

Summary of Recording 460A: “Maundy Thursday and Preparation for Prayer”

The problems that disturb us are not realities, and do not come to us from God. They come only because we have a sense of separation from God, a sense into which we were born as a member of the human race. As Paul said, the natural man is not under the law of God. But he also revealed that if so be the Spirit of God dwell in you, then do you become children of God, and if children of God, heirs of God, joint heirs to all the heavenly riches. To pass from being the man of earth to becoming that man who has his being in Christ, we must make a transition in consciousness. “The kingdom of God is within you,” so the only place to make this transition is within ourselves. We enter the divine kingdom within us through prayer, but to pray aright, we must conform to a certain standard. Unless there is a fitting preparation for prayer and the terms, or conditions, for prayer are fulfilled, prayer can never be answered.

Jesus outlined these conditions for prayer. One is humility. He said that if you go to the altar to pray and remember that any man has something against you, you must first get up and make peace with him, and then return to the altar. But think how many times we have prayed without first making peace with our fellow man, and you will understand one of the reasons that prayer is not answered. Prayer cannot reach God through the mind or consciousness of an individual who is not at peace with his fellow man.

Forgiveness is another condition for prayer. If there is anyone who has harmed you, you must forgive, even unto seventy times seven. If you are holding anyone in unforgiveness, your prayers are wasted. You must come to God pure and humble in Spirit, with the humility that compels you to forgive and to make peace with your fellow man. Some may not make peace with you, but *you* must bear no grievance toward them. You must be completely free of animosity, any desire for revenge, and any unwillingness to forgive.

The Master said that it profits us nothing to pray for our friends; that we must pray for our enemies. You may not have personal enemies, but there are national, racial, and religious enemies. Preparation for prayer must include praying for the enemy: “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do. Neither do I condemn thee. Thy sins be forgiven thee.” Pray that the enemy’s eyes and ears be opened to receive light and truth; that their sins be forgiven them.

Benevolence, or charity, is another condition for prayer. Prayers are not answered while we are withholding. We must do more than provide for our own families—that is an obligation. Benevolence involves giving to those to whom we owe no obligation, other than loving thy neighbor as thy self. To receive God’s grace, we must come to prayer pure of heart, which means we must be loving. Love is a state of spiritual integrity that enables us to bear no animosity to any man; to forgive our enemies; to open the entire universe to God’s grace, so that all may be blessed equally; to share the grace that flows to us with those who have less. With this openness of heart and purity of motive, we become a transparency through which the love of God can flow to the world. You prepare for prayer when you come to God with love, remembering that in expressing love to mankind, you are expressing love to the Christ.

The only love that meets our needs is the love that flows out through us, not the love that comes to us from a God or from other people. If we are not an outlet for the impersonal love that is expressed in humility, benevolence, forgiveness, and praying for the enemy, then divine love is

locked up within us and cannot bless us until we open out a way for it to escape. Jesus told us some of what we must do: visit the sick, comfort the comfortless, visit those in prison. He did not mean just those behind prison bars. Every human being is in some prison—imprisoned in his mind, in his troubles, false beliefs, hates, animosities, jealousies, and fears. So we must visit those in *any* prison and release them by releasing that divine love that holds no one in bondage.

So the attitude of prayer is humility, benevolence, forgiveness, praying for the enemy, and spiritual integrity with no mental reservations. In this purity of motive, you will find answered prayer. When there is an absence of answered prayer, it means we need further introspection until we can come before God with a clean heart, realizing that there is but *one* Father, and that we are all members of *one* spiritual family.

If you see others as human beings, you will see them as good or bad, young or old, sick or well, and you are malpracticing them, placing them in a prison of sin, disease, or age. But if you realize that all error is impersonal, a universal belief that is no part of them; if you realize that they are the temple of God; that God is their being—the life, mind, soul, and spirit of them; you remove those prison bars of universal belief that they are mortals, born in sin and destined for death. God never created death, and God is the only Creator. God is their eternal and immortal life. In knowing this truth, you fulfill the command of the Master: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." You will know that all discords that ever have touched their lives—or yours—were but the universal belief in two powers. God is Omnipotence, and beside God there is no other power. Any "power" of sin, disease, or death exists only in the illusory experience we call the dream. You break that dream when you break the prison bars of sin, disease, age, weakness, or limitation for others by knowing the truth. And you must do this, if your prayers are to be answered.

The secret of supply is that you have only what you give. In the degree that you permit love to flow out from you, some who are receptive and responsive will be healed. When you go to God pure of Spirit, you draw to yourself those who are ready and receptive to being forgiven, healed, or enriched, and you will be blessed as well. When you entertain the Spirit of God, the spirit of love, within you, you gain freedom from your particular prison—fear, lack, disease, or the negative qualities of human thought. These fetters are broken when we break the fetters of those who enter our spiritual household, our consciousness.

Prayer demands secrecy. We do not pray to be seen of men, but we enter the secret sanctuary of our being and pray. Then what God sees in secret, He rewards openly. When we are in prayer with absolute purity, our prayers will be answered. When we have purified and prepared ourselves, prayer has no words or thoughts. It is an attitude of listening. "Speak, Lord, thy servant heareth"—and then a vacuum. Prayer itself comes when you are completely still in the presence of God with no desire except, "Here I am. Fill me. Be my mind. Be my soul. Be my spirit." The ears are open, and in flows the Spirit of God. But this takes place *only* if we have purified ourselves, if we are praying for the enemy, forgiving seventy times seven, and sharing.

From now on we are transparencies through which the grace, love, forgiveness, supply, and infinite presence of God flows through and out. We seek nothing of God, but only to be transparencies through which God's grace flows. We take on the royal robes of the children of God, through whom God's blessings flow to those yet in darkness. Going forward, we will seek nothing of God for ourselves or our friends. We expect nothing of anyone. We will purify ourselves that His love and His grace may flow forth through us to bless this world. Eventually we can say, "I and the Father are one. Thou seest me, thou seest the Father that sent me, and all that the Father hath is mine to share with you."