

## *Neville Goddard Lecture*



# The Secret Of Prayer

**Neville Goddard Lecture - The Secret Of Prayer 10-06-1967**

Tonight's subject is: "The Secret of Imagining."

The secret of scriptural prayer, as told in the form of a parable, is to pray and never lose heart. One such parable tells of a widow who kept coming to a judge, asking for vindication. At first he did not respond, then he said to himself: "Although I neither fear God, nor regard man, yet I will exonerate her, because by her much coming, she wearies me." Parables, like dreams, contain a single jet of truth. This parable urges persistence in mastering the art of prayer. Once you have mastered it you will live in the state of thanksgiving, and all through the day you will say over and over again to yourself: "Thank you, Father."

A most effective prayer is found in the 11th chapter of the Book of John, as: "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me, for thou always hears me." In this chapter, the story is told of someone who has died and has seemingly gone from this world. But the truth is that no one is dead to you, when you know how to pray. You may no longer touch, see, or hear those you love with your mortal senses; but if you know how to give thanks, you can move from your body of darkness into the world of light and encounter your loved ones there. Therefore, he who would learn how to pray will discover the great secret of a full and happy life.

In the 33rd chapter of the Book of Genesis, Jerusalem is called "Shechem." It is said that, "Jacob came safely into the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan. There he erected an altar and called it El Elohey Israel, which means "the God of Israel".

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Orienting himself toward Shechem (the true direction) Jacob remained in El Elohey Israel, which means “safe in mind, body, or estate”.

We are told that Daniel oriented himself at an open window, where he looked toward Jerusalem. And those in the Mohammedan world pray looking towards what they call Mecca. But because Christianity takes place within, scripture is speaking of the Jerusalem within, and not on the outside at all. When you pray you do not prostrate yourself on the ground and look towards some eastern point in space, but adjust yourself mentally into your fulfilled desire. Although this technique is simple, it takes practice to become its master. Your true direction is to the knowledge of what you want. Knowing your desire, point yourself directly in front of it by thinking from its fulfillment. Silence all thought and allow the doors of your mind to open. Then enter your desire. Stay with your imagination as your companion. Start by thinking of your imagination as something other than yourself, and eventually you will know you are what you formerly called your imagination. It is possible to amputate a hand, leg, or various parts of the body . . . but imagination cannot be amputated, for it is your eternal Self!

Let me show you what I mean. While standing here in Los Angeles, I may desire to be elsewhere. Time and finances may not allow it, but in my imagination I can assume I am already there. Now, by a mere act of assumption on my part, God departs this body. If I assume I am in New York City, anyone I think of in Los Angeles must be three thousand miles away. No longer can I think of them as just down the street or in the hills west of me. That is my test.

The word “prayer” means “motion towards, accession to, at or in the vicinity of”. Orienting myself towards New York City, I have made a motion, an accession to. As I act in the vicinity of, I see my friends relative to New York City. Having done this, let me have full confidence in my imagination, knowing he is the being who made the motion. Blake’s words are true: “Man is all Imagination, and God is Man and exists in us and we in Him. Man’s Immortal Body is the Imagination, and that is God Himself.”

You can not only move in space but also in time and fulfill your every desire. Prayer does not have to be confined to what a person calls self. You can pray for another by feeling they now have what they formerly wanted, for feeling is a movement. The first creative act recorded in scripture is motion: “God moved upon the face of the water.”

A friend recently had a fantastic vision, during which he asked: “Did I learn anything?” and I answered: “Yes. You learned how to move.” Then everything was transformed, as conflict deceased, a hovel became a castle, the battlefield a sea of ripened wheat, and

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he was escorted into his eternal home. Prayer is motion. It is learning how to move toward a change in your bank balance, your marital status, or social world. Learn to master the art of motion; for after you move, change begins to rise up out of the deep. The technique of prayer is mastering your inner motion. If you are seeing things you would like to change, move in your imagination to the position you would occupy after the change took place.

Everything and everyone in your world is yourself pushed out. Any request from another . . . heard by you . . . should not be ignored; for it is coming from yourself! You came down from a world of light to confine yourself to this body of darkness. Now a spark from an infinite world of light, one day you will remember that world and awaken, but in the meantime you must learn to exercise the power of your mind. Having remembered the infinite world of light, I now know that everything is myself, as all things are contained within me.

Prayer is psychological movement. It is the art of moving from a problem to its solution. When a friend calls, telling of a problem, we hang up, and I move from the problem state to its solution by hearing the same lady tell me the problem is now solved.

A friend recently shared this dream with me: We were in a garden and he told me all of his desires, when I said: "Don't desire them, live them!" This is true. Desire is thinking of! Living is thinking from! Don't go through life desiring. Live your desire. Think it is already fulfilled. Believe it is true; for an assumption, though false, if persisted in will harden into fact.

When you are learning the art of prayer, persistence is necessary, as told us in the story of the man who . . . coming at night . . . said: "Friend, lend me three loaves of bread." Although his friend replied: "It is late, the door is closed, my children are in bed, and I cannot come down and serve you," because of the man's importunity, his friend gave him what he wanted. The word importunity means brazen impudence. The man repeated and repeated his request, unwilling to take no for an answer. The same is true in the story of the widow. These are all parables told to illustrate prayer.

The Lord's Prayer teaches the oneness of us all. It begins: "Our Father." If God is our Father, are we not one? Regardless of our race or color of skin, if we have a common Father, we must have a common brotherhood.

Eventually we are all going to know we are the Father; but in the meanwhile, persistence is the key to a change in life . . . more income, greater recognition, or

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whatever the desire may be. If your desire is not fulfilled today, tomorrow, next week or next month . . . persist, for persistency will pay off. All of your prayers will be answered if you will not give up.

