner search. It will have to come through conscious exploration - as much conscious exploration of the internal soil as we have done with the external world.

This New Jerusalem will require people who are dedicated to exploring this kingdom - who are willing to come to know it so well and understand it so well that they will be willing to share it. I believe these people will come from common stock like you and me. There will be no more special Jesuses or Buddhas. We are seeing people here on earth who are willing to live in the three-dimensional world but devote most of their time to an inner world. We will begin to grow in a New Jerusalem, a group of walking mystics; people who know this inner world so powerfully that sin, sickness, disease, death, may indeed disappear from the earth's surface. This call of John's in Revelations, which we thought was a new city to be built outside, was never thought of that way. It was always an internal city and the call is to you. Whether you rise to it or not depends upon your present intent for life. You must realize the call is to go into your kingdom, explore it, find it to be a place of power. Develop it and bring it back, share it and lead others.

The other realization in "...and the Power," comes in one of Jesus' parables, where he described the kingdom as being "harder for a rich man to enter the kingdom than a camel to go through the eye of the needle." The eye of the needle was a place in Africa where camels on a trade route had to go through such a narrow, thin passage that their baggage was removed and passed though later. Yet when one thinks of the needle and a camel attempting to get through it in just the literal sense, that is difficult. Jesus is saying here that it is harder for a rich man to enter the kingdom. Here he was not talking about money; he wasn't even talking to those who were poor or lacking in consciousness; he was talking to those who were already rich. He said, in essence, that in order for you to enter into the kingdom and to gain your powers, you are going to have to take off baggage. The baggage of rich men is the baggage of thinking that we know what is there, the baggage of knowing how the kingdom will talk to us, the baggage of thinking we know how it will share and what it will be like, the baggage that we think we know that we have it all because of what we know, our education, our fine minds, our ability to manifest in the outer world. It is much harder to take off that kind of baggage. Yet, the New Jerusalem is going to ask that we take it off. To enter into those other chambers, those other vast places, we will have to continually go through eyes of needles. Have you ever noticed that at the end of the spirals in a shell, there is a hole? As you enter your inner kingdom, your temple, it will require that you continually enter the eye of the needle into unknowns, like one swimming in deep sea waters continually entering deeper and deeper places. That's where power will come from. Know the vastness of your inner temple and everything else is inconsequential and does not matter.

"...and the glory." If you have been with me in this experience, then you know that the glory comes from exploring and feeling the power of the inner world. Glory is always felt inside as a sense of peace, and peace always comes through feeling freedom. There is nothing more devastating than feeling trapped and unable to get out. Jesus' use of "the glory" must come from a sense that if I have been in the deepest parts of me and explored them religiously and found them, then I know there is nothing that will be barred from me. All doors will open, all gates will lead me to some other greater knowing.

The last word of the Lord's Prayer is a symbol, "forever." It says there never was a beginning and there will never be an ending. It says that sound and light go on in rings forever, like dropping a pebble in a pool. So does an echo. The Lord's Prayer is an echo - it never ends. You are an echo - you never began; you are a sound - you will never end.

This is all brought together beautifully in the next to the last phrases in Revelations. At the end of the Book, the author comes down from his great scene of the glory of a new city, comprised of people devoted to this inner world, knowing what it would take to go there, and finding it was so fine that they would bring it back and share; they would be willing to drop their baggage and continue to go through the eye of the needle, and having that, they would know glory. He then dropped his pen, having completed his work, and said these words:

"I, John, am he who heard and saw these things and when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me. But the angel said to me, 'you must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brethren the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.'"

In John's last words the totality of the Lord's Prayer is expressed again, "Worship God."

SECTION II

THE PRAYER OF THE HEART

THE SILENCE

Most of this lesson will lead you in to silence. I always assume that people know what the silence is, and yet ongoing explanation is necessary.

The silence is a space that most people find extremely difficult to engage in, because our tendency in society today is to consider living an activity of the mind, containing emotional energy as well; it is our inclination to believe that being still is the activity of a fool, the action of one who is passive, the insane stupidity of one who lies down and is walked on. If you find yourself in trouble living in a situation where you do not feel solid and that you do not like; if you have a disease that is harming your body and may be killing it; if you find you cannot do what you used to do, that you do not have the pep you had or that age is setting in - then, if somebody suggests (as has been taught for over 5,000 years) that in the face of such issues, "Be still and know that I am God," it dumfounds the mental and emotional conditioning. We are trained to rise up, to energize, to do something about what is going on; to make things better. Being still and trusting the God Process, the I Am, to let It unfold through your consciousness in a state of stillness, is absurdity in most people's minds. It is so hard to tell a schizophrenic, a catatonic, a paranoid split personality (all of which we are); to tell a person loaded with fear, deep in depression, enthusiastic about being in love, on top of the world, "In all of those situations, be still and know that I am God."

One of the greatest reasons for this concept of stillness being so difficult to our Western minds comes from the early periods of stillness where quietness and no reaction are experienced as boring, or laying down and dying when you could be making things happen on your behalf. These early times with stillness (which can last for longer than a year) are like the gray space/band just prior to being born, as the psychiatric world describes it. This space feels like gray, like an impenetrable shield, like a membrane that will not break; sometimes it feels like a closed door. When we bump into this space, this territory in human consciousness, our reactionary selves do not call this being alive. So, in order to get our old selves going again, we would rather "want" the reverberations of agony and ecstasy, than be still. Stillness is not energetic; it is not

exciting. Stillness is another kind of energy, which we must get to know, and learn how to live in and with here on earth. It is not nervous energy, ecstatic energy, ego or ambition energy; it is an inner delight energy, a full and quiet loving energy. Thus, the period of waiting in stillness, in silence, both as a prayer period and a living period calls for a strong ego, a strong inner structure developed through living in the world, detaching from the world, and knowing what trusting is really about. It is through stillness, through silence, as a prayer activity and a living activity, that a person moves to a larger space, a deeper mansion, a greater territory, which when reached, is a stupendous experience. For on the other side of stillness is the universal kind of Love that we are talking about when we ask for peace. On the other side of stillness is an energy that heals, automatically. On the other side of stillness is creativity, abundance.

Another point of awareness regarding stillness and the silence is necessary. One of my great searches in the stillness has been for a voice, a sound, something that would say, "Do this. Go there. Accomplish this task. Develop this new part of your personality, your artistic nature." I listened and listened and listened for a voice, and I discovered that there was/is none. The fact that I say there is none is not an atheistic statement, that there is no God. Rather, it is a recognition of the mental factor within myself, that I was listening for the "wrong" sound - I was listening for my conditioned, verbal world. You see, the energy that is like God Creativity is not verbal. It is a Presence. And I am discovering more and more that what is in the silence is a universal harmonic. It is not a fat-bellied Buddha, or an all-knowing Father, or a huge receptive core. It lives in the core of the atoms of a rug; It lives in the core of flowers and plants; It lives in the individuality of a leaf; It lives in the essence of gold; It lives in the cells of our bodies. It is a vibration that is universal. It is here and now and It is way out there in the galaxies. It is as far as the Universe extends, even into its nothingness, into its black hole.

What silence does is awaken the realization that once you get still enough, the bang-bang-bang - the clatter-clatter-clatter - the words-words-words, do not matter. They do not go away either, be careful of that one. The hurricane does not stop, the issues do not change - but you touch down, you touch in whether through falling in love with somebody else, or hungering to be healed, watching a sunset in Hawaii or on top of a monastery in a Greek Isle - you find it is all the same, and It was always inside.

With this kind of introduction, I would like to take you now on a journey into silence, and I invite you to do that in your way, letting these images which have come through me, assist you. First, a clear pool.

I, me, personality, ego
Stands before a clear pool

All that is beneath,
Because of the clarity and quietness,
the stillness of the pool,
Rises to the top

I, unfearing,
Gradually see it;
the one who looks
Sees his own self, clearer and clearer
As the bottom willingly releases
Until the depth is so huge there is no bottom

Then pool and observer are not separate
But one and the same
Until one and the same,
Even the observer is gone
The one who is looking
Even he, is not present
To know himself

Clear pool, keep it still...keep it still... just keep the
pool still, not what comes up still.

Look into the pool; let the images rise up. Courage, my
friend, watch. Every second that rises will be different.
Watch. Do not judge. Trust. Let your personal dynamic show
itself.

Next, the mind.

Let the mind's chatter go on
Let the emotion live,
and all the while something in you
remains still, calm
Don't grind on any of this
Don't follow it down a tributary
Don't figure it out, mind

Mind, go to sleep
No rationalization
An analysis...
Permission
Let the chatter go on ... let it go on
Let the fear come in - the joy - the love
Watch
Only you inside remain calm
the rest goes on
The hurricane is the lesson you are learning
around you

The fear is annihilated through boredom
The loneliness loses its power through no energy
The tomorrows and yesterdays lose meaning
 through repetition
The hunger and desires lose passion
 through stupidity

All is calm - all is still

If perchance, you find that a part of you drops because what is coming in is too powerful, then you recognize it. Realize that what is dropping is not You - it is your personality, your ego, your attachment. It drops. So what? It does not affect you. You are calm, still, even though you are dropping. It outside you is always dropping around you. Even though you cannot get to yourself, though you don't have time, that does not affect You. Even though you are losing and it is all moving away, very fast, and the distance is frightening, it does not affect you.

