

An Analysis of Some Christian Practices & Their Spiritual Benefits

[PART 2: Prayer]

This investigation using logic is designed to analyze religious practices promoted by the church system which are said to have 'proven' spiritual benefits, but which are misdirections as far as the Kingdom is concerned. My logic is cause-&-effect analyses, not human reasoning. Before reading this, make sure you read the 'Introduction' to this series first: [HERE](#)

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Why Write This Article?

Why write this article? Because we are being deprogrammed and then reprogrammed so we can operate properly as sons in the New Ekklesia¹.

Even Theodore Austin-Sparks (leader of Honor Oak Christian Fellowship, 1926)² knew that it's all about the King, not about us, and that he'll strip everything unessential and unrighteous away from those who surrender to him – even Christian stuff:

"I am convinced, I know it is true, that what the Lord is doing with so many of us is stripping us, stripping us of the things which we have taken on or we have gotten into; He is stripping them off and bringing us down to the place where it is the Lord Jesus or it is nothing! If the Lord Jesus fails, there is nothing to live for, and some of us have come to the place where we have said to the Lord, "Lord, if You are not going to come in and fill this place, please take us away: there is nothing more to live for." Is that exaggeration? ... The Lord is doing that sort of thing, just stripping us, stripping us of things, even Christian things; and He is going to fill the place Himself."³

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PROPOSITION #2a: *I propose that the spiritual changes produced in the lives of people and localities through the various prayer movements is actually caused by the connection created between Heaven and each prayer participant, rather than the result of their earnest entreaty of God.*

PROPOSITION #2b: *I propose that pray has completely replaced spiritual communication with God, which is not the way he intended it to be.*

Christians in Australia and all over the world have been organising prayer groups with the aim of releasing revival in their cities &/or nations. Their desire is to mimic such events as the Welsh Revival (1904-1905) and the awakening of the Wesleyan movement (the end of the 18th century). Interestingly, the Welsh Revival petered out and the Wesley's movement quickly morphed into the Methodist denomination, both ceasing within a generation. Today, Christians believe that if their group is sincere enough and they pray enough with fasting, then God will hear their request and grant revival because it happened that way before.

So, the question is: Do these worldwide prayer sessions achieve revival? Logically, the simple answer is, no. If there are, say, 1 million such groups seriously praying for revival around the world today, and there is no outstanding, powerful revivals generated by them, then there is a problem. So, why continue to pray for 'revival' in the off-chance it could come about?

1 – "Father's Mind on the New Ekklesia"

canberraforerunners.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Fathers-Mind-on-the-New-Ekklesia.pdf

2 – en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theodore_Austin-Sparks

3– T. Austin-Sparks, from "The Greatest Transition from One Humanity to Another"

livingwalk.wordpress.com/2010/03/29/the-great-transition-from-one-humanity-to-another-t-austin-sparks

The same could be said of Christian's faith in their personal prayers. I would estimate from observation and experience that about 0.001% of worldwide prayers are answered immediately. I have no method of calculating this number, only that it is very tiny. As a consequence of this small success rate of immediacy, Christians pray harder, more vehemently and longer. They add fasting to the mix and extend it over weeks and months. Why? Because they believe God answers prayer. However, their method is really designed to 'twist God's arm' and make him 'cave in' to their demands. (I call this type of praying, "God bothering".) I am not alone in this understanding:

*"A lot of times the faith we're having faith in is 'faith', and that is not at all what is going on in the pages of the NT...Faith is not a commodity that we leverage for our circumstantial or personal advantage or comfort. Faith is relational trust in a living being. So I'm not having faith in faith. I'm not having faith in an outcome. I'm having faith in my Father. There's a relationship going on here, it's not transactional. It's not a business arrangement. You see this happen a lot with Christians, they're trying to corner God with his own words and promises, manipulating a particular outcome. We feel comfortable doing it because it's a scripture verse. But, in case you haven't noticed, God is not going to be cornered by you quoting a Bible verse back to him when he has 'set his nose' to forming his Son in you, despite your kicking, screaming, crying, pleading, bribing, ranting."*⁴

The prayer techniques to get God to do things, is illogical. The Creator of all things and Master of the Universe should be asked what he wants, rather than Christians embarking on coercive activities to force him to do what they want.

