

# THE SONG OF PRAYER

PRAYER, FORGIVENESS & HEALING



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### 1. PRAYER

#### Introduction

Prayer is the greatest gift with which God blessed His Son at his creation. It was then what it is to become; the single voice Creator and creation share; the song the Son sings to the Father, Who returns the thanks it offers Him unto the Son. Endless the harmony, and endless, too, the joyous concord of the Love They give forever to Each Other. And in this, creation is extended. God gives thanks to His extension in His Son. His Son gives thanks for his creation, in the song of his creating in his Father's Name. The Love They share is what all prayer will be throughout eternity, when time is done. For such it was before time seemed to be.

To you who are in time a little while, prayer takes the form that best will suit your need. You have but one. What God created one must recognize its oneness, and rejoice that what illusions seemed to separate is one forever in the Mind of God. Prayer now must be the means by which God's Son leaves separate goals and separate interests by, and turns in holy gladness to the truth of union in his Father and himself.

Lay down your dreams, you holy Son of God, and rising up as God created you, dispense with idols and remember Him. Prayer will sustain you now, and bless you as you lift your heart to Him in rising song that reaches higher and then higher still, until both high and low have disappeared. Faith in your goal will grow and hold you up as you ascend the shining stairway to the lawns of Heaven and the gate of peace. For this is prayer, and here salvation is. This is the way. It is God's gift to you.

## I. True Prayer

Prayer is a way offered by the Holy Spirit to reach God. It is not merely a question or an entreaty. It cannot succeed until you realize that it asks for nothing. How else could it serve its purpose? It is impossible to pray for idols and hope to reach God. True prayer must avoid the pitfall of asking to entreat. Ask, rather, to receive what is already given; to accept what is already there.

You have been told to ask the Holy Spirit for the answer to any specific problem, and that you will receive a specific answer if such is your need. You have also been told that there is only one problem and one answer. In prayer this is not contradictory. There are decisions to make here, and they must be made whether they be illusions or not. You cannot be asked to accept answers which are beyond the level of need that you can recognize. Therefore, it is not the form of the question that matters, nor how it is asked. The form of the answer, if given by

God, will suit your need as you see it. This is merely an echo of the reply of His Voice. The real sound is always a song of thanksgiving and of Love.

You cannot, then, ask for the echo. It is the song that is the gift. Along with it come the overtones, the harmonics, the echoes, but these are secondary. In true prayer you hear only the song. All the rest is merely added. You have sought first the Kingdom of Heaven, and all else has indeed been given you.

The secret of true prayer is to forget the things you think you need. To ask for the specific is much the same as to look on sin and then forgive it. Also in the same way, in prayer you overlook your specific needs as you see them, and let them go into God's Hands. There they become your gifts to Him, for they tell Him that you would have no gods before Him; no Love but His. What could His answer be but your remembrance of Him? Can this be traded for a bit of trifling advice about a problem of an instant's duration? God answers only for eternity. But still all little answers are contained in this.

Prayer is a stepping aside; a letting go, a quiet time of listening and loving. It should not be confused with supplication of any kind, because it is a way of remembering your holiness. Why should holiness entreat, being fully entitled to everything Love has to offer? And it is to Love you go in prayer. Prayer is an offering; a giving up of yourself to be at one with Love. There is nothing to ask because there is nothing left to want. That nothingness becomes the altar of God. It disappears in Him.

This is not a level of prayer that everyone can attain as yet. Those who have not reached it still need your help in prayer because their asking is not yet based upon acceptance. Help in prayer does not mean that another mediates between you and God. But it does mean that another stands beside you and helps to raise you up to Him. One who has realized the goodness of God prays without fear. And one who prays without fear cannot but reach Him. He can therefore also reach His Son, wherever he may be and whatever form he may seem to take.

Praying to Christ in anyone is true prayer because it is a gift of thanks to His Father. To ask that Christ be but Himself is not an entreaty. It is a song of thanksgiving for what you are. Herein lies the power of prayer. It asks nothing and receives everything. This prayer can be shared because it receives for everyone. To pray with one who knows that this is true is to be answered. Perhaps the specific form of resolution for a specific problem will occur to either of you; it does not matter which. Perhaps it will reach both, if you are genuinely attuned to one another. It will come because you have realized that Christ is in both of you. That is its only truth.

## II. The Ladder of Prayer

Prayer has no beginning and no end. It is a part of life. But it does change in form, and grow with learning until it reaches its formless state, and fuses into total communication with God. In

its asking form it need not, and often does not, make appeal to God, or even involve belief in Him. At these levels prayer is merely wanting, out of a sense of scarcity and lack.

These forms of prayer, or asking-out-of-need, always involve feelings of weakness and inadequacy, and could never be made by a Son of God who knows Who he is. No one, then, who is sure of his Identity could pray in these forms. Yet it is also true that no one who is uncertain of his Identity can avoid praying in this way. And prayer is as continual as life. Everyone prays without ceasing. Ask and you have received, for you have established what it is you want.