You are still...the depth increases
"Stuff" goes on in the periphery
 way outside somewhere
You are getting nearer the core

Be aware of your breathing
See how deep it is
 this depth has to do with how long you
 breathe in and how long you breathe out
 not consciously, but as an automatic
 happening through stillness
Pay attention - it may extend itself now as all
 the rest has become quieter
Pressure on the chest indicates the universal
 bellow - pushing for expansion

Pay attention to your breathing
On one of those outbreaths
 be aware of You inside in an even bigger sense
See if you can stay with that You in the center
 of the hurricane
Behind it all
 within it all...
 silence
 calm
 peace

Notice on the outbreath that you can catch
 a sense of life vibration
 deeper than usual life

It's moving slower
 slowly...
 at even cycles per second, they say
Watch for it in the outbreath
Can you hold the outbreathing a little longer
 until you feel it?
It is like a huge, harmonic pulse
The next time you go in for it,
 see if you can become one with it
 be with it
See how well you can get to know this core
 that lives in silence
See if you can sense its power
 its impersonality
Keep doing the work
 pay attention
Through attention it grows
 you can feel its energy

Notice - the world has gone away
 if it hasn't, it is way outside
 you are way in
Begin to feel this inner core pulsating
Now, getting larger
Breathing itself back through your whole system
Providing you with more energy
 lightness
 no answers - no words
 Universal love,
 harmony

It is here

"God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth
 should change,
 though the mountains shake and the heart
 of the sea,
 though its waters roar and foam,
 though the mountains tremble with its tumult.
God is in the midst of it all.

God helps all to be righted early.

The nations rage, the kingdoms totter.
He utters His voice - the earth melts.
the Lord of hosts is with us.
The God of Jacob our refuge.

He makes wars cease to the end of the earth.
He breaks the bow and shatters the spear.
He burns the chariots with fire.

Be still. Be still and know that I am God
The Lord of Hosts is with us.
The God of Jacob our refuge."

This is a reading of the 46th Psalm. How well it fits our world today in the midst of earthquakes and potential war in Afghanistan, Iran and perils in Cambodia and so many other places. Its message:

Be still and know in the midst of it all,
the God within
Its harmony - universality - rhythm - pulse - love

Times do not change - they keep giving us the same problems, issues, challenges.

In the midst of it all
There is a still point that lives
This is silence
and its power.

AN ANCIENT ART OF PRAYER

Introduction

My mother taught me to pray. No doubt many of you were taught in the same way. I was taught how to pray through the Unity movement as I was raised in Unity. I was given very clear guidelines for praying. When I started praying, I prayed as an egotist. An egotist prays for God to give them what the person wants. You know that kind of prayer, don't you? That kind of praying is very much supported by positive thinking movements, and by "Create Your Own Reality" organizations. Such teachings actually hype you up to make you into a god. (Sometimes I imply that you are a god, but there is a very deep, deep growth that has to occur within us in order to move from thinking you are a god at an ego level, to knowing you are a god from an internal level).

I would assume then, that most of us start out by asking God to give us what we want. If we have an ill body we ask for God to heal it, and God reveals Himself to us when we are healed. If we have depression, then we ask and beseech for it to go away. Last night when I talked to my mother, she had been listening to Oral Roberts. She said, "Carol, I am at that point where I just want to holler out," because the pain in her system was so deep. Oral Roberts suggests hollering out, beseeching, begging God. I am putting none of these ways of prayer down, for they are all ways, and at times they all work. If we are depressed, we beg to have this thing, this heaviness removed from us. If we have fear, we ask God to take it from us, but we don't understand why God would give it to us. If we feel lacking occasionally then we ask God to provide us with money. If we don't have somebody to love us then we beg for God to provide us with somebody to come charging in and fill us with the love force. Well, such prayer does work, and it works for a time - it worked in my life for a long time. I hope you have done it enough to know that this kind of prayer works too, but it works for only so long. If you have discovered this, then this material will speak more to you than if you have not.

The way that this kind of prayer starts to fail is when all that is asked for does not come through. You know about that, don't you - most of those prayers have a 50-50 result factor.

Sometimes I think when we are younger, the ratio is 60-40 or 80-20 (for), but then a person has a lot more energy for the world and to make things happen and probably does not even understand that is why all is going well. However, once one begins to see that with all the asking, with all the positive thinking, with all the "right" expectations, some things do not come through, then the self-doubt begins to lurch. Then the movement in one's personal consciousness has to seek a different direction.

When this turn in awareness started happening to me, I interestingly fell into a very "Catholic" position. I was led there by my dissertation director who suggested that I read some of the writings of the early Roman Catholic teachers (before it was literally Roman Catholic, during the time prior to the Council of Nicea). During those early years, there was quite a tradition of high prayer. Some schools call this the Heschychast tradition. If you want the information and want to read further, and I suggest you do, some call it the Gnostic tradition and some the Eastern Orthodox tradition. It is around this entire study that I have written my dissertation which will never take it any further than what it gave me personally and what I am sharing with you here. It richly served me. When I sought this new direction and was led to the early Christian teachings, I had to awaken to an entirely new way of relating to myself and to the Universe. This new way of relating was to understand first that I had not prayed "right." That could sound like a statement of guilt, but it does not feel in me like guilt. It feels like an understanding and a growing awareness of my own Spiritual evolution. I started reading intensely, and as I did, I awakened to know that my life focus had to switch from being external to being internal. I had to move the intention of my life away from the external world's expectations to learning how to relate to my soul at an internal level. It was through this process that I discovered that there are four stages to prayer, and I would like to share those with you via this material.

First Prayer Type

The first prayer type may be called simply, affirmation. You know it well, especially if you have read a lot of Unity literature. Affirmation is the way that you begin to sow a new thought in your mind, and the new thought is that we have a relationship with Spirit Indwelling. Once in a class at this Center, a gentleman raised his hand and said, "What I love is that I am learning a whole new language." It is as if you have grown up with one language and then you go to school to learn a new one. Spiritual awareness is the new language. To carry this analogy further, if the new language is French, as you start out, every word has to be gone through very carefully from the mind, into the mouth, to be spoken. As you do that over and over again, which is the trust process, gradually that moves from the mind down into the heart, so instead of having to give it to yourself from the mind, it is given to you from the heart. Once

the heart takes over, then the mechanism comes to operate on automatic from the inside. Then you speak French fluently without its going through your mind. In developing one's first stages in prayer, one learns slowly, the new language and attitudes - the concepts and beliefs, and sets them to affirmations. Thus, we begin the process and begin to de-program ourselves from the information of the world, to make the life of Spirit an internal experience where we understand truthfully that all life is a matter of Spirit. Only through affirmation does the message of Spirit, its concepts and values, have the chance to come from an internal space. There has to be some way for us to experience this long process - so the way we start is through affirmations.

There is a wonderful story about this process in the book, The Way of a Pilgrim, by Rench. We need to go back to these books time and time again to really understand our similar paths with fellow human beings. The account in The Way of the Pilgrim is the story of a Russian peasant who has a deformed arm, who loses his wife, and sets out for Moscow in order to make contact with his spiritual self. (Of course, that desire must be there, flaming inside you - that you have had enough of what has gone on in the world - you have had enough of demanding and creating your own reality and goal setting and trying to make it work and manipulating - so you set off for some other area, internally. Oftentimes, we do this search outside, but it is still internal in push). When the peasant gets to Moscow, he meets a priest there, and the priest advises him to go to a very simple place. So he finds one-room living quarters where his physical needs can be taken care of easily. When he gets there, the priest says to him, "Go to your simple place and say over and over again in your mind (which is an affirmation), 'Lord Jesus Christ, Have Mercy Upon Me.'" Now, this man does it. He goes home and uses this affirmation. It is important for you to realize that at this point in the training, when you say the affirmation, in your mind, you do not have to use anybody else's affirmation. You do not have to use the Jesus Prayer, which is what this prayer is called. You can use any one. You can open Daily Word and let the affirmation for the day be yours for the day. Then, what one does, in affirming, is to focus the whole attention into the words of that prayer whether they believe it or not. My mother was given one recently, "Rest, rest, rest, trust that the Lord of your being is taking care." It gave her peace for a whole day. It lifted the depression for a whole day. No matter what you think about this practice, affirmation is the very beginning link for this process of moving God from an external spot to an internal experience. It is obviously mental, not yet real, but it is a start.

