

The SEARCHLIGHT

Association for Research and Enlightenment, Incorporated
VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA

Vol. XV

July 1963

No. 7

WHEN WE PRAY

By Hugh Lynn Cayce

(Extracts from tapes of Mr. Cayce's 1962 Summer School Course on prayer and meditation, selected and arranged by Mary Ellen Carter)

What is listening prayer and what is the difference between this and meditation? This question bridges into the whole area of prayer, and I think we should discuss it. Esther Wynne, past director of the Study Groups, used the phrase, "It came to me." But it did not come in meditation. Though she spent a lot of time in meditation, it did not come at the same time. The ability to pray more effectively comes *as a result* of meditation.

If you have the capacity to heal and do nothing about it; if you do not pray for an individual, or speak constructively to an individual; if you don't smile at the right time - you do not care enough to begin to look around and to extend yourself to give out the spiritual energy which you have raised in meditation. (You have this energy all the time, and you raise it through meditation.) To meditate and thus draw up this energy and then be critical, you do more damage than one who is not meditating. The dangers here of becoming aware of what you are doing and who you are become greater all the time. Jesus said, "Love ye one another." This is necessary or you produce chaos, you destroy the people you touch. Give

to the spiritual law you understand. Different people understand it differently: a constructive word, a simple smile, may mean a great deal to an individual. Do what you know. You can't do more. If you meditate, you get more understanding of what to do.

The Confusion of the Unconscious

Many people who have tried a short meditation have begun to get what they think is guidance, which comes not from on high, but from the confusion of themselves and their own unconscious. Now this unconscious is a masquerader, itself, and a delayer. It is capable of assuming a thousand guises in order to delay the progress of the soul. It is connected with the unconscious, it is connected with the physical, it is connected with karma, and it is capable of a delaying process that will tie you up for a long time.

Now, I think that the kind of meditation that we have been talking about is enabling us to get past this point where we get this kind of thought or force. I do not accept thought, for example, that comes quickly at these lower levels during meditation or prayer. If one persists a bit towards

silence and toward light, then can come the kind of guidance that will be convincing in itself. All of these measurements suggested could be applied quickly and you would know there would be no doubt.

But when you have to apply a measuring stick, when you have to worry about this, and when you take direction on the way up, you get it as the centers open and you get it at all sorts of levels and in all sorts of guises. And the conditions are infinite to go off on tangents, to move in all sorts of directions. One spends a lot of energy and a lot of time, and does not get on to the real business of reaching this higher spiritual state.

Now when you have persisted for a long period of time, or long enough to reach a point of stillness and a point of light - then when this guidance comes in, it will come in a manner that is undeniable. The difference in this light and this silence is extremely important. These voices come, these hunches come, these thoughts come, these impressions come, they run over a thousand different angles taking us into all sorts of diversions and we don't get to the top of the mountain.

I use a number of tests to distinguish the source of guidance. One is to use the four absolutes: honesty, unselfishness, love, and purity. I test it with the highest I know, I consider what Jesus would do, and I check it with friends. It is wonderful if you have a sharing partner or partners, if you have a small group you can check with. I believe that 90 per cent of the time, we very well know what God wants us to do, but we just don't do it. It is excellent to have some means whereby we can check. I think more often than not, it isn't knowing whether something is good or bad. There are times when we

have a choice of perhaps two or three things.

The Goal of Meditation

At the level of taking thought, the readings suggest to take an affirmation into meditation, but it urges you to figure it out and reason it out, and to take in your answer in *prayer*. Many people teach a listening prayer that starts from the word "Go." Take a pencil and paper, for example, sit, listen, and write. Other groups sit and begin right away to pray and are there upon supposed to get guidance. I'm not saying that without the preparation of meditation, that prayer I wrong at all, but they have to do tremendous amount of checking to be sure that what they are getting fits with the highest ideals and principles of what Jesus would do. You get all kinds of measurement that have to be put into this, and I'm saying that meditation persists in, in this kind of seeking, is necessary.

I am not saying one should cut out prayer. Meditation is not something you can do *instead* of prayer. Use all kinds of prayer: petitionary ones, prayers of adoration, of confession, prayers of thanksgiving. Meditation does not take the place of any of these. I don't say that a person has to meditate one day, five minutes, or five years, but I say that prayer and meditation are necessary, and a lot of meditation.