It is also possible to reach a higher form of asking-out-of-need, for in this world prayer is reparative, and so it must entail levels of learning. Here, the asking may be addressed to God in honest belief, though not yet with understanding. A vague and usually unstable sense of identification has generally been reached, but tends to be blurred by a deep-rooted sense of sin. It is possible at this level to continue to ask for things of this world in various forms, and it is also possible to ask for gifts such as honesty or goodness, and particularly for forgiveness for the many sources of guilt that inevitably underlie any prayer of need. Without guilt there is no scarcity. The sinless have no needs.

At this level also comes that curious contradiction in terms known as "praying for one's enemies." The contradiction lies not in the actual words, but rather in the way in which they are usually interpreted. While you believe you have enemies, you have limited prayer to the laws of this world, and have also

limited your ability to receive and to accept to the same narrow margins. And yet, if you have enemies you have need of prayer, and great need, too. What does the phrase really mean? Pray for yourself, that you may not seek to imprison Christ and thereby lose the recognition of your own Identity. Be traitor to no one, or you will be treacherous to yourself.

An enemy is the symbol of an imprisoned Christ. And who could He be except yourself? The prayer for enemies thus becomes a prayer for your own freedom. Now it is no longer a contradiction in terms. It has become a statement of the unity of Christ and a recognition of His sinlessness. And now it has become holy, for it acknowledges the Son of God as he was created.

Let it never be forgotten that prayer at any level is always for yourself. If you unite with anyone in prayer, you make him part of you. The enemy is you, as is the Christ. Before it can become holy, then, prayer becomes a choice. You do not choose for another. You can but choose for yourself. Pray truly for your enemies, for herein lies your own salvation. Forgive them for your sins, and you will be forgiven indeed.

Prayer is a ladder reaching up to Heaven. At the top there is a transformation much like your own, for prayer is part of you. The things of earth are left behind, all unremembered. There is no asking, for there is no lack. Identity in Christ is fully recognized as set forever, beyond all change and incorruptible. The light no longer flickers, and will never go out. Now, without needs of any kind, and clad forever in the pure



sinlessness that is the gift of God to you, His Son, prayer can again become what it was meant to be. For now it rises as a song of thanks to your Creator, sung without words, or thoughts, or vain desires, unneedful now of anything at all. So it extends, as it was meant to do. And for this giving God Himself gives thanks.

God is the goal of every prayer, giving it timelessness instead of end. Nor has it a beginning, because the goal has never changed. Prayer in its earlier forms is an illusion, because there is no need for a ladder to reach what one has never left. Yet prayer is part of forgiveness as long as forgiveness, itself an illusion, remains unattained. Prayer is tied up with learning until the goal of learning has been reached. And then all things will be transformed together, and returned unblemished into the Mind of God. Being beyond learning, this state cannot be described. The stages necessary to its attainment, however, need to be understood, if peace is to be restored to God's Son, who lives now with the illusion of death and the fear of God.

### III. Praying for Others

We said that prayer is always for yourself, and this is so. Why, then, should you pray for others at all? And if you should, how should you do it? Praying for others, if rightly understood, becomes a means for lifting your projections of guilt from your brother, and enabling you to recognize it is not he who is

hurting you. The poisonous thought that he your enemy, your evil counterpart, your nemesis, must be relinquished before can be saved from guilt. For this the means is prayer, of rising power and with ascending goals, until it reaches even up to God.

The earlier forms of prayer, at the bottom of the ladder, will not be free from envy and malice. They call for vengeance, not for love. Nor do they come from one who understands that they are calls for death, made out of fear by those who cherish guilt. They call upon a vengeful god, and it is he who seems to answer them. Hell cannot be asked for another, and then escaped by him who asks for it. Only those who are in hell can ask for hell. Those who have been forgiven, and who accepted their forgiveness, could never make a prayer like that.

At these levels, then, the learning goal must be to recognize that prayer will bring an answer only in the form in which the prayer was made. This is enough. From here it will be an easy step to the next levels. The next ascent begins with this:

*What I have asked for for my brother is not what I would have.  
Thus have I made of him my enemy.*

It is apparent that this step cannot be reached by anyone who sees no value or advantage to himself in setting others free. This may be long delayed, because it may seem to be dangerous instead of merciful. To the guilty there seems indeed to be a real advantage in having enemies, and this imagined gain must go, if enemies are to be set free.

Guilt must be given up, and not concealed. Nor can this be done without some pain, and a glimpse of the merciful nature of this step may for some time be followed by a deep retreat into fear. For fear's defenses are fearful in themselves, and when they are recognized they bring their fear with them. Yet what advantage has an illusion of escape ever brought a prisoner? His real escape from guilt can lie only in the recognition that the guilt has gone. And how can this be recognized as long as he hides it in another, and does not see it as his own? Fear of escape makes it difficult to welcome freedom, and to make a jailer of an enemy seems to be safety. How, then, can he be released without an insane fear for yourself? You have made of him your salvation and your escape from guilt. Your investment in this escape is heavy, and your fear of letting it go is strong.