This practice is so powerful, so essential to our beginnings. This is how we become living monastics - this is how we become convent nuns - but monastics/nuns in the world. We want to make a society where we are living the Spirit wherever we go, where we know that the person who is working the press is carrying the prayer in his heart - where the person who is running our

business is carrying the prayer in the heart - where the person who is filling out the stock orders is carrying the prayer in his heart - where we know that the person who is cultivating his garden is carrying the prayer in his heart. When we all carry the prayer in our heart, we will be truly converted and truly committed, and we will not have the need for drink or the need for drugs or the need for alleviation from our own selves. There can be no higher message than this in terms of what do we do to build a spiritual life and this is not Carol Knox's message, this is a message that has been with us for as long as man has been on the face of the earth and this is what you do if you want to live out being a spiritual being.

Let me warn you, my friends - when the peasant began the process of affirming and carrying it in the mind (and it has to start in the mind), after a week of this work he went back to the priest terribly frustrated. Since he had carried an intense awareness of God in his mind, he had become intensely aware of who he really was. He had discovered what his true thought was. He had discovered how much jealousy he had - how much anger he had. He had discovered how much passion, how much fire he had. When he went back to the priest, the saving grace from the priest was, this is what you can expect. If you begin to sow in your mind thoughts about God, and you carry them in your mind, you are going to become increasingly compressed into the reality of who you are, and that can be frightening. In Thomas Merton's book, The Solitary Life, he states that a person who commits himself to the inner prayer life, makes contact with who he really is and he no longer can kid himself. You have no more lies. When the priest told the peasant that such an occurrence was natural, he sent the peasant back home and told him to keep on with the work. Now he was to increase saying the prayer so many times per minute. By the end of the book, the peasant was saying the affirmation 3,600 times a minute, and he had sores on his lips and his tongue. Now incidentally, those of you who are new, or those of you who find yourself reacting to this absurdity, pat yourself on the back because it sounds like an insane absurdity. It sounds like an absurd thing to do. Who would want to put themselves consciously through this kind of pain? I don't know. Probably only insane people like me! Probably only people who have a real Christ nature so that they can live as the Spring of God. If you believe that you can live as a Spring of God, a fount of God Life - if you believe that, then this is the path you must take. There is no other. It leaves psychology, sociology, government and medicine behind and goes down a single road, the straight and narrow road, the direct shot to make contact. This is the role of affirmation, the first step.

Second Prayer Type

Quickly, I am going to share the second type of prayer, denial. It is equal to affirmation, but different. Denial is a tool that is used so that when you get frightened, you keep the fear away from you so that it will not overwhelm you. That is

all. I don't necessarily care for this type of prayer, but it is one of the tools that has been used by mankind throughout history. Why? Because sometimes, as we all know, you get so frightened that you cannot stand the terror. You know about that. When it hits, then a tool that is available to you is to say to it, "Get Thee Behind me, Satan. Just keep away for now. I can't handle you." That is denial. You have all the right in the world to do that within yourself. Use it. I have used it and you realize that nothing can hurt you. Nothing. Not even your deepest fear.

Third Prayer Type

The third type of prayer is the most precious to me. Affirmation and denial are prayer types which are the product and servant of the mind. Yet, we all know that the mind is the devil's playground. The mind is a place where we believe we exist. The mind is the last threshold to keep us from pure contact with that deep power that is resting in our chests. The mind is a manipulative thing. It wakes you in the morning with your present problems. It is the thing that talks through you over coffee, that allows you to gossip and prattle on about others. It is that delicious belief in the illusion that anything could be out of order with you. You know about your mind, don't you? It is that thing that if you add a cup of coffee to it, it hypes up even more. If you take a drag on a cigarette, it moves it along even faster. A nice swig of wine will steady it down and make you think things are okay until the wine wears off and then... there it goes again. It is the thing we all would run away from and I know it well.

In order to get beyond the mind, one absolutely must move to the heart. You must move to your heart. I am going to ask you to do it right now. Keep your eyes open, keep reading, but at the same time, send your attention down into your heart. Notice that almost immediately you must become very quiet. As you are in your heart, say within, only two words: I AM. Notice that the mind still goes on, but a different energy begins to be created. Are you aware of that? Can you feel it? It is a different energy. This activity, the Prayer of the Heart, not only elevates consciousness, calms one's being, but it is also a grounding device. Physiologically it is a centering device. It affects the body. Can you feel it? This is called the Prayer of the Heart. This is deeper than affirmation. If, when you are down inside yourself, you keep your thoughts contained and don't allow yourself to run away into your mental spaces - don't allow yourself to run away into your emotional spaces, although they are a whole lot more powerful - something wonderful begins to happen. The language, the new language, begins to move from being just a mind trip to becoming a heart trip. It becomes so much deeper than this I AM space, whatever it is and no one knows, it begins to talk to you, through you, as if you heard yourself on a channel for the Living Spirit within. Your thought now is no longer of the world - it has transformed into another

level - the language of Spirit begins to move in you automatically. Your thought becomes the Christ Spirit speaking through you.

Every morning when I awake now, I go and sit somewhere. I go into this place within me, this I AM, this Kingdom of Heaven within - it has been in the process of being trained now for nearly four years, and I listen and I ask it to speak through me. It has a very pure statement. It says things like, "I am here with you always - trust me - I love you - I care for you - I am protecting you - I will lead you on (and incidentally, I am listening to it now) - I will guide you - I will tell you what to say next - I am the healer - that is all." It takes tremendous trust to live from this place. A whole new energy is born, and it is not dynamic, exciting, emotional, exquisite, dancing energy. It does not especially care to talk to people. It does not really care about organizations anymore. It does not want to be hassled by the head. It only wants to pray with others through the heart. It would rather be with a flower than a textbook. It would rather be with an animal than a business letter. It would rather listen to the creative voice of Spirit than write it in a book. It would rather heal than chatter.

Fourth Prayer Type

Once you have lived and dared to live from the Prayer of the Heart, you will receive the fourth level of prayer, grace. You will enter into grace. When you enter into grace, fear pretty much leaves except for those areas where you still have to learn from fear, but fear of fear leaves. When you live in grace you know that you walk in a cocoon of love and protection. When you live in grace you no longer have to affirm. You are affirmed through. You are lived through, breathed through, and it is not because you were not lived through or breathed through before. It is because you are now awakened to the fact that IT was always there and now you can hear. That is all. Won't you please start now?

THE FLAME IN THE HEART

There is a startling tendency in bringing our lives into Spiritual union, to separate ourselves from the ideals of our spirituality by presuming they are meant for somebody else. Such an attitude is often related in terms of Jesus. The words are, "He could do it because he was the Son of God - he lived in easier times - he had twelve disciples." The quality and nature of spirituality is that it calls for an intense commitment which becomes the nucleus for one's life and in relation to which all decisions are then made - if any one of us uses another person's life as a means to refuse that commitment, obviously he/she will deprive himself of spiritual union by default, i.e. he/she never participated.

I was forced to make such a commitment by the events of my life. After years as a minister, I was shoved into a deeper spiritual vein, and then a year later I made the commitment to love God, carry the flame in my heart, full-time, in spite of my life's condition. What was that condition? I was physically ill, emotionally drained; a loving relationship was causing me insane jealousy and pain; my professional life was in complete disarray; my self-esteem was up for grabs for the first time in my life; my mind was filled with chatter and little focus; all I knew was self-doubt and confusion; only my financial life remained in order. It was then I made a profound commitment to love God, carry the flame in my heart, without knowledge or understanding, like a stranger in a curious but fully forested forest. I worked the prayer and the prayer worked me.

There are times now when I feel others look at my life askance. They consider I have no issues or problems; my life is easy, removed. Often I have heard it said that I have my head in the sand, I have no family, I don't go through what you go through. When I was in my late twenties, a friend of mine said once, "You're not a good friend because you have no problems." Even then, I was using Spiritual Principles to organize and explain my life. It is difficult for me and you - my work is devoted to establishing and confirming Spiritual Realities as a fine thread that runs through the everyday, material realities of life. Since I do not devote much of my thought or energy to sharing the everyday matters of my life, it can look as if I have little to cope with. For that reason, I am going to share a few of those "real" issues of my life before presenting the gold of the flame of the heart.

Just this week I was informed I was to be audited - the fact grabbed my whole emotional system for nearly 24 hours. I am thought of as a single woman with no family, but being single can be, as I see it, far more demanding than being married - everything must be done alone and that special gift of personal support is missing. Ultimately, none of us has it easy, regardless of our life style. I may not have children, but the animals and plants and home I care for are all children to me. This week one of my dogs was ill, and I was concerned, of course. Further, although I live on a careful budget, it cost \$75 for a vet bill and there's still \$44 more due. I often feel like a parent when finally at 8 p.m. I can put all of them to bed and have a few hours for myself. I am concerned about the future, about enough money for retirement. I am concerned about the health of my parents and the well-being of my brothers who are working together with difficulty for the first time in 25 years - they are family. I have a roommate and partner with whom I have blended my financial life and many future plans. Only yesterday she called from Winthrop where she is completing a home we are building together and cried soulfully for a half hour. I am concerned! Since I returned from a rich summer's vacation I have sat in two meetings with the most important organizational parts of our Center and felt like a carnival duck being shot down every time I came back to a standing position. I have decisions which must be made soon with regard to my living situation. My life is no easier than yours - it is real, not reserved or frozen in God's grace. Yet, through it all, I do not incline towards absorption in the pain, nor perpetuating the mentalization of the issues - I ever deepen and nurture the flame in the heart!

