

**Optional Study and Practice Suggestions for Recording 468B,  
“Preparation for Prayer”**

***Summary of the Class***

*We always encourage you to write your own summary of the class, because each person will select the points most important to them. However, if it is helpful to you as a quick review, you are welcome to use this summary of recording 468B.*

Every day we must re-dedicate ourselves to the spiritual path. Just as spiritual manna flows fresh every day, so does the hypnotism of the world penetrate consciousness every day. It takes a constant, conscious rededication to remain above the world influences.

The spiritual path is a way of inner contemplation that results in the outer life of harmony, peace, and protection. But we meet some difficulties when we begin to live the spiritual life.

- For some, the first difficulty is **breaking the habit of praying to God for something**. The spiritual way of life is a way of prayer, of praying without ceasing, both waking and sleeping. But this prayer is *not* the prayer of petition.
- Another difficulty is recognizing that **prayer is never for oneself**. It is a constant abiding in the word of God. Prayer is an impartation I receive *from* God, not a message I send *to* God. So my attitude in prayer must be, “Speak, Lord, Thy servant heareth.”

Prayer is both an attitude and an altitude. The **attitude** of prayer is constant listening, expecting the word of God. Prayer is an **altitude** because we must rise so high in consciousness that we can hear the still small voice. We must rise above the level of selfishness and personal interest and pray constantly, “**Thy** will be done in me, not mine. **Thy** way be made clear.”

- Another difficulty may come when you realize that you are on earth to show forth God’s glory, and you see how little you have performed that function. We are not here to be famous or successful, or to glorify our own greatness. Man is to show forth **God’s** beauties, grace, and love—**God’s** love, not my love. We must ask, “To what extent can I permit the love of **God** to flow through me to others? How much of **God’s** beauty, **God’s** grace, **God’s** benevolence, **God’s** care shine through my life?”

God must even be glorified in the infinite abundance of our supply. Yet we need not ask for anything for ourselves because “Your heavenly Father knows your need, and it is His good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

- Another difficulty is that prayer is of no avail unless we come to it pure of heart. “If you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave your gift before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.”

If you are holding **anyone** in judgment, criticism, ill will, or condemnation, your prayer is of no avail. So you must “forgive seven times seventy.” If you enter the attitude of prayer and have not forgiven fully, you have set up a barrier to prayer. Day after day, you have to remind yourself to hold *no one* in judgment, criticism, or condemnation. This does not mean that you condone their actions or agree with evil ways, but that you can sincerely say, “Father, forgive them; they know not what they do.” We must recognize that all evil is the product of ignorance.

We do not seek that they be revenged, overcome, or destroyed, but rather forgiven; that their eyes, hearts, and ears be opened. This requires a high altitude of consciousness. We must be able to look at friend *and* enemy and realize, “Christ is as much the center of your being as my being. If we would be children of God and joint heirs to all the heavenly riches, we must pray for our enemies; we must pray for their forgiveness.

To pray spiritually is to have the feeling that your arms are outstretched, embracing the world—friends *and* enemies—and saying, “Father forgive them. Open their eyes and ears. May Thy love shine upon them and Thy grace feed and sustain them. God’s love is upon us all. God’s grace is with us all. God’s benevolence shines in our hearts.” This attitude of prayer brings forth spiritual fruitage within you because God’s grace flows to everyone, including you. If we do not all receive the benefits of God equally, it can be because in some way, we may be preventing God’s grace from flowing to us. We may be holding some people in condemnation, not remembering that the kingdom of God is within **every** individual.

Prayer is not prayer until you have acknowledged that wherever you are, whatever you are doing, the kingdom of God is already within you. We do not have to get good, or get healthy, or get out of poverty before we can get God. If we find God first, the disharmony will dissolve. But to find God, you must make yourself a fitting temple to receive God, and you must prepare the way for God to enter your consciousness. How?

First, open your ear with the attitude, “Speak Lord, Thy servant heareth.” Be receptive, regardless of what you are doing. Always have an area of consciousness that is receptive and listening. Second, live a life of forgiveness. Pray that your enemies be forgiven, not destroyed; that the grace of God touch them.

The spiritual life is a change of base from expecting something to come *to us from* God, to expecting God’s grace to flow *through* us to the entire world.