Stand still an instant, now, and think what you have done. Do not forget that it is you who did it, and who can therefore let it go. Hold out your hand. This enemy has come to bless you. Take his blessing, and feel how your heart is lifted and your fear released. Do not hold on to it, nor onto him. He is a Son of God, along with you. He is no jailer, but a messenger of Christ. Be this to him, that you may see him thus.

It is not easy to realize that prayers for things, for status, for human love, for external "gifts" of any kind, are always made to set up jailers and to hide from guilt. These things are used for goals that substitute for God, and therefore distort the purpose of prayer. The desire for them the prayer. One need not ask explicitly. The goal of God is lost in the quest for lesser goals of any kind, and prayer becomes requests for enemies. The power

of prayer can be quite clearly recognized even in this. No one who wants an enemy will fail to find one. But just as surely will he lose the only true goal that is given him. Think of the cost, and understand it well. All other goals are at the cost of God.

#### IV. Praying with Others

Until the second level at least begins, one cannot share in prayer. For until that point, each one must ask for different things. But once the need to hold the other as an enemy has been questioned, and the reason for doing so has been recognized if only for an instant, it becomes possible to join in prayer. Enemies do not share a goal. It is in this their enmity is kept. Their separate wishes are their arsenals; their fortresses in hate. The key to rising further still in prayer lies in this simple thought; this change of mind:

*We go together, you and I.*

Now it is possible to help in prayer, and so reach up yourself. This step begins the quicker ascent, but there are still many lessons to learn. The way is open, and hope is justified. Yet it is likely at first that what is asked for even by those who join in prayer is not the goal that prayer should truly seek. Even together you may ask for things, and thus set up but an illusion of a goal you share. You may ask together for specifics, and not realize that you are asking for effects without the cause. And this

you cannot have. For no one can receive effects alone, asking a cause from which they do not come to offer them to him.

Even the joining, then, is not enough, if those who pray together do not ask, before all else, what is the Will of God. From this Cause only can the answer come in which are all specifics satisfied; all separate wishes unified in one. Prayer for specifics always asks to have the past repeated in some way. What was enjoyed before, or seemed to be; what was another's and he seemed to love -- all these are but illusions from the past. The aim of prayer is to release the present from its chains of past illusions; to let it be a freely chosen remedy from every choice that stood for a mistake. What prayer can offer now so far exceeds all that you asked before that it is pitiful to be content with less.

You have chosen a newborn chance each time you pray. And would you stifle and imprison it in ancient prisons, when the chance has come to free yourself from all of them at once? Do not restrict your asking. Prayer can bring the peace of God. What time-bound thing can give you more than this, in just the little space that lasts until it crumbles into dust?

## V. The Ladder Ends

Prayer is a way to true humility. And here again it rises slowly up, and grows in strength and love and holiness. Let it but leave

the ground where it begins to rise to God, and true humility will come at last to grace the mind that thought it was alone and stood against the world. Humility brings peace because it does not claim that you must rule the universe, nor judge all things as you would have them be. All little gods it gladly lays aside, not in resentment, but in honesty and recognition that they do not serve.

Illusions and humility have goals so far apart they cannot coexist, nor share a dwelling place where they can meet. Where one has come the other disappears. The truly humble have no goal but God because they need no idols, and defense no longer serves a purpose. Enemies are useless now, because humility does not oppose. It does not hide in shame because it is content with what it is, knowing creation is the Will of God. Its selflessness is Self, and this it sees in every meeting, where it gladly joins with every Son of God, whose purity it recognizes that it shares with him.

Now prayer is lifted from the world of things, of bodies, and of gods of every kind, and you can rest in holiness at last. Humility has come to teach you how to understand your glory as God's Son, and recognize the arrogance of sin. A dream has veiled the face of Christ from you. Now can you look upon His sinlessness. High has the ladder risen. You have come almost to Heaven. There is little more to learn before the journey is complete. Now can you say to everyone who comes to join in prayer with you:

*I cannot go without you, for you are a part of me.*

And so he is in truth. Now can you pray only for what you truly share with him. For you have understood he never left, and you, who seemed alone, are one with him.

The ladder ends with this, for learning is no longer needed. Now you stand before the gate of Heaven, and your brother stands beside you there. The lawns are deep and still, for here the place appointed for the time when you should come has waited long for you. Here will time end forever. At this gate eternity itself will join with you. Prayer has become what it was meant to be, for you have recognized the Christ in you.