All of us have difficult issues. All of us. No one is deprived. Setting up our priests, rabbis, ministers, gurus as special rather than real is a dis-service. It deprives you of jumping in, trying the message on, and letting a leader be an example rather than making yourself an "also-ran." We all have difficult financial issues, personal and relationship issues; our physical lives are filled with stress and our environment is far more demanding than we realize. We also have the concerns of our personal destiny like where am I going, what will my future be, where is my power, dignity and meaning?

Having zeroed in on all this, without letting it become overwhelming, I would now like to set it aside and address how we might honor these parts of our lives spiritually. It is a difficult assignment - to radiate spiritual realities, without denying material realities, for both exist.

A Matter of Heart

"For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Here indeed we groan, and long to put on our heavenly dwelling, so that by putting it on we may not be found naked. For while we are still

this tent, we sigh with anxiety; not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. He who has prepared for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee." 1

This statement from Paul honors the Spiritual consideration of life - there is a reality, a God sense occurring concurrently with every material sense. I call that the flame of the heart, an ancient tradition which can be used by everyone during their entire life. I constantly refer to bringing one's attention into the heart and then dwelling in the Presence.

What is the heart I refer to? It is a place - where is it? What is its content? This heart I continually refer to is not the emotional heart so often mentioned. It is not the physical heart in the body, nor is it a community feeling or a mental concept. Ram Dass states that it is "first in the transcendental state." 2 If one considers the chakras as taught by the Eastern religions, the first chakra is at the base of the spine, from which instinctual concerns arise; the second is in the sexual area, from which sexual and power concerns arise; the third is in the solar plexus from which the emotional and mental attachments are given birth. At the fourth chakra, the heart, one begins to cross over into the transcendental, spiritual levels of living and capacity. This leads to the throat chakra and higher power (other than ego and manipulation). Then of course comes the third eye opening and finally the crown chakra opens up completely with Spiritual Union.

In order to cross over, the heart must be developed, must let go for assimilation without attention. In other words, as long as one remains caught in churning about in the first three chakras, the heart cannot be developed. There does seem to be a point in time when one tires of one's self and such absorption and hungers to move on - when that moves into consciousness, the heart hungers to be opened. And it is difficult. In an ancient Ophic Myth, this moment is considered to be turning the river of one's life around, "analogous to the Israelites leaving Egypt and encountering the Red Sea, the Sea must be turned around to enter the Promised Land." 3

To understand what and where this heart is, participate in this description. Visualize that at the center of your being (not in the body, but penetrating through the body and emanating from it) there is an unquenchable flame. That flame is like the trick birthday candles which, when blown out, appear to disappear, but in a second come to life again, full flamed. This flame obviously is surrounded and encased by all life's issues - all the ones named earlier. Yet, it is possible, once one has had enough of the earlier stages, to cut a pathway straight through the encasements by using the single eye of attention - i.e. "If thine eye be single, then the whole body will be full of light." This is done constantly by bringing one's attention to the heart and moving quickly through the drama and trauma. It

takes time, exercise, commitment and willingness. And it works. Once the flame in the heart is touched, it rises higher and higher and gradually one's life begins to move from the flame out. Thus, new pathways are created literally in the brain/mind mechanism and as one comes back through the drama and trauma, all looks different.

There is only one assignment to develop this flame, and it is stated by a 19th century leader of spiritual studies:

"Feeling towards God - even without words - it is a prayer... Guard this gift of feeling, given to you by the mercy of God. How? First and foremost by humility, ascribing everything to grace and do not turn your heart or thought to anything else except from necessity. Be all the time with the Lord. If the inner flame begins to die down a little, immediately hasten to restore its strength." 4

And in terms of the devotion and dedication required, he goes on to say:

"To kindle in his heart such a divine love, to unite with God in an inseparable union of love, it is necessary for a man to pray often, raising the mind to Him. For as a flame increases when it is constantly fed, so prayer, made often, with the mind swelling ever and more deeply in God, arouses divine love in the heart. And the heart, set on fire, will warm all the inner man, will enlighten and teach him, revealing to him all its unknown and hidden wisdom, and making him like a flaming seraph, always standing before God within his spirit, always looking at Him within his mind, and drawing from this vision the sweetness of spiritual joy." 4

Many people, after hearing such a recommendation, ask about the credibility and possibility of such an activity. I know about that disbelief. I disbelieved it too, but I have lived this out, and therefore I would share with you my response as written in my dissertation, concerning this issue:

"It does not take much intelligence or experience to see the high demand of such an act or the blind expectation with regard to one's life - thou shalt let go of expectation and trust only this inner force as if an idiot. The purity of the simplicity is awesome as well as the affect. And, thou shalt do this without clarity, without surety or guarantee, as if beyond the planes of common sense and mental skill, beyond the 'gut' feelings of experiences and the gifts of emotional knowledge. And our guides, the hesychasts and gnostics, the Essenes and Pharisees, the stoics and Spinozans, the saints and mystics know their demand is absurd and correct. There is a smile they smile - the one of knowing without proof; the one of having been there without soul damage and knowing the only way to know is to go; the one of asking a person to leap without a net and being able to say,

'It's an ultimate leap and it is fun;' the one of knowing that trust is built by one step forward, testing the ground, and experiencing what is said is so and no life game has changed - control is gone and so is manipulation, along with emotional displays, ego possession and personal anything. For this is our Lord's will - that our prayer and our trust be alike, large." 5

This matter of building the flame in the heart, I believe, is extremely important, and furthermore, the hope of the world. It is what I do with my life., It is all I have to offer anymore. I believe it is what Chardin expects in building the noosphere. I believe it is far ahead of its time. Yet, it must be taught and practiced by all of us if we would enter the transcendent.

Julian of Norwich tells of an experience she had while deep in prayer. She had a sense of being immersed in love in a vision she had where a little thing the size of a hazel nut was placed in her hand. As she looked at it, she wondered what it was and the answer came, "It is all that is made." 6 She then wondered how long it would last since it was so small. Again, an answer came, "It lasts, and ever shall last; for God loveth it. And even so hath everything being - by the love of God." This hazelnut is placed in your hand - it is the gift of the heart. Tiny, yet full powered, I invite you to use the gift of the heart and keep it enflamed.

1 II Corinthians 5:1-5, The Holy Bible.

2 Ram Dass, Grist for the Mill.

3 G.R.S. Mead, Fragments of a Faith Forgotten.

4 Igumen Chariton, Art of Prayer, pp. 47 and 60.

5 Knox, Carol Ruth, The Prayer of the Heart - A Method for Transformation, Chapter 5, pp. 11 and 12.

6 Julian of Norwich, p. 53.

THE INTERIOR LIFE

Introduction

This lesson is devoted entirely to what I consider to be the nucleus, the most important, the most precious, the most vital "pearl" that any person could ever receive. To get you involved, I will pose a series of questions that will ever lead you deeper.

Do you wonder what you are doing here? Do you ever wonder what you are doing here on earth? If your answer is yes, then my response is, good, you are supposed to. The reason you are supposed to is because it is God's way of pushing you. When I use the word "God," I am really perceiving God as an evolutionary "pushing" at one's back, working on you to expand you, wholify you, nourish you and cause you to become ever more creatively involved with your own life here on earth.

God's work is not done... that is a basic part of my teaching philosophy. I am not a believer in the "big bang" theory of creation which is the theory that says God "threw" the Universe into existence and its whole creative nature was completed then. The evolutionary theory states that God is a point of awareness in the beginning and gradually all has evolved itself into existence through God. Both are possible theories of creation, even in terms of the laws of physics. The theory I hold to is that life began as an exuding force which gradually expanded. In this expansion, forms change, shift, expand and become a part of all. Even man, as a projection of God, and God as a projection of man, is expanding all the time. Since these theories are so different, you must come to terms with them. If you believe in the "big bang" theory, you will not want to stay at Unity. You will want traditionalism because traditionalism says that it knows how things should be: "We'll box it, we'll label it, and then we'll tell you how to fit." Unity, new-age consciousness, the kind of thinking that began with the New England transcendentalists and has been around for over 100 years, says that the individual can know, internally, and can participate in the creative edge of the Universe, and we are becoming a being, not a completed being.

