

**- Madame Guyon: prayer of the heart**

PRAYER is nothing but the *application of the heart to God*, and the internal exercise of love. St. Paul has enjoined us to "*pray without ceasing*;" and our Lord bids us "watch and pray"

... You must, then, learn a species of prayer which may be exercised at all times; which does not obstruct outward employments; which may be equally practiced by princes, kings, soldiers and children, laborers, and sick persons; It is not a prayer of the understanding alone, for the mind of man is so limited in its operations that it can have but one object at a time; but it is the PRAYER OF THE HEART which is not interrupted by the exercises of reason.

...As I have said...our direct and principal exercise should consist *in the contemplation of the Divine presence*, ... by sinking within, under a view by faith, and simply recollecting ourselves.

It is proper here to caution beginners against wandering from truth to truth, and from subject to subject; the right way to penetrate every divine truth, to enjoy its full relish, and to imprint it on the heart, is to dwell upon it whilst its savor continues.

HERE we must begin to *abandon* and give up our whole existence to God, from the strong and positive conviction, that the occurrences of every moment result from his immediate will and permission, and are just such as our state requires. This conviction will make us content with everything; and cause us to regard all that happens, not from the side of the creature, but from that of God.

But, dearly beloved, whoever you are who sincerely wish to give yourselves up to God, I conjure you, that after having once made the donation, you take not yourselves back again; remember, a gift once presented, is no longer at the disposal of the giver.

4. It is practised by continually losing our own will in the will of God; renouncing every private inclination as soon as it arises, however good it may appear, that we may stand in indifference with respect to ourselves, and only will what God has willed from all eternity;

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When you sit in front of the divine, why do you meditate? If you want sweetness and presence and getting something, that is not the highest meaning. Just sit in front of the divine to give love. Take whatever comes to you as a gift of the divine. Take everything in your life as a gift of the divine. Be grateful. If dryness comes, then take that. If pain comes, take that. Because the sun is shining in everything. By seeing separation, pain, joy, hunger, then we are not seeing underneath all this is non-separateness. Everything is already reality. Any notion of yourself as other than the one reality is an illusion.