## 2. FORGIVENESS

### Introduction

Forgiveness offers wings to prayer, to make its rising easy and its progress swift. Without its strong support it would be vain to try to rise above prayer's bottom step, or even to attempt to climb at all. Forgiveness is prayer's ally; sister in the plan for your salvation. Both must come to hold you up and keep your feet secure; your purpose steadfast and unchangeable. Behold the greatest help that God ordained to be with you until you reach to Him. Illusion's end will come with this. Unlike the timeless nature of its sister, prayer, forgiveness has an end. For it becomes unneeded when the rising up is done. Yet now it has a purpose beyond which you cannot go, nor have you need to go. Accomplish this and you have been redeemed. Accomplish this and you have been transformed. Accomplish this and you will save the world.

### I. Forgiveness of Yourself

No gift of Heaven has been more misunderstood than has forgiveness. It has, in fact, become a scourge; a curse where it was meant to bless, a cruel mockery of grace, a parody upon the holy peace of God. Yet those who have not yet chosen to begin the steps of prayer cannot but use it thus. Forgiveness' kindness is obscure at first, because salvation is not understood, . What was meant to heal is used to hurt because forgiveness is not wanted. Guilt becomes salvation, and the remedy appears to be a terrible alternative to life.



Forgiveness-to-destroy will therefore suit the purpose of the world far better than its true objective, and the honest means by which this goal is reached. Forgiveness-to-destroy will overlook no sin, no crime, no guilt that it can seek and find and "love." Dear to its heart is error, and mistakes loom large and grow and swell within its sight. It carefully picks out all evil things, and overlooks the loving as a plague; a hateful thing of danger and of death. Forgiveness-to-destroy death, and this it sees in all it looks upon and hates. God's mercy has become a twisted knife that would destroy the holy Son He loves.

Would you forgive yourself for doing this? Then learn that God has given you the means by which you can return to Him in peace. . Do not make it real. Select the loving and forgive the sin by choosing in its place the face of Christ. How otherwise can prayer return to God? He loves His Son. Can you remember Him and hate what He created? You will hate his Father if you hate the Son He loves. For as you see the Son you see yourself, and as you see yourself is God to you.

As prayer is always for yourself, so is forgiveness always given you. It is impossible to forgive another, for it is only your sins you see in him. You want to see them there, and not in you. That is why forgiveness of another is an illusion. Yet it is the only happy dream in all the world; the only one that does not lead to death. Only in someone else can you forgive yourself, for you have called him guilty of your sins, and in him must your innocence now be found. Who but the sinful need to be forgiven? And do not ever think you can see sin in anyone except yourself.

This is the great deception of the world, and you the great deceiver of yourself. It always seems to be another who is evil, and in his sin you are the injured one. How could freedom be possible if this were so? You would be slave to everyone, for what he does entails your fate, your feelings, your despair or hope, your misery or joy. You have no freedom unless he gives it to you. And being evil, he can only give of what he is. You cannot see his sins and not your own. But you can free him and yourself as well.

Forgiveness, truly given, is the way in which your only hope of freedom lies. Others will make mistakes and so will you, as long as this illusion of a world appears to be your home. Yet God Himself has given all His Sons a remedy for all illusions that they think they see. Christ's vision does not use your eyes, but you can look through His and learn to see like Him. Mistakes are tiny shadows, quickly gone, that for an instant only seem to hide the face of Christ, which still remains unchanged behind them all. His constancy remains in tranquil silence and in perfect peace. He does not know of shadows. His the eyes that look past error to the Christ in you.

Ask, then, His help, and ask Him how to learn forgiveness as His vision lets it be. You are in need of what He gives, and your salvation rests on learning this of Him. Prayer cannot be released to Heaven while forgiveness-to-destroy remains with you. God's mercy would remove this withering and poisoned thinking from your holy mind. Christ has forgiven you, and in His sight the world becomes as holy as Himself. Who sees no evil in it sees like Him. For what He has forgiven has not

sinned, and guilt can be no more. Salvation's plan is made complete, and sanity has come.

Forgiveness is the call to sanity, for who but the insane would look on sin when he could see the face of Christ instead? This is the choice you make; the simplest one, and yet the only one that you make. God calls on you to save His Son from death by offering Christ's Love to him. This is your need, and God holds out this gift to you. As He would give, so must you give as well. And thus is prayer restored to formlessness, beyond all limits into timelessness, with nothing of the past to hold it back from reuniting with the ceaseless song that all creation sings unto its God.

But to achieve this end you first must learn, before you reach where learning cannot go. Forgiveness is the key, but who can use a key when he has lost the door for which the key was made, and where alone it fits? Therefore we make distinctions, so that prayer can be released from darkness into light. Forgiveness' role must be reversed, and cleansed from evil usages and hateful goals. Forgiveness-to-destroy must be unveiled in all its treachery, and then let go forever and forever. There can be no trace of it remaining, if the plan that God established for returning be achieved at last, and learning be complete.

This is the world of opposites. And you must choose between them every instant while this world retains reality for you. Yet you must learn alternatives for choice, or you will not be able to attain your freedom. Let it then be clear to you exactly what forgiveness means to you, and learn what it should be to set you

free. The level of your prayer depends on this, for here it waits its freedom to ascend above the world of chaos into peace.