To understand the spiritual way of life, you must understand the nature of God. God is the same from everlasting to everlasting. We cannot change God; we can only change ourselves. We bring ourselves into at-one-ment with God. We mold our will to God’s will.

The spiritual way of life is a contemplative way of life in which we contemplate the nature of God, the nature of prayer, the nature of individual being, the nature of truth, of grace, of love.

One essential on the spiritual path is to lose the fear of death. We can do this by realizing, “Neither life nor death can separate me from the love of God.” We are just as secure in God’s love in death as in life. Understand death as a transition from one state, or form, of life to another, but always under the government of God. We can always be consciously one with our Source.

As we live the spiritual, contemplative life, the within becomes the without. The degree of our conscious oneness with God becomes the degree of manifested harmony in the without. When we become consciously one with our Source, spiritual grace flows through and performs healing and forgiving.

The Master said, “My *peace* give I unto thee”—not my judgment, criticism, or condemnation. This can be our attitude, too: “My *peace* give I unto thee.” Look on every member of your family with this attitude; have this attitude with everyone you meet. Have this attitude when you listen to or read the news—no criticism or judgment, but forgiveness and blessing. Then you have the attitude in which you can receive the word of God, and this is prayer.

### ***Self-Reflection***

This chapter gives us the opportunity to look within ourselves and see if we are practicing what Joel teaches in this class. For example:

- Have I made the shift:
  - From praying to God *for* something, to a constant abiding in God and listening for the word of God?
  - From thinking that I am here to be famous or successful, or to glorify myself, to recognizing that I am here to show forth **God’s** beauties, grace, and love; to permit the love of **God** to flow through me to others; to let **God’s** beauty, **God’s** grace, **God’s** benevolence, **God’s** care, shine through my life?
  - From expecting something to come *to* me from God, to expecting God’s grace to flow *through* me to the world?
- Am I:
  - Coming to prayer with a pure heart, completely devoid of judgement, criticism, condemnation for ANYONE? If not, do I stop and forgive fully in the spirit of “Father, forgive them; they know not what they do.”
  - Praying for the enemy—personal enemies as well as national and international enemies?
  - Taking the time to pray spiritually, in the sense of having the feeling that my arms are outstretched, embracing the world—friends *and* enemies—and I am saying, “Father forgive them. Open their eyes and ears. May Thy love shine upon them, Thy grace feed and sustain them. God’s love is upon us all. God’s grace is with us. God’s benevolence shines in our hearts.”
  - Always keeping an area of consciousness open and receptive to the still small voice, no matter where I am or what I am doing?
  - Looking upon EVERYONE I meet with the attitude, “My *peace* I give unto thee,” not my criticism, complaint, judgment, condemnation?

## ***An Experiment***

When you watch the news on TV or online, or read the news, or review social media posts, can you maintain for the entire time this attitude of holding NO ONE in judgment, criticism, or condemnation, but forgiving them and holding them in peace? Can you do this even to the extent, as Joel suggests in this class, of praying, "Father, forgive these tyrants. Father, forgive these who have caused the world's destruction or who are causing what may be its destruction. Father, do not destroy them. Forgive them. Open their eyes, open their ears, open their hearts."?

## ***Bible Quotations in This Class***

Joel has said many times that The Infinite Way is rooted in the Christian Scripture, and this class testifies to that. By simply considering the Bible quotes that Joel uses in this class, we can be reminded of the main points he makes.

- "The kingdom of God is within you." (Luke 17:12)
- "Man does not live by bread only, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord." (Deuteronomy 8:3)
- "Not my will, but thine be done." (Luke 22:42)
- "Speak, Lord, Thy servant heareth." (1 Samuel 3:9)
- "If you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave your gift before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift." (Matthew 5:23-24)
- "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34)
- "Neither do I condemn thee." (John 8:11) "Thy sins be forgiven thee." (Mark 2:5)
- "Thou art the Christ, son of the living God." (Matthew 16:16)
- "Put up thy sword." (Matthew 26:52)
- "But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven. For he makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?" (Matthew 5:44-47)
- "The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Corinthians 2:14)
- "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God." (John 17:3)

- “Your Father knows what things you have need of, before you ask him.” (Matthew 6:8) “It is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” (Luke 12:32)
- “Neither life nor death will be able to separate us from the love of God.” (Romans 8:38-39)
- “My peace give I unto you.” (John 14:27)