

PRAYER IS FEELING GOOD ABOUT DOING NOTHING

Even believers must hold that at least some people only pray for they don't want to feel bad about not helping you and they want the emotional reward of thinking that their prayer helps more than anything else could. While they feel that way, you are left in a bad situation or one that has worsened and their physical intervention could have made a positive difference. They also have to admit that those who pray may not see that they have these sick attitudes.

Pope Francis 2020, "Where there is God, there must also be man. Sacred Scripture is categorical: 'We love because He first loved us. He always goes before us. He is always waiting for us. If someone says, I love God and hates his brother, he is a liar. Indeed, whoever does not love his brother whom he sees cannot love God whom he does not see. If you pray many Rosaries a day, but then gossip, you have a grudge, that is not praying."

If you are not praying and saying all those prayers then you are getting a good feeling of some kind. All we are saying is that this is happening even with prayer Francis approves of. Most type of prayer would be akin to those bogus Rosaries!

Prayer is always asking in the sense that you are asking for you and God to relate to each other. So even prayers of love for God are petitions in a sense.

All prayer is petitionary and we must ask if there is a problem with petitionary prayer.

Some people believe prayer is not meant to do anything apart from make you feel better about somebody else's suffering or your own.

Some believe prayer only helps a person inside - God gives them strength. A change happens emotionally or spiritually or both. This pressures the person to pretend to have changed otherwise people will think they are not sincere when they pray.

Some believe prayer can also change what is going to happen on the physical level. A person who should die may live.

Some get a good feeling from prayer because they reason that when they pray for others' needs and well-being, their own needs are answered! Praying for others can be a tactic for getting blessings yourself! No wonder it can feel good!

In fact if your or somebody else's suffering is terrible then feel bad as about it as possible so that you will do all you can about it. Be confident that the person may be enduring something that cannot be made up for not even by God. Be confident that if the person really is alone and no being is with her or him that you have to be and that it does not matter at all if she thinks god is or isn't with her. Anything that waters down these noble principles is an outrage.

THE CARING ILLUSION

Caring looks right and good and laudable even if others are deliberately neglected. People are so biased and they have a need to believe there are enough good people around for it stops them worrying about their own welfare so much. So the good person is praised while the bad they are doing is ignored or excused. Doing good is not enough to make you good for saints can be fakes. Your heart may have secret motivations that are on the dark side or it could be about showcasing how wonderful you are. Cherry-picking good is a sign of badness not goodness for it shows you are capable of doing good properly but won't. The brain rewards good deeds even when they are not really good but about you doing good not because it is good but because you feel like it. Prayer is top of the list when it comes to trying to experience this reward. It is the easiest and can be the laziest. As bad as it is to help a person when you are dodgy in everything else it is worse to pray instead. Believers may find this statement totally offensive but do they really want a world where everybody prays for the orphan and gives her or him nothing? Prayer realistically is not what truly matters though it presents itself as if it is for it is based on the notion that all comes from God so God alone can matter and does matter.

A PROBLEM SHARED---

Prayer is about feeling God listens to you. A problem shared and talked about is not lessened but feels less terrible. You get warped if you seek that relief if the pain you feel is about somebody else. What if it is an acquaintance? What if it is the starving children on the television famine appeal? Or the victims of the Nazis? You are dulling your empathy and your good deeds for them will be nothing compared to what you could do. Chances are you will do nothing but pray or pray that somebody else will help them so you can go to Mauritius.

WHEN PRAYING FOR ANOTHER IS AN EXCUSE FOR INACTION

"Damn it. Don't you dare ask God to help me!" What the dying Joan Crawford said to her housekeeper who prayed out loud for her.

The bottom line is: being good is not being good unless there is a real recipient be it yourself or another person. If prayer does not work then it is not a good work. If there is no God then prayer is not a good work. Some might say, "If you cannot help but pray that is help." No it is not - it is about you using somebody's pain to make yourself feel goody goody.

Religion says we can know that God exists though we can't understand him so how then are we able to understand that he needs and utilizes prayer? You pray to a being whose existence you are not strongly sure of. You pray to a being whose goodness you are not strongly sure of. You pray to a being whose goodness may not be in doubt but who may consider it good to ignore your prayer. It is arrogant to argue that God always answers prayer. If he is good and good is sometimes tough he does not have to.

Anyway it is all stuff you are not sure of. You are praying to please your feelings so it is really yourself that you are pleasing.

CAN'T TELL GOD WHAT TO DO

Prayer is about feeling good about doing nothing for another.

It is all about leaving it up to God to act. Even when the believer is prompted by God to act, the believer says God alone must take the credit for helping. God creates the believer and his choice from nothing so it is all God. So even when you are doing something you are really doing nothing. It is not what you did that matters but what God has done. Attitude wise, there is no difference between this and doing nothing literally. There is a thin line between it and standing by with medication while the sick cry out for it.