## II. Forgiveness-to-Destroy

Forgiveness-to-destroy has many forms, being a weapon of the world of form. Not all of them are obvious, and some are carefully concealed beneath what seems like charity. Yet all the forms that it may seem to take have but this single goal; their purpose is to separate and make what God created equal, different. The difference is clear in several forms where the designed comparison cannot be missed, nor is it really meant to be.

In this group, first, there are the forms in which a "better" person deigns to stoop to save a "baser" one from what he truly is. Forgiveness here rests on an attitude of gracious lordliness so far from love that arrogance could never be dislodged. Who can forgive and yet despise? And who can tell another he is steeped in sin, and yet perceive him as the Son of God? Who makes a slave to teach what freedom is? There is no union here, but only grief. This is not really mercy. This is death.

Another form, still very like the first if it is understood, does not appear in quite such blatant arrogance. The one who would forgive the other does not claim to be the better. Now he says instead that here is one whose sinfulness he shares, since both

have been unworthy and deserve the retribution of the wrath of God. This can appear to be a humble thought, and may indeed induce a rivalry in sinfulness and guilt. It is not love for God's creation and the holiness that is His gift forever. Can His Son condemn himself and still remember Him?

Here the goal is to separate from God the Son He loves, and keep him from his Source. This goal is also sought by those who seek the role of martyr at another's hand. Here must the aim be clearly seen, for this may pass as meekness and as charity instead of cruelty. Is it not kind to be accepting of another's spite, and not respond except with silence and a gentle smile? Behold, how good are you who bear with patience and with saintliness the anger and the hurt another gives, and do not show the bitter pain you feel.

Forgiveness-to-destroy will often hide behind a cloak like this. It shows the face of suffering and pain, in silent proof of guilt and of the ravages of sin. Such is the witness that it offers one who could be savior, not an enemy. But having been made enemy, he must accept the guilt and heavy-laid reproach that thus is put upon him. Is this love? Or is it rather treachery to one who needs salvation from the pain of guilt? What could the purpose be, except to keep the witnesses of guilt away from love?

Forgiveness-to-destroy can also take the form of bargaining and compromise. "I will forgive you if you meet my needs, for in your slavery is my release." Say this to anyone and you are slave. And you will seek to rid yourself of guilt in further bargains which can give no hope, but only greater pain and misery. How

fearful has forgiveness now become, and how distorted is the end it seeks. Have mercy on yourself who bargains thus. God gives and does not ask for recompense. There is no giving but to give like Him. All else is mockery. For who would try to strike a bargain with the Son of God, and thank his Father for his holiness?

What would you show your brother? Would you try to reinforce his guilt and thus your own? Forgiveness is the means for your escape. How pitiful it is to make of it the means for further slavery and pain. Within the world of opposites there is a way to use forgiveness for the goal of God, and find the peace He offers you. Take nothing else, or you have sought your death, and prayed for separation from your Self. Christ is for all because He is in all. It is His face forgiveness lets you see. It is His face in which you see your own.

All forms forgiveness takes that do not lead away from anger, condemnation and comparisons of every kind are death. For that is what their purposes have set. Be not deceived by them, but lay them by as worthless in their tragic offerings. You do not want to stay in slavery. You do not want to be afraid of God. You want to see the sunlight and the glow of Heaven shining on the face of earth, redeemed from sin and in the Love of God. From here is prayer released, along with you. Your wings are free, and prayer will lift you up and bring you home where God would have you be.

### III. Forgiveness-for-Salvation

Forgiveness-for-Salvation has one form, and only one. It does not ask for proof of innocence, nor pay of any kind. It does not argue, nor evaluate the errors that it wants to overlook. It does not offer gifts in treachery, nor promise freedom while it asks for death. Would God deceive you? He but asks for trust and willingness to learn how to be free. He gives His Teacher to whoever asks, and seeks to understand the Will of God. His readiness to give lies far beyond your understanding and your simple grasp. Yet He has willed you learn the way to Him, and in His willing there is certainty.

You child of God, the gifts of God are yours, not by your plans but by His holy Will. His Voice will teach you what forgiveness is, and how to give it as He wills it be. Do not, then, seek to understand what is beyond you yet, but let it be a way to draw you up to where the eyes of Christ become the sight you choose. Give up all else, for there nothing else. When someone calls for help in any form, He is the One to answer for you. All that you need do is to step back and not to interfere. Forgiveness-for-Salvation is His task, and it is He Who will respond for you.

Do not establish what the form should be that Christ's forgiveness takes. He knows the way to make of every call a help to you, as you arise in haste to go at last unto your Father's house. Now can He make your footsteps sure, your words sincere; not with your own sincerity, but with His Own. Let Him take charge of how you would forgive, and each occasion then will be to you another step to Heaven and to peace.

