

The Centrality of Prayer

Part 1

Fr. Herman Acker

March 27, 2020

No action is more important in the believer's life than prayer. This is because prayer involves us in a direct relationship between God and ourselves and nothing is more necessary for our life than God. Prayer is that which engages us in a direct communication with God. Since God is necessary for the continuation of our lives, it is necessary for us to be in regular communication with Him.

There is never a place or time when we are not in God's presence. God and his accessibility are always true. It makes no difference if we are among people, in our home with family, or by ourselves; God is always present and ready to receive our prayer.

After reading Matthew 25:31- 46, which contains a teaching about the Judgment, one could also say that acts of charity and compassion toward our fellow human beings are just as important as prayer. Indeed, in this passage, love is the criterion for judgment. One could say that love is a prerequisite and extension, or consequence, of prayer to God. In 1 John 4:8 we read, "God is love". Prayer has at its center God-consciousness. For prayer to be true and acceptable, one must love and forgive others (Matt.6:12, 14-15). This is an inner attitude for which we must strive. This love of neighbor is expressed when we love them while they are present with us or we with them. If we are not present and are unable to do anything to directly help and love them, we can still love them by praying for them. Though we may not present with them, God is.

Any particular act of love is always contingent upon particular circumstances; prayer, on the other hand, is never dependent on a particular situation. It is not dependent on time or place any more than God is. Nothing is a more direct connection to the One who made us than prayer, and wherever we are, He is. Prayer itself is our reason for being because God is so.