When you say you get answers after meditating fifteen or twenty minutes I would say you are not meditating. You are not meditating, you are praying. Meditation will enable you to know God's Will, but it is not getting your answer right now. You need a lot of quiet, a lot of stillness, you need a movement to another level of consciousness. This is the goal of meditation. Before this goal is reached,

you do not accept answers which would be out of the unconsciousness.

Jacob Boehme said this movement of consciousness happened to him only four times in his life. It has happened a very few times to some of the great initiates of all time. But this is the movement, or the goal of meditation. This does not interfere with our prayers. Listening prayer, petitionary, worshipful, thanksgiving, confessional prayers — use them, but use them separately.

Go into meditation not asking for answers, for guidance, for pictures, but hold constantly an affirmation in attention. Grow still, grow silent, then you may finally become aware of a light that is within and without. This is the goal and you use the affirmation as a point of focus.

Work at this. Ten, fifteen minutes a day is all that has been suggested in these preliminary steps for meditation. This is much different from listening prayer.

When you are in the light, in the silences God speaks to each one differently. God does not tell us our automobile needs an oil change, or that one should go see so-and-so. This is the unconscious operating and it will divert us from this final goal.

If you seem to get past incarnations, do not look at these, either: they are out of the subconscious.

Meditation is not the only path to illumination. Some have received the light while on a path of service; others through disciplined searching. Many have been very simple people and of course, some, great.

Relationship of Meditation to Listening Prayer

I would strongly advise that you have a period of listening prayer

separate and apart from the first steps toward meditation. Keep ideas from coming in (during meditation) exactly the same way you keep your mind from thinking about the things you have been doing during the day or from having pictures come floating in. These pictures or impression which set you going, come drifting like a picture, like a thought, and activate you to go do something before you have the energy to do it with, before you have the spirits know-how to do it. This is taking it too soon from the unconscious level. Meditation is an attempt to move in consciousness to the highest spiritual level of the upper spiritual center and not to get answers from the unconscious along the way. Meditate first, and then later in the day, have a period of listening prayer.

When in meditation you move into another level of consciousness; it is God speaking to you. But unless you get this level, it is not God speaking to you, it is your unconscious. Persist in meditation, and separate your listening prayer period from your meditation period. Do not use it in meditation.

When God speaks to you, you do not have to question as to the authority, you do not have to measure this communication by anything. If you have to use a yardstick, the message is not from God. When you get ideas to do this or that, this is from the unconscious. How do you know when God is speaking to you? You just know.

Use an affirmation constantly in front of you., Looking at it, not at mind pictures, not "getting answers, not asking questions, but simply looking for this silence and this light. Now, this comes, if we persist in holding the . affirmation. You don't get directions to go out and help Susie Jones, she's starving: this is clairvoyance or telepathy. This is not meditation. You do

not get impressions on how to design a new machine: this can come later. But this is not meditation. This is the action of the unconscious.

The preliminary step to meditation, and only preliminary, is to bring oneself to a point of stillness, a point of silence, a point of light where God is capable of speaking in His way. He speaks to each individual differently. This is not the picturing of the unconscious, not voices talking to you. This is a kind of illumination and an ultimate experience. It is the goal of meditation.

Through meditation we are more able to get out the creative power and energy of which we are custodians, and when we see an opportunity to be kind, to be thoughtful, to pray for healing for someone, we become much more sensitive. This is knowing God's Will: this growing sensitivity. This growing state of consciousness is God's Will and this becomes a sort of every day living. Not as something that comes as a great climactic thing – this may happen only a very few times; but it is by the constant, - day by day application of meditation that we become more sensitive and more capable.

Not only will you know what is God's Will, but also you will become a channel through which God works constantly. Listening prayer, because of subconscious blocks and levels, can get a lot of people into difficulty. Those who are not really working at meditation can get confused by what they call listening prayer and get shoved and pushed by the unconscious. Most of us want short cuts, want to make a connection and be told what to do, and in so doing, feel we are doing God's Will. Few will take the time to really meditate whereby we would know God's Will.

We pray "Father, as we seek to

know Thy face, May we as individuals come come to know ourselves even as we are known." Known by Gods? This is a beautiful concept if we can come to know ourselves as God knows us. Known by our fellow man? This could be pretty grim.