Are you not weary of imprisonment? God did not choose this sorry path for you. What you have chosen still can be undone, for prayer is merciful and God is just. His is a justice He can understand, but you cannot as yet. Still will He give the means to you to learn of Him, and know at last that condemnation is not real and makes illusions in its evil name. And yet it matters not the form that dreams may seem to take. Illusions are untrue. God's Will is truth, and you are one with Him in Will and purpose. Here all dreams are done.

"What should I do for him, Your holy Son?" should be the only thing you ever ask when help is needed and forgiveness sought. The form the seeking takes you need not judge. And let it not be you who sets the form in which forgiveness comes to save God's Son. The light of Christ in him is his release, and it is this that answers to his call. Forgive him as the Christ decides you should, and be His eyes through which you look on him, and speak for Him as well. He knows the need; the question and the answer. He will say exactly what to do, in words that you can understand and you can also use. Do not confuse His function with your own. He is the Answer. You the one who hears.

And what is it He speaks to you about? About salvation and the gift of peace. About the end of sin and guilt and death. About the role forgiveness has in Him. Do you but listen. For He will be heard by anyone who calls upon His Name, and places his forgiveness in His hands. Forgiveness has been given Him to teach, to save it from destruction and to make the means for separation, sin and death become again the holy gift of God. Prayer is His Own right Hand, made free to save as true



forgiveness is allowed to come from His eternal vigilance and Love. Listen and learn, and do not judge. It is to God you turn to hear what you should do. His answer will be clear as morning, nor is His forgiveness what you think it is.

Still does He know, and that should be enough. Forgiveness has a Teacher Who will fail in nothing. Rest a while in this; do not attempt to judge forgiveness, nor to set it in an earthly frame. Let it arise to Christ, Who welcomes it as gift to Him. He will not leave you comfortless, nor fail to send His angels down to answer you in His Own Name. He stands beside the door to which forgiveness is the only key. Give it to Him to use instead of you, and you will see the door swing silently open upon the shining face of Christ. Behold your brother there beyond the door; the Son of God as He created him.

### 3. HEALING

#### Introduction

Prayer has both aids and witnesses which make the steep ascent more gentle and more sure, easing the pain of fear and offering the comfort and the promises of hope. Forgiveness' witness and an aid to prayer, a giver of assurance of success in ultimate attainment of the goal, is healing. Its importance should not be too strongly emphasized, for healing is a sign or symbol of forgiveness' strength, and only an effect or shadow of a change of mind about the goal of prayer.

#### I. The Cause of Sickness

Do not mistake effect for cause, nor think that sickness is apart and separate from what its cause must be. It is a sign, a shadow of an evil thought that seems to have reality and to be just, according to the usage of the world. It is external proof of inner "sins," and witnesses to unforgiving thoughts that injure and would hurt the Son of God. Healing the body is impossible, and this is shown by the brief nature of the "cure." The body yet must die, and so its healing but delays its turning back to dust, where it was born and will return.

The body's cause is unforgiveness of the Son of God. It has not left its source, and in its pain and aging and the mark of death

upon it this is clearly shown. Fearful and frail it seems to be to those who think their life is tied to its command and linked to its unstable, tiny breath. Death stares at them as every moment goes irrevocably past their grasping hands, which cannot hold them back. And they feel fear as bodies change and sicken. For they sense the heavy scent of death upon their hearts.

The body can be healed as an effect of true forgiveness. Only that can give remembrance of immortality, which is the gift of holiness and love. Forgiveness must be given by a mind which understands that it must overlook all shadows on the holy face of Christ, among which sickness should be seen as one. Nothing but that; the sign of judgment made by brother upon brother, and the Son of God upon himself. For he has damned his body as his prison, and forgot that it is he who gave this role to it.

What he has done now must God's Son undo. But not alone. For he has thrown away the prison's key; his holy sinlessness and the remembrance of his Father's Love. Yet help is given to him in the Voice his Father placed in him. The power to heal is now his Father's gift, for through His Voice He still can reach His Son, reminding him the body may become his chosen home, but it will never be his home in truth.

Distinctions therefore must be made between true healing and its faulty counterpart. The world of opposites is healing's place, for what in Heaven could there be to heal? As prayer within the world can ask amiss and seeming charity forgive to kill, so healing can be false as well as true; a witness to the power of the world or to the everlasting Love of God.

## II. False versus True Healing

False healing merely makes a poor exchange of one illusion for a "nicer" one; a dream of sickness for a dream of health. This can occur at lower forms of prayer, combining with forgiveness kindly meant but not completely understood as yet. Only false healing can give way to fear, so sickness will be free to strike again. False healing can indeed remove a form of pain and sickness. But the cause remains, and will not lack effects. The cause is still the wish to die and overcome the Christ. And with this wish is death a certainty, for prayer answered. Yet there is a kind of seeming death that has a different source. It does not come because of hurtful thoughts and raging anger at the universe. It merely signifies the end has come for usefulness of body functioning. And so it is discarded as a choice, as one lays by a garment now outworn.