Both philosophical thoughts are extremely important. When I say, "Do you know what you are doing here?" and you say, "No,"

then I say, "God's intention for you is to be ever sitting on the edge of your chair wondering, and that is why you always feel uncomfortable." If you can grasp that, then you can enjoy feeling uncomfortable. My intention is to help you be alive with greater ease because through such a theory, you can be easy with being uncomfortable. I am. You see, I nearly always am uncomfortable. The funny thing is, that the more I am, and the more easy I am with it, the more people say, "God, you look wonderful - God, you look peaceful!" And I understand that because one can be at peace with being un-peaceful.

Having put those philosophical questions clearly before you, let's push the question of what you are doing here, further. Do you ever get that sense that you are just a job, just a mate, just a parent, just a kid? And you don't like that; you find yourself scratching your head and thinking, "God, I wish somebody would come down here and reveal to me what I am doing here."

Another question in line with this regarding one's meaning and importance is, is there a larger picture? And then, "Am I a part of a transformative, transcendent process?" Is it possible that you are part of a transformative, evolutionary process occurring within you? Is it possible that you are a part of an evolutionary process, living at the edge of God's pressure, helping humanity move on to a larger expression? Is it possible in this whole design that God even inserted negativity and darkness and confusion and danger not as negativity, but as a part of the process - to keep pushing us on to become more and more transcendent and more light and more possible and more potential? Do you have a part in this? Do you have a part in life, to be more than personality and love and children and jobs? Is it possible that it is all a screen, and all the big oil deals, the plane going down in Korea, and the potential wars popping up everywhere are just a screen, a veil? And somewhere, underneath the root of it, we are all involved in a very important process called transformation and evolution. It started with the first amoeba that may have gone all the way inside himself and thought, "Is this all that I am - just a little old amoeba?" And some little pressure point came along and said, "Hey you, you're a part of expansion - expand. transform, transcend, drop out of your own personal life and its limitations; drop out of worrying about when you're going to meet another amoeba so that you can do amoeba things together! Drop out of worrying about where you are going to get the next amoeba dress!"

There needs to be a leading-edge people who will say, "Hey, you - you are on target. And God has His hand here, on you and you are important." Your importance is that evolution happens because people take part in evolution and work to assist in the transcendence of what is going on. Not because what is going on is bad - nothing that is going on is bad. But because that is the urge. That is the urge - more important than sex and libido and survival - much more important. That is what we are doing here.

Further, we are here to experience that life is eternal while we are living in the body, and to grapple with it, to know it, to experience it, while in the body... so that when you face your own death, you will not be so afraid. You are also here to experience that there are experiences beyond death. Religion is no longer in the hands of its ministers, its Priests, Rabbis, charlatans and Shamans - it is in the hands of the common people - that fact turned around a hundred years ago - everybody shall know, everybody shall experience. Do you ever have a sense that maybe YOU could be a healer. We have to get religion and spiritual beliefs out of the hands of the one and the small and the minuscule and into the hands of the everybodies. It will only happen if each of us says, "Yes, me too, I can do it, I can dare."

What are you doing here? You are responsible for the transformation of consciousness and the continual evolution that started with the tiny amoeba trillions of years ago.

How shall transformation occur? HOW? The answer comes in four words. Four words people don't appear to like. The answer is, **DEVELOP THE INTERIOR LIFE.**

Now, that must follow with another question! HOW? To answer that, I would like to explain a concept that is extremely important. It is an involved representation of the way consciousness develops here on earth. These ideas are a proving ground for the interior life's role. What must be done is to work with the word so often talked about in consciousness movements, CONSCIOUSNESS. Notice this plant leaf - it is a different consciousness than the consciousness in the rug. That consciousness is made up of vibrations. Those vibrations are moving at a speed that makes them different from the consciousness that is in the rug. the rug's consciousness is living, but moving at a different rate of speed than the plant. Everything is comprised of atoms and those atoms are consciousness. And YOU are consciousness, but you are human consciousness. The fact that you are human consciousness, which is the energy of consciousness inside your being, makes you specifically different from a chair that is also consciousness, but moving at a different vibration speed. The speed of movement, of energy, is consciousness. What is being presented is physics, science. It is not religion; it is something to build a system upon so that you can accept this idea of consciousness evolution.

Imagine that standing in front of you is a ladder. Let's place on the bottom rung of the ladder, the lowest quantity and quality of consciousness there is. That does not mean that it is not as good as, it only means that there is not much intelligence, and it is not moving at the speed of those which supersede it. There is no judgment of good or bad, only a recognition of the difference. The lowest rung is the amoeba. The quality consciousness is not as refined. The quantity of consciousness is not as much. Move up another level, and you come to bacteria. The quality and quantity expand. When we talk about the quality

of consciousness, it begins to refine. It refines so that if it is stepped on, it is affected...whereas you can step on the floor consciousness and apparently it is not affected.

With refinement, comes more capacity to "take in." The nervous system has more receptivity to what is available. That is why we are learning that we can love a plant and cause it to grow faster.

The next level is animal consciousness. With refinement (quality) now comes "intelligence" as we define it - which means the form is more capable of receiving a larger field of vibration which is quantity of consciousness. When we get to human consciousness, again the quality increases.

Before I go any further, consider this. We know that there is built in to every consciousness force (atom, amoeba, vegetable, human) a protection system. The protection system is built in to it by Mother Nature. Mother Nature builds a protection system into it to protect it from the larger ring of vibrations that is next available to it. The reason Mother Nature does this is that she knows if it did not have that protection system, the system, at its present perfect rate of evolution, would not be able to stand the speed of vibration at the next "ring" out - it could knock the system off kilter, out of balance. If the system is not ready for that, then it could not continue to exist. In other words, every stage of the evolution of consciousness, by physical law (which is also spiritual law) must be protected from the next level of expansion. Why? Because, if the system is not ready for the next level whether nervous or otherwise, it does not have the capacity to handle that raise of vibration. This means that the system has to continue to evolve itself in consciousness to accept that which is next. That means that everybody sitting in this room is limited. You are not limited in the ultimate sense, but in terms of your protection system, you must be limited from the next realm - until you are capable of expanding internally to the point of being able to embrace it. That is what happens when we go through crisis: You feel as if you have been thrown into a whole new realm, and you can't stand it, and you want to run back to the other. You want to run back because you do not think you have enough within you to embrace where you presently are. The secret is - you do, you are ready - your system and life put you there - you are ready.

Now to the consciousness evolution again. In the human realm there are three levels, physical, mental and spiritual. A person whose consciousness is primarily physical enjoys the whole sensual life. Remember, this is not good or bad - it is gradations of consciousness. As an example, you find that you become terribly physical - all you can think of is food, or sex, or you want to "ape out" on both! There are some levels of consciousness that remain physical. The next level is mental. Here the personality is totally a thinking being, or has periods where thinking is dominant.

Beyond these two levels come the areas that people rarely tackle. This is the spiritual realm. Up to this point we have only talked about the human realm. Many people think that they are experiencing things spiritually when they suddenly have ideas, or they suddenly have feelings, but what is really happening is that their consciousness has expanded to give them more of humanity. That is not spiritual per se because the spiritual level has not yet been tapped in to according to this model. The next level on the staircase then is the intuitional. When you tap into the intuitional, you have entered the first level of spirituality. The intuitional is that level where one has the capacity to begin to "intuit," potential, right action, right responses. Beyond the intuitional comes the realm of creativity where one has creative spiritual ideas that feel new - as if they popped through out of the Universe and came in to assist you with your life. Then, once you are through the creative, on the staircase, you begin to tap into a word that a lot of people throw around, but is very rare, and that is Spiritual ideas. So, in the human range, consciousness has the capacity for physical, emotional, mental, then intuitive spiritual, creative spiritual and spiritual ideas.

The how, the answer to the how questions... "How do we develop the interior life?" is for us to begin to understand that we are not just a human being encased in a human body, that our life is not just limited to what we experience, but to realize that we have the potential to explore deeper and higher realms of consciousness available to us. That kind of pressure to explore can become the meaning to life. That is the meaning to my life. I may look like I am a minister, but that is not really what I am doing with my life. What do I really do with my private time? I spend time meditating, caring for my body, working on my inner balance. Why? To tap into the larger dimensions of the transformative vehicle which is available to me. My hope would be that there would be a few others reading this who would also be interested, who will put enough of their life into the background so that it does not matter so much anymore. That does not mean you do not do life anymore. That does not mean you do not care anymore. I work every day, you know. I have to pay for living, work to buy food, etc. Yet, that is not the "push" of my life. The push is: I am a part of the evolutionary consciousness; I am a part of the next creation. I have a role to play, so I do it.

The Prayer of the Heart

The last question is HOW? I am only going to give you a "peek" into how. For how always involves that you become involved and participate for the experience to happen within you. Here it is.