My old friend, Abdullah, gave me this exercise. Every day I would sit in my living room where I could not see the telephone in the hall. With my eyes closed, I would assume I was in the chair by the phone. Then I would feel myself back in the living room. This I did over and over again, as I discovered the feeling of changing motion. This exercise was very helpful to me. If you try it, you will discover you become very loose with this exercise. Practice the art of motion, and one day you will discover that by the very act of imagining, you are detached from your physical body and placed exactly where you are imagining yourself to be . . . so much so that you are seen by those who are there.

Being all imagination, you must be wherever you are in imagination. Moving in your imagination, you are preparing a place for your desires to be fulfilled. Then you return, to walk through a series of events which will lead you up to where you have placed yourself. In imagination, I can put myself where I desire to be. I move and view the world from there. Then I return here, confident that . . . in a way unknown to me . . . this being who can do all things and knows all things, will lead me physically across a bridge of incident up to where I have placed myself. You can move in imagination to any place and any time. Dwell there as though it were true, and you will have learned the secret of prayer.

My wife had a wonderful vision where she found herself in a grove of trees. Walking down a clear passage, she saw people gathered around an altar. A lady approached, carrying a book entitled, *The Credence of Faith and the Forgiveness of Sins according to Judaism*. Reaching the altar, she began to read it aloud. Shortly, another lady appeared, carrying a book entitled, *The Credence of Faith and the Forgiveness of Sins according to Christianity*. Approaching the altar, she too opened her book and began to read. As my wife listened, she realized it was infinitely more difficult to be a Christian than to be a Jew. She saw the whole thing was psychological. That nothing is done on the outside, because everything comes from within.

Browning began his wonderful poem, "Easter Day" with the words: "How hard it is to be a Christian." And Chapman said: "Christianity has not been tried and proved wanting. It has been tried and found difficult and therefore given up." Why? Because a Christian cannot pass the buck and blame another. Christianity is built upon the foundation that all are one. That man is forever drawing confirmation of what he is doing within himself.

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That your world bears witness to what you are doing to yourself. This is difficult to accept, yet it is Christianity. No man comes unto me, save my Father who sent me calls him. I and my Father are one, therefore I call all those who enter my life to reveal to me what I am doing in my imagination.

Learn how to pray. Master it and make your world conform to the ideal you want to experience. Stop thinking of, and start thinking from. To think from the wish fulfilled is to realize that which you will never experience while you are thinking of it. When you put yourself into the state of the wish fulfilled and think from it, you are praying, and in a way your reasoning mind does not know, your wish will become a fact in your world. You can be the man or woman you want to be, when you know how to pray. All things are possible to him who believes, therefore learn the art of believing and persuade yourself it is true. Then one day, occupying space and time in your imagination, you will be seen by another, who will call or send you a letter verifying your visit. This I know from experience.

The Bible is not just beautiful poetry; it is the inspired word of God. Written by poets, they have given enlarged meaning to normal words. When you put your body on the bed and assume you are elsewhere, are you not all imagination? In the act of imagining, you depart the dark caverns of this body and appear where you imagine yourself to be, because you are God . . . all imagination . . . and cannot die. You cannot go to eternal death in that which cannot die, and your immortal being is imagination! You are the central being of scripture . . . the one called Jesus Christ, who is the Lord God Jehovah . . . who descended here for a purpose.

While here, you must pay the price of living in the world of Caesar. You may criticize our politicians and protest any raise in taxes, but you will continue to be taxed. All you have to do is learn the art of prayer and make more money.

I am reminded of a story told of the late President Kennedy. It seems his father . . . who had, in one generation, made something like four-hundred million dollars . . . complained that his children were spending too much money. At a banquet, President Kennedy said: "The only solution to this problem is for father to make more money."

One day a friend told me that when she was a child, her father would say: "If you have but a dollar and it was necessary for you to spend it, do so as if it were a dry leaf, and you the owner of a boundless forest." If one really knows how to pray, he could spend

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his dollar and then reproduce it again. You see, this world is brought into being by man's imagination, so it is very important to learn the secret of prayer.

If you are still desiring, stop it right now! Ask yourself what it would be like, were your desire a reality. How would you feel if you were already the one you would like to be? The moment you catch that mood, you are thinking from it. And the great secret of prayer is thinking from, rather than thinking of. Anchored here, you know where you live, your bank balance, job, creditors, friends, and loved ones . . . as you are thinking from this state. But you can move to another state and give it the same sense of reality, when you find and practice the great secret of prayer.

Take my message to heart and live by it. Practice the art of prayer daily, and then one day you will find the most effective prayer is: "Thank you Father." You will feel this being within you as your very self. You can speak of it as "thou" yet know it is "I." You will then have a thou/I relationship, and say to yourself: "Thank you, Father". If I want something, I know the desire comes from the Father, because all thought springs from Him. Having given me the urge, I thank Him for fulfilling it. Then I walk by faith, in confidence that he who gave it to me through the medium of desire will clothe it in bodily form for me to encounter in the flesh.

Don't get in the habit of judging and criticizing, seeing only unlovely things. You have a life . . . live it nobly. It is so much easier to be noble, generous, loving, and kind, than to be judgmental. If others want to do so, let them. They are an aspect of yourself that you haven't overcome yet, but don't fall into that habit. Simply thank your heavenly Father over and over and over again, because in the end, when the curtain comes down on this wonderful drama, the supreme actor will rise from it all and you will know that you are He.

Now let us go into the Silence.