Kinds of Prayer

There is a number of very good books on prayer that break it down into various categories, various groupings. And I think this is where most of us have the greater difficulty. We can make a complete distinction, for example, and an awfully good case for confessional prayer, just by itself, whether you believe that anybody's listening or not. Even an atheist can make a good case for confessional prayer at a psychological level. But far more than this, when we get to this discussion this morning in the work of meditation, in the meaning of these centers related to the meditative process, what happens within them, confessional prayer takes on a new meaning. Prayer of confession in which we look at and confess, face, that part of ourself, that which we have done or failed to do, can be a tremendous release, help, in starting again; and we all have to start again, every morning. In this beginning again, or finishing a trying experience of some kind, or a particularly hard piece of road we've been over, confession becomes a very important kind of prayer. Too often, we spend just a little bit of time, just a minute or two, with "God, forgive me, etc.," rather than looking at it, examining it. I think so frequently we don't follow this up and make amends, where individuals are involved. I remember a phrase in the readings, for example, which stated that particularly if you were married, never go to sleep

with anything that had not been apologized for, and your marriage would be much easier all the way.

Confessional prayer enables you to do this with a much greater feeling of grace. If we can confess, it humbles us and brings us into an attitude of being able to do this with an individual: "I'm sorry, forgive me. I was wrong." The ability to utter these words, and the ability to Forgive another person is the key.

All of these are ways in which we relate ourselves, and they are quite different from the prayer of worship, for example, the prayer in which you combine prayer of adoration, thanksgiving, and sometimes confessional prayer. The kind of silence and the use of prayer in church worship services of all varieties can be extended into our lives, in addition to prayers of petitioning for ourselves, sometimes for others. There are all the other kinds of pray too.

In my opinion, this is something we've lost out of our churches, that could well be restored in groups of all kinds: the actual practice, the actual doing, not just talking about - making prayer practical, in small groups.

If you did them all in one evening you'd be praying all evening, of course. As a groups you might try different types at different meetings: one type before, and one after, let's say. But to go through them all would be difficult. There needs to be more experimentation, I think, in these areas in which people practice prayer work. The common assumption is that "everybody knows how to pray." That isn't true at all. You learn how to pray and you learn how to meditate, and the healing prayer in particular, can be done in several different ways very effectively. Some groups find one way

more successful than another.

Confessional prayer it simply a first step - a very necessary first step. Forgiveness is the key. Forgiveness of one's self, though is just as important as forgiveness in relationship to other people. You think that you can forgive other easily, but do you really know how to forgive yourself? Confessional prayer is the beginning step in forgiveness of self. It's a very important operation.

In prayers of petition, you can ask for all kinds of things and when you begin to get them, you no longer will need or want them, perhaps, and they can really be in the way. Whatever you hold in mind will come about. It will come slowly, though. This is the operation of the law of expectancy which is part of praying. These are all the things, the aspects of this area, that are important. You learn how to operate in these various techniques and laws; they don't just happen overnight. Don't be impatient with each other: everybody's moving in the same direction, but they may be moving on little different roads and sometimes at different paces. You must deal with people where they are, not where you would like for them to be. You must deal with them, and face them, and pray about them and with them, where they are. Don't insist that they run as fast as you or as slowly as you.

Seeking God's Will

I would say that the safer procedure is three steps that would be involved in this: (1) More prayer - a prayer life that would involve all the kinds of prayer that we have been talking about. Prayer of confession, you see, gets things out of the way that would be blocks. Without confession, as the Bible puts it very simply, not only can we not hear you, but I don't think

you're going to hear Him, as long as this thing is there, and if you have "aught against your brother." Make it right before you come into the temple to pray.

Now the horns of the dilemma arise when you say "I'm going to pray and God's going to answer me." The egotism of this is an astounding thing, and yet, we are taught to expect this. The dilemma is quite a considerable one, and I think, here again, man is troubled by the dimension he calls time, which is a complete barrier to his perception of reality. And until, as the reading put it in that lesson on Spirit, we can begin in time, space and patience to approach this, to deal with this, we simply are selling ourselves and God short in the concepts we hold about Him.

(2) Now, besides prayer, we need also to begin another step in cleansing: to be acting as channels through which whatever we know of service is being rendered. In other words many people sit around getting read to do something important, big, and never do anything practical about helping the person next door. Somebody may be starving next door, and they're getting ready to feed the people in India, or to do something great, when their child is going to pieces on them, and they don't even know it.