Ten thousand years ago in India, two thousand years ago in Christianity, the little "pearl" I am going to give to you was shared only with those who were monastics, which means those totally devoted and committed to loving God. It was only shared

in caves with hermits; it was only shared with a select few. Why? Because its power and potential for anybody who would activate it is so dumfounding that it was believed that common stock could not handle it. (I don't believe that is so now.) they discovered that if the attention was brought down into their heart and maintained there, along with a simple prayer that had Universal content and spiritual intent, something profound happened within the being: He/she was transformed, elevated. The cell structure altered, the thought content was ultimately changed from within, the being was evolved. Let me reiterate. It was discovered ten thousand years ago and usually hidden from the masses, that if one brought the attention into the heart, which is the central organ in the body, that one was transformed. You see, the heart is vitally important in this. In the chakra system, the lowest chakra is the base of the spine, then follows the sexual organs, the solar plexus, the heart, the throat, the third eye, the crown chakra (seven in all). Where does transformation happen? At the heart level. It all fits, and yet we don't know what we are talking about; we don't have the scientific information to tell why it happens. But we do know that when the attention is brought through the mind, into the heart, it has been discovered that wrapping that attention around a simple prayer that is universal in content and God-centered in intent, the being automatically becomes altered, transformed. The cellular structure is even changed and gradually the whole personality and system is evolved into a higher level of expression.

Attention

The first requirement - attention. Attention. Sri Aurobindo says, "The key to every human problem is attention." I believe him, I agree. How does healing happen? Attention. Attention on what? The problem? No. What? The heart? Yes. What happens? The heart then vibrates an energy field outward that moves through the body, that then embraces whatever it is in the presence of. Thus all is altered, including the cellular structure. You have heard the story of the fellow who goes to a guru and sits with him saying, "Please tell me what the ultimate teaching is." The guru never says a word, but writes in the sand, "ATTENTION." The attention fires life, if it is brought into the heart; it becomes vital, alive and then embraces everything that is near it.

Get your attention off me for a minute and put it on your left shoulder. Your left big toe. Put your attention into your right heel, now, the crown chakra, the top of your head. Heart. Heart. Stay there. It would be best if you could leave your eyes open because this is a living way of being. Keep your attention in your heart. You can play volleyball with your attention in your heart. You can make love with your attention in your heart. You can build a home with your attention in your heart. You can swim with your attention in your heart. You can drown with your attention in your heart. You can eat with your attention in your heart. The truly devoted master of

spirituality brings his/her attention into the heart. That is true in every tradition. Bring your attention into your heart.

I want to show you how powerful this is. [A demonstration is done with Dr. Knox showing how the vibrations emanating from her, keeping her attention in the heart, literally moves a pendulum. And then, once the pendulum moves, another pendulum is placed nearby and it begins to move as well.]

What has been shown is that true attention, not on the object, but in the heart, can cause other objects to move. (Primarily the structure of the body temple, once one moves, as the result of the heart power emanating out to the body cells, the rest of the cells are affected synchronistically and alter as well. This is the secret to transformation via the Spirit, not the mind.)

Conclusion

What are you doing here on earth? Not what you think you are doing. You have a very important part to play and that is to be a part of transformation. It is not because the earth is going to end, but because evolution is going to happen. You have a role. Your role is to assist in the evolution of your personal consciousness. The most direct and effective way to do that is by bringing the power of the mind to the heart. And while in the heart, one carries a universal prayer that has spiritual intent and does not tend to manipulate. You are developing the interior world. Keep your attention in the heart. Every time the attention wants to wander somewhere else, your inside knows and you can call it back. Now stay there. Practice...practice... practice... practice.

THE PRAYER OF THE HEART

(Presented in Sacramento, California, May 1, 1983)

Introduction

It states in the Bible that when one finds a "pearl of great price" it is to be cherished. The material I am providing in this writing is my personal "pearl of great price." Although I have been in the Unity movement for 44 years, it was about six years ago that I fell upon the pearl of the "Prayer of the Heart." Although Unity means very much to me as a discipline and as a way of being, and although it has been a guidance and direction of my entire life, I feel as if the pearl I am about to present is one that has integrated my whole system, completed my individualization process - taken me through a very difficult dark night experience - moved me into mystical experiences, awakened my soul - changed my personality - shifted my life style and has been a total transformational experience. So I do not treat it lightly. I don't doubt but that what I have to offer may cause you to grapple, to question, to doubt, because it did me.

A Personal Account

In September, 1977, after having taken a three-month sabbatical, I found I was still tired and drained. I returned from that sabbatical and went to my dissertation advisor. She listened to my story and said, "Carol, you must make your dissertation an expression of what you are experiencing, because you are going through a true shift in consciousness." (A shift which had begun in 1976.) As I listened to her, she suggested I read St. John of the Cross, Dark Nigh of the Soul. I opened the book one morning while sitting in meditation, and I found there exactly what had been happening to me for over a year. The words stated that in the dark night of the soul one experienced no meditations, no illuminations, no fantasies - only dryness. Well, I knew these symptoms, but when I read these words written by a saint who had experienced them too, I had that safe feeling that finally I knew I was in the abode of saints. My thoughts were, there is somebody else like me here on earth, I don't have

to be so lonely anymore; maybe I am not crazy, maybe I am not lonely, maybe I am not falling "off," maybe I am falling "on." I began to have the courage to experience what I was being forced into. It was then that I started doing the studies, the reading that you are about to study in this text. It was then that I started practicing The Prayer of the Heart - ongoing, 100% of the time. I drove to Los Angeles and began then carrying the Prayer of the Heart in my heart - in my heart with my mind. For weeks and months I practiced the Prayer and began to watch what happened to me, as a result of it. What happened to me was my personal catharsis.

As a result of this, I found a jewel - it is my jewel, I think it's a priceless jewel. I believe it is a Universal jewel. It is not Christian or Jewish or Islamic or Hindu or Buddhist. It was Universal, ancient, all-fitting. It reminds me of an experience I had in Israel recently. I was visiting the prison cell of Jesus. As I climbed down into this cell, there was a Greek Monk saying prayers. I looked at him, and he looked at me, and we could hardly speak the same language. He said, "Jew?" I said, "No." He said, "Christian?" I said, "No," wincing. And then he looked at me as if to say, "Well, what are you?" I hunched my shoulders and then I spread out my hands in a gesture of broadening and said, "Universal?" And he said, "Ah..." He took it in. The Prayer of the Heart then feels to me like a Universal jewel. We get so lost in our religions; we get so lost in our differences, we get so lost in our denominationalism, and we hardly know that we are defending them. But this Prayer of the Heart is something beyond personality, beyond the mosque or the synagogue or the temple or the church. Again, it is a Universal power and gift!

I am devoted to this work of the Prayer, and I feel that the rest of my life will be devoted to learning from it and teaching it. I now carry the Prayer of the Heart in me approximately 90% of the time. I feel it is the whole direction for my life, and that is all my life is about in its depth. It is my only ministry now. So with that I would like you to read this invitation from The Cloud of Unknowing.

An Invitation

Not all of those who hear this or hear it spoken of or read a part of it and as a result think it is a good and pleasing thing, are therefore called by God to engage in this great work, because of the pleasant sensation they get when they read or hear about it - this urge to do the work might spring from a natural curiosity rather than from a call of Grace. But if they want to test the origin of their urge, they can test it in this way if they like. In the first place let them see if they have done everything possible in the way of preliminaries. Preparing for it by cleansing their consciousness. So far so good. If they seek further assurance, let them inquire whether this urge to

love God, completely with the whole heart and the whole mind, constantly and habitually, claims their attention more than other Spiritual devotions. And if they have come to believe that their consciousness will not really approve anything they do, physical or Spiritual, unless their secret little love, which is fixed on a cloud of unknowing - on God, is the main-spring of their work spiritually, then it is a sign that they are being called to this work by God.

I give you this invitation at the start so that you can make a choice to go on the journey.

A Concept - Aspiration

Aspiration is the pursuit toward God, born within every single human being. Within it are two qualities, both to aspire toward God and to be inspired by God. Spiro is from the Latin meaning "to breath," inspiro means being breathed into by God, which means that God is ever pushing His force down into the person. When I began this frightening process to realize more of God, I forgot that God was doing it. Now I fully believe that God keeps hungering for me, and more intensely than I for God. In fact, a number of the saints say that the reason for crisis is because God is seeking to make contact with the soul more than ever before and such activity is a blessing. It is a very special happening. St. Theresa of Avila states it over and over, that such a special occurrence is the process of being pressed into the Lord's service. Oftentimes pressing feels like constriction, rigidity, being lost, not being in God's grip. One of the great discoveries I have made is whether I feel like I am in God's grip or not, I always am. Therefore, God does not have to be any way for me - I am always in the presence of God. There is no definition or special qualification of when I shall know God to be - God is always present, truly.

