**Kinds of Prayer**

**Audible prayers are often answered but the most potent are silently uttered in the secret recesses of the soul. Jesus warned against wordy prayers -- prayer uttered to be heard of men. He told His disciples not to be like those who pray on the housetop. When thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee. *(Charles Fillmore, in Atom-Smashing Power of Mind, p. 12)***

**In an amusing article which appeared in the London “Express” George Bernard Shaw says: “Lots of people pray for me; and I have never been any worse for it. The only valid argument against the practice is that God knows His own business without any prompting." Obviously Shaw was alluding to a common type of prayer which occupies itself with praying for this and for that intimating that God could not run His universe without help. Any prayer that beseeches and begs God to do a thing is an open acknowledgment that the creation is incomplete, and that the Creator has forgotten or overlooked something that is very necessary. The more we beg God to be good the more we show forth our ignorance of His eternal nature. *(A Synoptic Study of the Teachings of Unity, p. 33)***

**The best prayers have often more groans than words. *(Paul Lee Tan)***

**A single grateful thought toward heaven is the most complete prayer. *(Gotthold Ephraim Lessing)***

**But surely there are those for whom the directed approach works better. I emphasize this because we should strenuously resist attempts to pray according to some set formula. We must honor each individual’s effort to interact with God in his or her own unique way.  If some discover that prayer works best when it is extremely specific and directed, the choice must be respected. *(Dr. Larry Dossey, in The Healing Process, p. 30)***

**Prayer has everything to do within us, with our every thought, with our every feeling, with our every need, if it's to be an effective prayer. *(Roy E. Fox)***

**Effective prayer must be:**

**1.  Unselfish -- not alone for oneself.**

**2.  Believing -- according to faith.**

**3.  Sincere -- Sincere of heart.**

**4.  Intelligent -- according to light.**

**5.  Trustful -- in submission to the Father's all-wise will. *(Urantia Book)***

**Our adult Sunday-school class was discussing formal and informal prayer, when one man remarked, “I do some of my best praying while I'm driving.” From the back of the room, in a quiet voice, the man's wife agreed. “I, too, do my best praying while you're driving." *(Elise Seibt Herrin, in Reader's Digest)***

**General prayer is praying to God as a loving, understanding Father in your own private way. It can be on your knees or in any comfortable position. It can be expressed in spoken words or in silent communion. It can be with a prayer book before you, or it can be by browsing through your Bible, dwelling upon favorite passages, or paraphrasing them to meet your need. *(Catherine Ponder, in The Dynamic Laws of Prosperity, p. 259)***

**Quietly entering the inner chamber within the soul, shutting the door to the external thoughts of daily life, and seeking conscious union with God is the highest form of prayer we know. *(Charles & Cora Fillmore)***

**The highest level of prayer is not a prayer for anything. It is a deep and profound silence, in which we allow ourselves to be still and know Him. In that silence, we are changed. We are calmed. We are illumined. Prayer is meant to dissolve the worldly focus to dissolve our sense of a separate self, to help us detach from an insane world order. We pray that He might flood our minds. *(Mary Ann Williamson)***

**Realize that prayer is a visit with God and should be restful and joyous -- not an unwelcomed talk. An understanding joy in living is the highest prayer of all. *(Emmet Fox)***

**Highest prayer is that prayer which is based upon great principles; it is the prayer that is in accord with the nature of the Universe; it is the prayer that aligns itself with Truth. Knowing and living the truth of the Infinite is the highest prayer. *(Nona L. Brooks, in Mysteries, p. 128)***

**Some have called meditative prayer a useless act, because we do it not for the sake of getting something, but spontaneously, as uselessly as a child at play. After an extended time with God, my urgent requests, which had seemed so significant, took on a new light. I began to ask for them for God's sake, not my own. Though my needs may drive me to prayer, it is there I come face to face with my greatest need: an encounter with God himself. *(Philip Yancey, in Christianity Today)***

**In the old prayer, men sought to get that which they needed and desired; in the new prayer, men seek to give of themselves, to commune with God that His perfect will may be known to them, and to give of themselves to their fellow men according to this Purpose; in other words they seek to cooperate with God, the Giver of all good gifts. *(Nona L. Brooks, in Mysteries)***

**Why should non-directed prayer work better? Perhaps, as the Spindrift researchers suggest, it is because there may be an inherent perfection, wholeness, or “rightness” in the world that will manifest itself if all obstructions are removed. If so, one need not tell the universe what to do, for God knows already. *(Dr. Larry Dossey, in Unity magazine)***

**When called on to deliver the offertory prayer, a deacon said: “O Lord, why is it that a ten-dollar bill looks so large in the offering plate and so small in the grocery store?” *(Jackie O. Vickers, in Reader's Digest)***

**Sometimes one longs to pray the old prayer -- to ask the Father for something very near to the deepest desires and aspirations of the heart. I have felt this, and I have known that God has understood. Even though we do not consider that the prayer of supplication is that of the highest vision, still, we know that it has brought satisfaction to the lives of many men. Sometimes a few words like these spoken from the heart bring comfort and rest: “Dear Father, you know for what I am praying, and I trust you to help me to realize that which is best about it.” *(Nona L. Brooks, in Mysteries, p. 130)***

**Practical prayer is harder on the soles of your shoes than on the knees of your trousers. *(Austin O'Malley)***

**True prayer is not asking God for love; it is learning to love, and to include all mankind in one affection. *(Mary Baker Eddy)***

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