Prayer is asking God or gods to do their own will - it is asking not commanding. They are going to do it anyway if they are good. It is like asking a man to breathe! Asking somebody to help a person is not helping the person. Why? Because the free will of the person asked is the cause of any help he or she gives. It's not you. People pray because it makes them feel they are helping themselves or somebody else. But that can only happen if they see it as a kind of magic in which case they should be honest and do magic instead.

Proper prayer doesn't really do anything for anybody. Such prayer is asking God to help people. If people need help, a good God will help them and not wait until somebody asks him.

The doctrine that God prefers to make things work out for the best without changing them is interesting. It shows you might as well just accept what is coming when you cannot do anything about it. If that is what praying people are trying to do, then they don't need to pray. They just need to accept. To pray for others then is sheer magic. More about that!

PRAYER AND MAGIC

Magic is an sort of ethical way of helping people. Prayer isn't. Magic is doing something for them - it is sending power out to enfold them in love and hold them and protect them. Sadly magic is futile and self-deluding but prayer is worse.

With magic, you can experiment in the hope of seeing results. With prayer, nothing whatever proves success or failure. There is always an excuse when the prayers are not answered. Usually it is that the answer was received but just not recognised. Prayer affirms that you don't have the right to do tests or seek proof. Anything that is supposed to be so important and is neither verifiable or falsifiable is really just an affirmation that says: "I have no right to learn the things that are most important. I am therefore worthless." Prayer makes artificial demons that need to be exorcised.

Using prayer to do your will is different and is actually magic not prayer. Proper prayer calls for help and then blocks that help. It is really about kidding yourself that you are doing something for others.

To pray for a person is really doing nothing for them. You may see it as an attempt at magic. But it is really asking for your magic to fail because prayer implies that you are not the one that has the magic and somebody else, God perhaps, does. It injures the person prayed for in the sense that you are keeping the magic from them that they need.

ARROGANT

The problem with any kind of belief is that we tend to forget most of the time that it is not a fact for you but just a belief.

For example, if you believe Jesus rose you still don't know for certain if this belief is factual. You will tend to feel that it is a fact and treat it as such. Belief easily slips into such arrogance.

Prayer reinforces that arrogance. You feel sure that you have helped others when you should not be so sure.

When people hear about the bad things that happen in other areas or other countries they may feel that they are somehow picked by something or someone for special treatment. They may think the higher power regards them as better people than it does the unfortunate people who have poor luck. Or it may be random blessings. Both attitudes stink. Yet the feeling of being blessed or that one can be is what prayer is all about. The atheist resists the urge for it is repulsive.

If you pray for John to get better of cancer, and he does, you will end up thinking, "I did it for him. My prayers cured him." There is something stomach-churning about that. We sense you are using John's situation to get a self-righteous thrill.

Hypocrites like to feel they are good people - the ultimate hypocrite does prayers and superstitious rituals in order to convince herself or himself that she does the greatest work of all. That is terrible in itself. It is incredibly arrogant to think your saying a prayer for x matters while your helping that person say get medical treatment does not matter in comparison. It is a short step from that to reasoning that you don't have to do anything for others but pray for them.

PASSIVE AGGRESSIVE

The idea that God always helps but through people means that if you are not helped you blame others or blame yourself for not getting the help. If a loved one is not helped you blame others or blame yourself. The main reason for blame is that the praying was not done or was not up to standard.

THE CHOICE

Suppose you had to make a choice - one or the other. You pray for a person who is very ill or you give them medicine. If prayer is the best you can do then you have to pray. Religion says it is. The atheist will reach for the medicine bottle. Do you see the intrinsic hypocritical passive aggression in faith now?

A baby needs tablets from you to get better from a terrible cruel illness. You have a choice, and it has to be one or the other. The choice is will I pray or give the tablets? If God and prayer come first then clearly praying is the choice. So you see the nastiness inherent even in the sweetest prayers! And if God does not come first for you then to pray for him to work with a person is to invite evil or the risk of evil into that person's life for they are asked to connect with a God who isn't good enough to matter.

VIRTUE SIGNALLING

Most praying people show it in some way most of the time. This is virtue signalling to others. Private prayer can be understood as trying to virtue-signal to God. People forget you can also virtue-signal to yourself! People who are prayed for need to see how offensive it all is.

PETITIONARY PRAYER

We are talking about praying to God and asking him to help others or yourself.

We are talking about praying to God for yourself. Remember this would be future-oriented. If prayer does not help, you are trying to feel you are helping your future self when you are not. Feeling you are helping when you are not is then risky and dangerous.

So praying for yourself or others is the same in the sense that you are trying to feel you have helped when you have not.

Praying for others or yourself might seem to make you feel good. When it does, then why do you think it makes you feel good?