This is what death should be; a quiet choice, made joyfully and with a sense of peace, because the body has been kindly used to help the Son of God along the way he goes to God. We thank the body, then, for all the service it has given us. But we are thankful, too, the need is done to walk the world of limits, and to reach the Christ in hidden forms and clearly seen at most in lovely flashes. Now we can behold Him without blinders, in the light that we have learned to look upon again.

We call it death, but it is liberty. It does not come in forms that seem to be thrust down in pain upon unwilling flesh, but as a gentle welcome to release. If there has been true healing, this can be the form in which death comes when it is time to rest a

while from labor gladly done and gladly ended. Now we go in peace to freer air and gentler climate, where it is not hard to see the gifts we gave were saved for us. For Christ is clearer now; His vision more sustained in us; His Voice, the Word of God, more certainly our own.

This gentle passage to a higher prayer, a kind forgiveness of the ways of earth, can only be received with thankfulness. Yet first true healing must have come to bless the mind with loving pardon for the sins it dreamed about and laid upon the world. Now are its dreams dispelled in quiet rest. Now its forgiveness comes to heal the world and it is ready to depart in peace, the journey over and the lessons learned.

This is not death according to the world, for death is cruel in its frightened eyes and takes the form of punishment for sin. How could it be a blessing, then? And how could it be welcome when it must be feared? What healing has occurred in such a view of what is merely opening the gate to higher prayer and kindly justice done? Death is reward and not a punishment. But such a viewpoint must be fostered by the healing that the world cannot conceive. There is no partial healing. What but shifts illusions has done nothing. What is false cannot be partly true. If you are healed your healing is complete. Forgiveness is the only gift you give and would receive.

False healing rests upon the body's cure, leaving the cause of illness still unchanged, ready to strike again until it brings a cruel death in seeming victory. It can be held at bay a little while, and there can be brief respite as it waits to take its

vengeance on the Son of God. Yet it cannot be overcome until all faith in it has been laid by, and placed upon God's substitute for evil dreams; a world in which there is no veil of sin to keep it dark and comfortless. At last the gate of Heaven opens and God's Son is free to enter in the home that stands ready to welcome him, and was prepared before time was and still but waits for him.

### III. Separation versus Union

False healing heals the body in a part, but never as a whole. Its separate goals become quite clear in this, for it has not removed the curse of sin that lies on it. Therefore it still deceives. Nor is it made by one who understands the other is exactly like himself. For it is this that makes true healing possible. When false, there is some power that another has, not equally bestowed on both as one. Here is the separation shown. And here the meaning of true healing has been lost, and idols have arisen to obscure the unity that is the Son of God.

Healing-to-separate may seem to be a strange idea. And yet it can be said of any form of healing that is based on inequality of any kind. These forms may heal the body, and indeed are generally limited to this. Someone knows better, has been better trained, or is perhaps more talented and wise. Therefore, he can give healing to the one who stands beneath him in his patronage. The healing of the body can be done by this because,

in dreams, equality cannot be permanent. The shifts and change are what the dream is made of. To be healed appears to be to find a wiser one who, by his arts and learning, will succeed.

Someone knows better; this the magic phrase by which the body seems to be the aim of healing as the world conceives of it. And to this wiser one another goes to profit by his learning and his skill; to find in him the remedy for pain. How can that be? True healing cannot come from inequality assumed and then accepted as the truth, and used to help restore the wounded and to calm the mind that suffers from the agony of doubt.

Is there a role for healing, then, that one can use to offer help for someone else? In arrogance the answer must be "no." But in humility there is indeed a place for helpers. It is like the role that helps in prayer, and lets forgiveness be what it is meant to be. You do not make yourself the bearer of the special gift that brings the healing. You but recognize your oneness with the one who calls for help. For in this oneness is his separate sense dispelled, and it is this that made him sick. There is no point in giving remedy apart from where the source of sickness is, for never thus can it be truly healed.

Healers there are, for they are Sons of God who recognize their Source, and understand that all their Source creates is one with them. This is the remedy that brings relief which cannot fail. It will remain to bless for all eternity. It heals no part, but wholly and forever. Now the cause of every malady has been revealed exactly as it is. And in that place is written now the holy Word of God. Sickness and separation must be healed by love and

union. Nothing else can heal as God established healing. Without Him there is no healing, for there is no love.

God's Voice alone can tell you how to heal. Listen, and you will never fail to bring His kindly remedy to those He sends to you, to let Him heal them, and to bless all those who serve with Him in healing's name. The body's healing will occur because its cause has gone. And now without a cause, it cannot come again in different form. Nor will death any more be feared because it has been understood. There is no fear in one who has been truly healed, for love has entered now where idols used to stand, and fear has given way at last to God.