To review then, there are two forces working within every human being, pushing down into us to inspire. That push may come through crisis experiences, through senses of loss, and in numerous ways. There is also moving within us the desire to move toward God, the aspiring power. This aspiration is the key to the life of the Spirit. It is a part of the essence within every single person; it is immutable; it is living and breathing, in the atoms of the rug, the atoms in the chair you are sitting in; it is breathing in every plant and every animal. One of the most gracious gifts we can give to each other is to remember that each being is truly aspiring toward God.

In the course of one's life, as more and more phases are completed, this movement toward God begins to refine itself. For example, we complete the physical parts of our life, the relationship parts of our life. To complete does not mean to finish, but rather to become aware of certain aspects of the self-refining so they can be put on the back burner - consequently

they do not demand so much attention. There seems to be a time, very clearly, within the being, when the demand for spiritual contact moves to the forefront and shows itself. It seems to have a timing mechanism. The timing shows as something becoming primal and a focus for your life. It appears to come out of nowhere, and everything else slips away. For instance, the desire for material goods is no longer prominent. Oh, you still pay the rent, you still get your food, you still raise the children, but suddenly that is not so important, and something else is - the desire to know God. I believe completely that there is not only a physical seed, a mental seed and emotional seed born within us, but there is of course the spiritual seed. The spiritual seed has its timing - it is as if God plans when that seed will appear. The appearance usually occurs when the personality thinks it has "it" all together. Thus, the appearance can be crucifying, devastating, shocking. I was on top of the world when it happened to me. I was very, very wonderfully in love - I was at the top of all my goals and aims for my life, and then, boom, came this demanding power that said, "Hey, pay attention to me - wake up!" It wasn't, "Who are you - what are you going to be for the rest of your life?" But, "I want your full attention, right away!" So, I spent nearly a year in depression, because I didn't want to have anything to do with it. I was doing something else with my life - I was building a church. I was becoming famous.

What we tend to do, what a lot of people in our society tend to do, is to suddenly turn to religion. Religion is a wonderful format, but I do not believe it has the power to serve such a major shift as spirituality has. I make a great distinction between being religious and being spiritual. Religion is involved with teaching, confining and restricting; spirituality is a very personal and private journey between me and Thee. Spirituality provides an environment in which one may discover and pursue his own path.

In Fragments of a Face Forgotten, by G.R.S. Mead, it states:

A religion is not essential to spur the spirit of aspiration. With regard to this aspiration, rising and refining within a person until we arrive at that class of souls which consciously seeks to welcome the light and all its fullness and makes this the one object of their lives.

The spiritual process refines one's whole nature until the personality is capable of being fully devoted to God, to the Spirit, to light.

The Prayer of the Heart has allowed me to let my life become simple. What is that simplicity? There is now only one object in my life, and that is to seek the inner Light constantly and let everything else be there as an after effect, if it will, but without any expectations. There is no product in the spiritual life, there is only the "doing, and the now." By-products may come, but the only object is to seek the light.

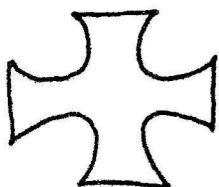
One of the curious things about this aspiring work is that it can remain hidden most of our lives. That does not mean that spirit is hidden, that God is hidden, but the moving, the demand within the being, does not surface. This reality made me feel a little bit more insane...here I am going through this "great" internal crisis for no external reason whatsoever and everyone else is just hanging around having a wonderful time living life. So, it can remain hidden for a long time and may not ever appear. It can also appear as a crisis. It may appear from our fearing non-existence or death. It may also appear as a result of a sudden disinterest in the material world. Alan Watts says, in Behold The Spirit, "More and more people are becoming aware of the exhaustion of humanism, the shallowness of rationalism and its analytic view of life, and the truth that creating a meaningful life is impossible without some realization of a union with God." I think more and more people arrive at our churches because they have met crises, because they have suddenly faced existential fear, the reality of nothingness, and they come to churches because they are finally seeking true union with God, the Spiritual aim, not the religious.

The Goal of Aspiration

This is a powerful, totally immersing force, and what does it move towards? It is always moving toward unification with God. St. Demetri of Rostov states explicitly, without a doubt, "that it is the duty of all Christians, especially those whose calling dedicates them to the spiritual life, to strive always and in every way, to be united with God. Because the final purpose of the soul must be God Himself alone, and nothing else." And why does he say this is necessary? "Because the soul attains eternal rest only in the eternal God which is its natural home." There is no doubt in St. Demetri's mind of the soul's innate desire to return home." When the person opens up and the aspiring movement starts moving towards that which has always moved into the person, that movement aspires to unify with God. The story of the prodigal son is an example of this teaching that our desire to return home is the subtle awareness that the person must return to their natural home and there become aligned again. Alan Watts makes constant reference to this singular attention in a person's life, and he admonishes the church to support this intent. He states, "Modern man's soul still desires that release from itself, that infusion of life and meaning, to being possessed by a power greater than itself, which is found perfectly in union with God, alone."

Now, I do not want to tell you what union with God is like, for you alone. It cannot be done. Since I have had some marvelous experiences with it, I would like to share one, a very special one which might provide some of the definitions and guidelines for your recognizing moments of unification. No doubt you who read this have a hunger to feel united with God - this material can assist in fulfilling the hunger. After I had been

carrying the Prayer in my heart for two years, one morning in March of 1979, I was awakened at 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning. Lying right outside my breast was a Germanic cross. I had never seen such a cross before. It is also known as a coptic cross.



As I lay there I could see this luminous silver cross hover, pulsate and illuminate right outside my breast. Internally I thought and felt the sense of an "Aha," as if God and I had been waiting for three years for some indication like this.

As it rested there, it then began to move itself of its own accord (there was no effort on my part) and began to implant itself inside me. When it was finished, it was implanted about a half an inch beneath my breast area. Then, that infusion within began to fill my whole being with its power and energy. I lay there basking in this marvelous physical, mental, emotional and spiritual sensation. Then I fell asleep. When I awoke about three hours later, I was encased completely in an energy field. My only way of describing it now would be that it was total Love, total Unification and only Light. I lay there in an orb, a circle of energy, and I knew that I was totally in the midst of Love. In Genesis it states that "a firmament was placed in the midst of the waters." I felt as if I had been put in the midst, knowingly, and was totally surrounded and wrapped in Love and Light. I was buoyant, carried, selfless, empty and full. I knew as I lay there that if anybody entered where I was, they could be healed, but I was not to go outside and do any healing work. The experience lasted for about five hours. It left me with a feeling of being "in love." It was like being in love with another human being - you know in such a state your heart feels full and you have somebody to cast that fullness upon. Well, I was left with that feeling in my heart, but there was no outside object. I had experienced the total unification experience. For all that I know, and the best I know.

That lasted for seven days. I then went to Bodega Bay to work on my dissertation. As I was walking on the beach, I began feeling that hum - that love, that "in love" feeling, slip away. And indeed it did slip away. As I felt it leave, I said, "Oh, no, you're not going to leave me." And it said to me, "Yes, you know enough of me, I can now go on to do my work elsewhere." And so it left me. I had some tears... there was still that portion of me that would love to have that sense with me all the time in an external way. But there was a knowing that said, "Let go of even having to have this, because all you need to learn in a dark night is that there is no dark night. For I am even there in the dark night and you do not have to go anywhere to find me."

I share this experience with you, only to expose one of my "pearls" of experience, the one of having known what it is like to be wholly unified with God. It was one of a number of mystical experiences. I feel those experiences are profoundly import-

ant. I am still not clear enough to know whether it is possible to live in such a state one hundred percent of the time. I do believe that such a state is what we are probably talking about and seeking most of the time - forgive me if I am wrong.

To review this. When this aspiring power becomes obvious in the being, as well as being pushed into one through inspiration, one becomes aware of a hunger to become unified with God. This hunger requires a support system as well as certain inner activities that must be carried out by the person who is engaged in this mystical path. (I believe that the mystical path is the ultimate path that we know today. However, it is only the ultimate in terms of what we know today. Once we realize and live this mystical path more completely, causing it to be believed, there will be a higher, deeper ultimate that will show itself.)

Essential Soul Supports

There are essential qualities which must be developed to support the soul, the personality, as the individual pursues becoming unified with God. The literature shows that there are three such essential support systems. The saints and desert fathers all say that once one begins on this path, the person moves into a very special ground and being on that special ground requires a strength not known or even assumed at the start. Proof of this comes from an experience I had while flying to Cairo, Egypt in April, 1983. I walked up the aisle of the plane and there was a Greek priest from Boston sitting there. It felt as if God had put him there for me. I started talking to him. I told him I had just finished my dissertation on the Prayer of the Heart. I expected him to be quite delighted. Instead, his first words were, "That's a dangerous practice, you know." I told him I believed I was aware of that. He continued, "Don't share it with too many people; they are not ready for it." That may seem strange in reference to a spiritual practice... yet, it is essential and a fact to be shared. When one tells others to bring the whole attention, the whole mind into the heart and there stay with God the rest of one's life, people have very little idea of the kind of energy that is being released. The energy that was released in me was phenomenal, and I have spent the last five years (and I am not finished) rebuilding a body, a mind, an emotional system, and a life support system that allows me to be in the effect of this practice, in the fullness of life. Tremendous energy can be triggered into action, and this priest was warning me. So I share it with you - a personal, a deep responsibility. Before I left the priest, he took from his pocket a small knitted rosary, which was his gift in saying goodbye.

