

The Jesus Prayer – The Prayer of the heart

LORD JESUS CHRIST, HAVE MERCY ON ME

*LORD JESUS CHRIST, HAVE MERCY ON ME A
SINNER*

*LORD JESUS CHRIST, SON OF GOD, HAVE
MERCY UPON ME THE SINNER*

To Pray Unceasingly – The Way of the Pilgrim

¹⁶Be rejoicing always; ¹⁷be praying unceasingly. [1 Thess. 5:16,17]

³We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, [Col. 1:3]

¹And He was also speaking a parable to them to this end, that it is needful to be praying always, and not to be faint-hearted, [Lk. 18:1]

¹⁷And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is *the* word of God— ¹⁸by means of every prayer and entreaty, praying in every season in *the* Spirit, [Eph. 6:17,18]

Saint Chrysostom: “He has armed them fully with all security against stumbling. It remains how it is necessary to call upon the King, so that He may stretch forth His hand ... For it is possible not to pray in the Spirit whenever one uses vain repetitions...”

How to pray the Jesus Prayer –

“Be still and know that I am God (Psalm 46:10).”

Stillness is a state of being – hesychia, hesychast

“Our elders tell us that the person seeking inner stillness is someone who has embarked upon the journey into his own heart...someone who returns to himself...the seeker begins to wait upon God in stillness and silence, no longer talking about God or to God but simply listening. (Becoming A Helaling Presence, Albert Rossi, p. 19)

We refuse to be still: internet, smartphone, working on projects, talking to friends, even busy ourselves with Church related work but we refuse to be still and find silence

I AM TO STAND BEFORE THE PRESENCE OF GOD

In prayer, says Bishop Theophan the Recluse (1815-94), 'the principal thing is to stand before God with the mind in the heart, and to go on standing before Him unceasingly day and night, until the end of life.'

Praying, defined in this way, is no longer merely to ask for things, and can indeed exist without the employment of any words at all. It is ... a continuous state. To pray is to stand before God, to enter into an immediate and personal relationship with him; it is to know at every level of our being ... that we are in God and he is in us. To affirm and deepen our personal relationships with other human beings, it is not necessary to be continually presenting requests or using words; the better we come to know and love one another, the less need there is to express our mutual attitude verbally. It is the same in our personal relationship with God. (The Power of the Name, by Kalistos Ware)

STANDING BEFORE GOD IN STILLNESS SO THAT GOD CAN ACT IN ME

St Gregory of Sinai (+1346). 'Why speak at length? Prayer is God, who works all things in all men.' Prayer is God — it is not something that I initiate but something in which I share; it is not primarily something that I do but something that God is doing in me: in St Paul's phrase, 'not I, but Christ in me' (Gal. 2:20) ... It is in this sense that to pray is to be silent. 'You yourself must be silent; let the prayer speak' — more precisely, let God speak. True inner prayer is to stop talking and to listen to the wordless voice of God within our heart; it is to cease doing things on our own, and to enter into the action of God. (The Power of the Name, Kalistos War)

DISCOVERING HIDDEN GRACE OF BAPTISM – CONFESSION IS THE RENEWAL OF THE SPIRIT WITHIN US

St Gregory of Sina: ‘Prayer’, he says, ‘is the manifestation of Baptism.’ The action of the Lord is not, of course, limited solely to the baptized; God is present and at work within all humankind ... But this image has been obscured and clouded over, although not totally obliterated, by our fall into sin. It is restored to its primal beauty and splendor through the sacrament of Baptism (AND RENEWED THROUGH CONFESSION), whereby Christ and the Holy Spirit come to dwell in what the Fathers call ‘the innermost and secret sanctuary of heart’. For the overwhelming majority, however, Baptism is something received in infancy, of which they have no conscious memory. Although the baptism in Christ and the indwelling Paraclete (Holy Spirit) never cease for one moment to work within us, most of us — save on rare occasions — remain virtually unaware of this inner presence and activity. True prayer, then, signifies the rediscovery and ‘manifestation’ of baptismal grace. To pray is to pass from the state where grace is present in our hearts secretly and unconsciously, to the point of full inner perception and conscious awareness when we experience and feel the activity of the Spirit directly and immediately (The Power of the Name, Kalistos Ware) ”

FINDING SILENCE - Breathing the Name Jesus

“The Fathers suggest that we begin by becoming aware of our breathing. We go gently inside. Quoting John of the Ladder, ‘Let the remembrance of Jesus be present with your every breath. Then indeed you will appreciate the value of stillness ...We must always breathe God.’ (Rossi, pg. 32)

“His person is mystically encapsulated in His name. His name is His Presence. ‘I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in His Name.’ (Rossi, Pg. 32)

“Let the name penetrate our soul – as a drop of oil impregnates a cloth. Let nothing of yourself escape. Surrender your whole self and enclose it within the Name.” (Rossi, pg. 33)

Stillness leads is to God and becoming our true self

“The high price for not being still is the possibility that we may not know God. If we don't know God, we don't know ourselves, because we are made in the image an likeness of God...today many people are looking for their identity, for their place in the world, for who they are. The only place we can find who we are is in God.” (Rossi, p. 23)

“The purpose of prayer can be summarized in the phrase, ‘Become what you are’. Become, consciously and actively, what you already are potentially and secretly, by virtue of your creation according to the divine image and your re-creation at Baptism. Become what you are: more exactly, return into yourself; discover him who is yours already, listen to him who never ceases to speak within you; possess him who even now possesses you. (The Power of the Name, Kallistos Ware)

The Heart

- *The heart is where we heal and restore our baptismal grace.*
- *“We begin with an awareness of the physical heart and to then move into the awareness of the spiritual heart.”*
- *“Observe that prayer of the heart is not only prayer of the soul and spirit but also of the body...the body has a positive role to play in the work of prayer.” (Kallistos Ware)*

Prayer of the Heart

“The heart not only has its own language but its own mind. The awareness of heart intelligence is sometimes called intuition. The heart is exquisitely sensitive to emotions and emits an energy field five thousand times stronger than the brain’s one that can be measured more than ten feet away. The physical heart is where we place our awareness to enter into the realm of the spiritual heart. (Rossi, p. 55).”

“How can we learn to stop talking and start listening?...One way to begin this journey inward is through the invocation of the Name. We can repeat ‘Lord Jesus’, (Rossi, pg. 62)