Because:

YOU INTEND TO HELP. Prayer for another intends a better or more perfect outcome. Believers hold that if you can pray for a person to get better or to become more virtuous then the latter takes priority. No sane person agrees that virtue matters that much! Human nature tends to think that intending good to happen to another is enough to make you good. It is not

unless you are doing hands on work for them. Your lazy good intent is just about you feeling good. When you pray, you imagine that it is you who is helping the other person by getting God to do it. To put a person in the care of a reluctant God is not helping them! God is bigger than you! It is like giving a person into the care of a person who does not want to care for them.

OR BECAUSE YOU CONSENT TO GOD HELPING IF HE SO WILLS. You imagine that God is going to help somehow and that you are great for telling him you agree with what he is set on doing. You cannot know for certain there is a God so you risk trying to put the person at the mercy of cold random mechanical nature. If there is no God then nature is mistaken for him and his activity.

OR BECAUSE YOU ARE LAZY - or it is easier to pray for somebody to get better than to pay money for their cure, to dedicate your time to them, than to admit that God is not going to help.

Intending to help makes you feel good for it reminds you that helpfulness exists and many can be helped even if not all. That is reassuring. It reminds you as well that if helpfulness exists then somebody may help you. But you don't need to pray to feel that way. With prayer, you stop being realistic. You stop realising that it is better if there is a choice to wish a person well without it being prayerful than to wish it when it is being prayerful. You defy the principle, that if you have to choose between a prayer and a good wish you must choose the good wish. Prayer after all is no comfort if it does not contain an element of wishing anyway.

UNTESTABLE

A following b does not mean b caused a. It can mean it might have or it happened in spite of it. If people pray and what could be seen answers to prayer and miracles seem to follow that does not mean the belief had any role in causing the answers or miracles or allowing them to happen. Testimony has no power to help.

A following b does not mean b caused a. It can mean it might have or it happened in spite of it. Which should we assume if we have to assume only one of them? It depends. Given that a miracle is uncommon it is better to assume it is b and only came about in spite of a.

You feel good because you make prayer untestable. Even when you get nothing you have asked for, you reason you got something as good or better for you forget that b coming after a does not mean b was caused by a. Anybody can imagine that something good has come out of praying or carrying the rabbit's foot. That is a worthless argument and is you trying to blind yourself to the fact that prayer does not work.

Making something untestable makes you feel in control. You feel you can be your own truth without regard for truth as it is. You feel stronger than reality for you use the untestable to protect yourself from it. You use the untestable to see reality the way you want to see it instead of how it is. That is about power. It is false control for truth is not about you which is why you have to be in line with it and seek it.

Those who pray for you are careful not to ask for anything too far-fetched - eg that their daughter will become the next world queen of pop. It is as if they pick out the causes that have a reasonable chance of happening anyway and they want to take the credit for it when they happen.

Rationalising is a form of self-empowerment. You do it to cope with feelings of powerlessness. The religious person argues that prayer for her dying child's recovery has worked and she will say that whether the child lives or dies. She will see death as its recovery and has proof that God heals in ways you do not expect. She protects herself from seeing that prayer is nonsense and that she has not helped her child by engaging in it. Proof that she is kidding herself is plain from the fact that she would not say that if her doctor treated the child that the treatment worked even if it killed the child. She would not say if the child dies, "Doctor X is an incredibly good doctor. His tablets sent my baby to a better place. I can't thank him enough." She would not even say that if instead of a doctor it was a Catholic or Pentecostal or whatever healer.

It is better to keep well-informed and to try to be as rational as possible. Reason is a better way of self-empowerment than twisting reason which is what takes place when you rationalise. Rationalising means you are giving some of your power away in order to feel empowered. You are twisting your mind.

Twisting your mind is not self-empowerment.

PRAYER AND MOTIVATION

If people pray a lot and still labour 24/7 to help others, this is their human nature at work. It is not prayer. They are good

because they are good. It is not prayer that is helping for it cannot. If it is not helping it is stopping them from being even better than what they are. No wonder it is easy to find disasters in how Mother Teresa cared for the sick.

FINALLY

Prayer is bias for anything that cannot be tested is bias by default. Even when you do not get what you ask for you are told the prayer just worked in a way that was best for you. It is too biased to be about anything other than feelings. It is not right to use the suffering of others to make yourself feel good by praying for them. When you say you pray for them you are trying to look good at their expense.

You are a doctor and you will not give your patient antibiotics for a bacterial chest infection. When it is too late and you know it you come along then. Praying after a disaster is like giving antibiotics to a person who needed them but can't use them now. To say, "Prayer does not prevent disasters but fixes them" is one strange piece of logic. If it cannot stop them then it might not fix them either!

Prayer seems to spring from how human nature does the same wise, bad, stupid and mad thing over and over thinking it will be different this time. It is trying to say you believe it can be different and for God to make sure of it. So it is like God rolls a dice randomly and will only take direction because you have requested it! Its insane. Its pure superstition. Go and help the person properly.