Having provided this warning, let me share the essential soul supports:

First, a person must always be lifting the heart toward God.

Second, one must be fully burning of the Spirit.

Third, one must have an attitude of "mustness."

Now, to explain each. The first, to lift one's heart to God. Since most of the remainder of this booklet will concern that action, merely reflect upon this line from the Art of Prayer, "One cannot live spiritually unless this action (lifting one's heart to God) is carried out." To give a sense of burning in the Spirit, consider this quotation. "He who burns in Spirit works zealously for the Master, waiting to delight in the things for which he hopes, and he overcomes the temptations which he encounters, meeting their confrontations with patience and calling incessantly for help from Divine Grace." Why do people not burn of the Spirit? Why do people not even know what it is? Because people are occupied largely, or even exclusively, with their own personal affairs, with worldly business and public life, so that the Spirit, although it is still making itself felt, is choked. In order to kindle the Spirit, one must become aware of the unsatisfactory direction of their activities, and enter deeply into contemplations as to what is divine, holy, heavenly and eternal. When one does this, then one is burning of the Spirit. A 15th Century saint called this activity a lively desire for God and considered this lively desire the primary motive for obtaining union with God. And, of course, might I remind the reader of our old friend, Jesus of Nazareth, who would refer to this activity as the first commandment for the Spiritual life. "Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul (one's whole being) and with all thy mind and with all thy strength."

Finally, "mustness." I have no other word for it. One of the hardest things for me to awaken to once I began, was that there could never be an excuse for not carrying the Prayer in my heart. There was finally nothing to figure out. It was hard to agree to, I must only carry the Prayer. I had entered the ministry so well prepared in counseling. We had had a wonderful two years of counseling preparation. I became a fine counselor. I counseled on television, had my own program entitled, "Insights." I was a good communicator and had been taught how to listen well. I knew how to discuss, how to arbitrate, and that ability helped my ministry grow. So, I was caught in analysis, listening, communicating and feeling. When I started carrying the Prayer in my heart, it was hard for me to stop that approach and to keep bringing my attention back into the heart, to spend my whole day devoted to only carrying the Prayer in my heart, and to trust that that little phenomenon would work out my life. I have never made such a total commitment. I gave up all the good former tools and took on another. I made a commitment to love God. "Mustness" then is realizing that we are all on our way to unification with God, that there is a "mustness" about it and none of us can escape whether it is in this lifetime or another... this is the way we must go. St. Ignasus says it in this way, "God became man, so that man might become God."

Stages of Prayer

In the account on the development of interior prayer by St. Teresa, she talks about prayer being like taking a bucket to a well. We start our prayer life by carrying our little buckets to the well. As we carry our little buckets we are thirsting. When we get to the well, we plunge our buckets down into the source, fill the buckets, replacing the empty needing. This activity is called an "affirmation." Affirmations are based upon desire, hunger, lack. St. Teresa does not call this activity an affirmation; she does call it the first stage of prayer. In the Unity movement it is called an affirmation. Such a prayer form is based upon hunger and desire. In its most extreme form it becomes begging and demanding, screaming, Bible toting, trinket making, etc.

St. Teresa describes the second stage as a similar activity. Again, the person is carrying a bucket to the well. The person goes to the well because he or she realizes that asking and demanding certain things necessarily requires letting go of certain other things. This is known more familiarly as denial. One knows that one moves to the well out of one's lack, and in so doing there must be a fear of lack that is driving them to the well. Therefore, one must deny the lack as one affirms the hunger. Both affirmations and denials are conditional, and a subtle, underground concern involved with both of them is that they are driven by fear. With these first stages of prayer, rather than working with wholeness, we are working with balancing pluses and minuses.

As one moves through these prayer stages, the soul is clearly developing. Thusly one comes to the realization that this kind of prayer, to this point, is not serving the person fully enough. Therefore, there is a demand for some larger order, for a more complete serving and relationship to God. So, in this case, one stands by the well with one's bucket and never takes it out. Such an action is non-conditional; it is always. There are no terms, one is there. This is the Prayer of the Heart, sometimes called, Practicing the Presence. In order for one to stand by the well always, it is necessary to "hold" a prayer in the heart. The original prayer is not usually comfortable for people who are involved with Unity or positive thinking groups.

"Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy upon me
for I am a sinner."

I did not start using this prayer. I started with the simple phrase, I Am. When I took the trip to Los Angeles in September, 1977, the prayer that I carried in my heart full time was, I Am. At present I am using the "Jesus Prayer" full time. I recommend your trying it, using it, full time, 100% and observe its effect.

The prayer, Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy upon me, feels like a Universal, ancient, pre-Jesus prayer. It somehow captures my total sense of life and awareness. When I say the words, "Lord Jesus Christ," I do not see Jesus. Rather, the words feel like an ancient tradition that has meaning, which is probably the Universal Christ. I am kind of sorry that the words say Christ, because the word, "Christ" can separate too many people from the Universal. Yet, when I move on to the words "have mercy upon me," it does not feel as if I am asking for some benefit of mercy from somebody, because I do not feel wrong or guilty or sinful. But I do feel humble with regard to these words. I feel humbled by the awesome awareness of who I am, and where I am, and what I am in the midst of... and that is God. So the word, "mercy" is not a reference to being bad; mercy is awe. Having traveled through Israel, Egypt and Greece, one feels total awe at the power of the Spiritual, eternal message which has been present forever. That awareness has awakened the fact that spirituality has been forever and that it cannot be denied - it is. That is what "Have mercy upon me" feels like in me.

When I say, "for I am a sinner," it does not make me feel bad. It is more a simple understanding and acceptance - why should I deny that I make mistakes, why should I take that away from life? Why is it we try so hard to eliminate mistakes from our vocabulary. Ultimately there is no such thing as a mistake in the Universe, but I make mistakes. You know I do sin against my little dog and sometimes I kill a fly. Sometimes I kill a person with an unknowing glance. I am a sinner. I don't feel bad about that. I kind of like acknowledging it. I feel no guilt. So saying this "Jesus Prayer," Lord Jesus Christ have mercy upon me for I am a sinner, feels whole and total and "here I am." It feels unconditional. I feels as if I am asking for nothing and that is a deep prayer level and state of consciousness leaving one open for God.

As I have worked with this prayer, I have come to feel as if it is in charge of my life, and it is my process of transformation. One of the qualities I love about this prayer is that it becomes the transforming pressure, refiner, purifier of the whole being. Then the person no longer has to take charge of the refinement of one's internal life, through the prayer, one is clearly shown what is being pruned, weaned next. This is what I adore about it. I have up responsibility for my life when I started taking this prayer in 100% by practicing it fully. I no longer have to figure out what needs to be changed, what needs to be altered. No. It tells me. It tells me when I have moved too far away from the prayer: it says, "Hey, Carol, remember me?" I love it. So, it is its own transformer, its own communicator, its own work. The Prayer "does" you. One of the most beautiful lines relating to the Prayer comes from Katherine of Genoa - it was said of her, she prayed so fully, she became prayer. One day the Prayer takes you over. When I teach this as a course or at a seminar, I say to the guests, "After you have done the Prayer enough, after you have read enough and studied enough, you will find that one day there will be a time when you will not be

praying the Prayer. You will not be putting the bucket in the well, rather you will be embraced by the Prayer - it will start praying you. This will not happen because you wanted anything or because you were afraid of anything, you will just be prayed.

Finally then, the Prayer leads to grace, the fourth stage of prayer, and grace is not having your life together. Grace does not mean that you might not die of cancer. It does not mean that your marriage relationship will be perfect or that your friends will always like you or that you won't be judged or flogged or scorched. If that's the proof then why did Jesus get what he did from life? If His life had to prove to be a plus, by the time it finally ended, it sure didn't look like that. But what we do know is that Jesus was in a state of grace. Grace is the awareness that you are in the presence of God one hundred percent of the time. Now you are not practicing the Presence - you are in the Presence. Does this mean there is any difference between one in grace and one who is not? No, I don't think so. No, the chances are they are all alike. But there is a difference in terms of the inner life between the two, The one in grace never forgets - never questions that he/she is in the Presence of God regardless of the circumstances.

The Practice

At this point, I invite the reader to leave the reading and practice the Prayer, either the Jesus Prayer or I Am, for a period of one half hour. Experiment, watch its effect, be consistent, and then let it be the center of your life if you like it and are served by it as I have been.