#### IV. The Holiness of Healing

How holy are the healed! For in their sight their brothers share their healing and their love. Bringers of peace -- the Holy Spirit's voice, through whom He speaks for God, Whose Voice He is -- such are God's healers. They but speak for Him and never for themselves. They have no gifts but those they have from God. And these they share because they know that this is what He wills. They are not special. They are holy. They have chosen holiness, and given up all separate dreams of special attributes through which they can bestow unequal gifts on those less fortunate. Their healing has restored their wholeness so they can forgive, and join the song of prayer in which the healed sing of their union and their thanks to God.



As witness to forgiveness, aid to prayer, and the effect of mercy truly taught, healing is blessing. And the world responds in quickened chorus through the voice of prayer. Forgiveness shines its merciful reprieve upon each blade of grass and feathered wing and all the living things upon the earth. Fear has no haven here, for love has come in all its holy oneness. Time remains only to let the last embrace of prayer rest on the earth an instant, as the world is shined away. This instant is the goal of all true healers, whom the Christ has taught to see His likeness and to teach like Him.

Think what it means to help the Christ to heal! Can anything be holier than this? God thanks His healers, for He knows the Cause of healing is Himself, His Love, His Son, restored as His completion and returned to share with Him creation's holy joy. Do not ask partial healing, nor accept an idol for remembrance of Him Whose Love has never changed and never will. You are as dear to Him as is the whole of His creation, for it lies in you as His eternal gift. What need have you for shifting dreams within a sorry world? Do not forget the gratitude of God. Do not forget the holy grace of prayer. Do not forget forgiveness of God's Son.

You first forgive, then pray, and you are healed. Your prayer has risen up and called to God, Who hears and answers. You have understood that you forgive and pray but for yourself. And in this understanding you are healed. In prayer you have united with your Source, and understood that you have never left. This level cannot be attained until there is no hatred in your heart, and no desire to attack the Son of God.

Never forget this; it is you who are God's Son, and as you choose to be to him so are you to yourself, and God to you. Nor will your judgment fail to reach to God, for you will give the role to Him you see in His creation. Do not choose amiss, or you will think that it is you who are creator in His place, and He is then no longer Cause but only an effect. Now healing is impossible, for He is blamed for your deception and your guilt. He Who is Love becomes the source of fear, for only fear can now be justified. Vengeance is His. His great destroyer, death. And sickness, suffering and grievous loss become the lot of everyone on earth, which He abandoned to the devil's care, swearing He will deliver it no more.

Come unto Me, My children, once again, without such twisted thoughts upon your hearts. You still are holy with the Holiness which fathered you in perfect sinlessness, and still surrounds you with the Arms of peace. Dream now of healing. Then arise and lay all dreaming down forever. You are he your Father loves, who never left his home, nor wandered in a savage world with feet that bleed, and with a heavy heart made hard against the love that is the truth in you. Give all your dreams to Christ and let Him be your Guide to healing, leading you in prayer beyond the sorry reaches of the world.

He comes for Me and speaks My Word to you. I would recall My weary Son to Me from dreams of malice to the sweet embrace of everlasting Love and perfect peace. My Arms are open to the Son I love, who does not understand that he is healed, and that his prayers have never ceased to sing his joyful thanks in unison with all creation, in the holiness of Love. Be

still an instant. Underneath the sounds of harsh and bitter striving and defeat there is a Voice that speaks to you of Me. Hear this an instant and you will be healed. Hear this an instant and you have been saved.

Help Me to wake My children from the dream of retribution and a little life beset with fear, that ends so soon it might as well have never been. Let Me instead remind you of eternity, in which your joy grows greater as your love extends along with Mine beyond infinity, where time and distance have no meaning. While you wait in sorrow Heaven's melody is incomplete, because your song is part of the eternal harmony of love. Without you is creation unfulfilled. Return to Me Who never left My Son. Listen, My child, your Father calls to you. Do not refuse to hear the Call for Love. Do not deny to Christ what is His Own. Heaven is here and Heaven is your home.

Creation leans across the bars of time to lift the heavy burden from the world. Lift up your hearts to greet its advent. See the shadows fade away in gentleness; the thorns fall softly from the bleeding brow of him who is the holy Son of God. How lovely are you, child of Holiness! How like to Me! How lovingly I hold you in My Heart and in My Arms. How dear is every gift to Me that you have made, who healed My Son and took him from the cross. Arise and let My thanks be given you. And with My gratitude will come the gift first of forgiveness, then eternal peace.

So now return your holy voice to Me. The song of prayer is silent without you. The universe is waiting your release because

it is its own. Be kind to it and to yourself, and then be kind to Me. I ask but this; that you be comforted and live no more in terror and in pain. Do not abandon Love. Remember this; whatever you may think about yourself, whatever you may think about the world, your Father needs you and will call to you until you come to Him in peace at last.

The Song of Prayer is a supplement to A Course in Miracles scribed by Helen Schucman in the same manner as A Course in Miracles.

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