I'm talking about the practical simple aspects of being a channel through which we can be more and more aware, and I think this is the whole point of *A Search for God*, if, through these procedures, you become more sensitive and more aware. "Let me be a channel of blessing now, today, to those I contact in every way." This is every time you open your mouth, this is every time you think about a person, this is every time you shake hands. You don't want to deplete them, you want to exchange as much energy so they have. When someone asks help or you see

somebody in a dejected state, to be able to praise or lift them, even with a smile, this is the kind of thing through which we became channels. All of this business of beating big drums and making big plans and being in a state of unconsciousness as to what is going on around us is absurd, The people who are in our homes, these friends, associates, all of the contacts around us, are those for whom you do "what you know to do."

(3) Now, meditation is the third step. When, if we work at meditation, ~ think that God can in an infinite number of ways answer us. As we are doing all three of these, then actually this is God's way, if we think about it a moment. He works through you and me...through our bands, our prayers, our activities. This is the way He works. And you know this. But you want to do it differently. You want to do something else. We do not want God's way, we want our way, and we kid ourselves but we're not kidding God, I don't think, at this level.

Meditation, plus the prayer, plus the service, and I don't think you can miss God's will for you.

The Bread and the Wine

I have often felt, and I mention it here in the course, that symbolically, for me, the bread may we symbolize, as it does in the Lord's Prayer, I think, the creative energy or power that man has within himself which he is raising, actually, in consciousness. This is the purpose of meditation. This is the creating drive of the body. This is the bread that which provides the very life force of the body, This is the sex energy, the creative energy. Now this is a symbol of the kundalini movement of this energy upward.

The wine becomes the symbol the other energy which is available to man, which is the spiritual power that is

pouring in constantly from God, constantly available. By energy, I mean divine energy, divine power that is all outside, and flows to man as this other energy raised. The actual process meditation brings these two rivers, these two energies, together in the head, or in the spiritual gland centers of the body, in the pineal and pituitary centers where the energies come together.

Now, in communion, we take both these energies, put them together and we do exactly what we hope will follow meditation, we swallow them and they go back down to heal and cleanse the "earth", the lower centers of the body. This is "the cup overfloweth", then the energy flows back down, healing, cleansing, purifying the lower gland centers which we will talk about a little later this morning. In my opinion, the Edgar Cayce readings suggest that these are the deeper levels of the unconscious: the cell structure of the endocrine. This is the procedure that I think is tied up symbolically with the communion.

The sooner we begin regular, consistent meditation, the sooner our consciousness will be raised to higher levels. We will remove ourselves from what Jesus called the "pigsty."

At that point when we get up in Consciousness and move back to the house of the Father, the prodigal son in us has returned, and there is rejoicing and there is healing power. As this energy flows, I think, Grace operates. We can function under the Law of Grace, or the Law of Karma. We can beat ourselves into a pulp by constantly releasing and continuing to let this energy flow out front these lower centers, which can destroy us.

The first steps are these

disciplines of the centers, consecrated and set aside to letting this energy rise and move back. The focusing of attention so that the pictures and the faces and the demons of our own unconscious are closed out and we focus only on this affirmation of an ideal and purpose which is related to the daily expression of this energy at some level.

The body grows quiet, the mind grows quiet, and this light of consciousness of the meeting of these two energies takes place. At that point, you have started meditation. Everything else is preparation. At that point, you have begun to meditate. We're only trying, we're only moving in this direction as we discipline, as we work, day by day, in periods of ten to fifteen minutes, not rushing, not pushing, not beating ourselves, but simply letting this thing take place. This is the *norm* for this is the return to Paradise. And this returning to God must take pace in us before it can take place outside.

This is meditation. This is the movement toward...the state of stillness and light.

* * *

"Will prayer answer for mediation?"

"Will asking a question answer it? No, but it shows that we desire information and therefore it has its merits. Just so when we pray. We show to our Heavenly Father that we are anxious for His guidance and help, for the manifestation of His promises in our lives. It then takes an attitude of waiting, of silence, of listening, to be able to hear the still small voice whisper within, and to know that all is well. Prayer therefore is the basis of meditation."

(*A Search for God*, Book II)

THE PRODIGALS

Here in the depths of time and space
Our hearts and souls and minds erase
The infinite beginning Light,
Leading us through this long night
Conscious mind has pulled the veil
Upon the long and lonely trail,
Since spirit in His image shod
First turned its face away from God.
From highest heaven to the depths
Of lowest self the spirits wept,
Choosing hell with heaven's free will
But God within is waiting still,
Waiting through the tortuous night
For sons of men to choose the Light!

Ruth Hille Bramman

NOTE: This is a REPRINT of a former monthly publication of the
Association for Research and Enlightenment, Inc.