If all the time and energy put into prayer requests for revival isn't working the way Christians believe it should, then logic demands a 're-think'.

The starting point for this is: Why did revivals happen in the past? The right answer to this question should lead us to the right path for praying. That's cause-&-effect analysis.

Firstly, it must be understood that in the Kingdom, Christian prayer methods and systems don't exist. That's a real wake-up. Sons communicate with the Trinity in a normal, natural, relational way. We talk to them, share our hearts, confess our failures and make requests. However, our main focus is to hear from them, not to talk at them. Out of respect and honour for who the members of the Trinity are, sons want to be about their business, not their own. This means they totally rely on the Trinity to meet all their needs and trust them with everything, including overseeing and ordering their lives.

How, then, did the Welsh and Wesleyan revivals happen as a product of prayer groups? I believe it wasn't the prayer method, the length of time spent praying or the faith of the prayers, but what actually transpired during the prayer vigils and its impact on the individual lives. Again, that's cause-&-effect analysis.

Let's see some other examples to analyze.

(1) Jesus taught his OC disciples to pray a certain way, but that's not necessarily transferable to the NC. Remember, Jesus is our prototype, not his OC disciples. His disciples became NC spirit-filled sons like him, so their example is relevant for us (provided we use discernment to separate their Jewishness from the Kingdom).

Jesus never prayed for something to happen in the same way that Christians pray today. He never said, "Be healed in the name of Jesus". Logically, he would never have said that. He never prayed, "Father, raise Lazarus from the dead", or, "I rebuke you Satan in the name of Father", or, "Be healed in the name of WHWH". Instead, he operated as a son, commanding things to happen.

For example:

4 – Nicholas with Frank Viola (7-1-2020) "Insurgence Podcast 51: Practical Lessons on Kingdom Living: Part 2" [5:45-7:04]
www.podbean.com/media/share/pb-93xsq-cf81a5

- “Peace, be still!”⁵
- “Your sins are forgiven you”⁶
- “As you have believed, so let it be done for you”⁷
- “Your faith has made you well. Go in peace.”⁸

In regards to demon possession, it says about the incident with the Gadarene demoniac, the demons “begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss. Now a herd of many swine was feeding there on the mountain. So they begged Him that He would permit them to enter them.”⁹ No praying here, just commanding.

In regard to one blind man it’s recorded that “He took the blind man by the hand and led him outside the village. When he had spit on the man’s eyes and put his hands on him, Jesus asked, “Do you see anything?”¹⁰

Of the times it’s recorded that he did pray, it was to go away from the crowd and be with his Father on a mountain so he could talk with him privately in relationship. This are only 3 instances recorded in the Gospels. Hardly a principle that dictates prayer days and 40-day prayer and fasting events for his modern-day followers.

Jesus was operating as a son, a genuine, mature son. He’d put aside his deity,¹¹ so everything he was able to accomplish was out of his sonship, being filled with the Spirit (AKA baptised in the Holy Spirit) and doing what father had already set up for him to do.

So, there’s no precedent set by Jesus to spend extensive times in prayer, only the need for relational communication.

(2) The Desert Fathers¹² are another group whose prayer life was different to the modern techniques. Read this extract:¹³ →→→→→→→→

They were spiritual warriors involved in spiritual warfare. They also practised Hesychast prayer.¹⁴ This “was a meditative practice that was traditionally done in silence and with eyes closed – “empty of mental pictures” and visual concepts, but with the intense consciousness of God’s presence.”¹⁵

BY the third and fourth centuries, the deserts of Egypt, Palestine, Persia, and Arabia had become filled with a radical wave of hermits and monks, who had chosen solitude apart from a decadent society, in a quest for deeper connection with God. They were not out to form a Christian counterculture, and they were not merely escapists. Theirs was a purposeful life of intercession and spiritual warfare, waging battle from their holes and caves. To them, Christian *society* did not require an overabundance of church services, prayer meetings, and accountability groups. The Body of Christ, and their connection to it, was a mystical identification. Their lives, meanwhile, were spent in continual prayer. They waged war against demonic forces on the very frontiers of the world. And while there are extremes with any movement, these men were not overly negative or bent on withdrawal at the expense of reaching out to society. In fact, society came to them for advice.

Hesychast prayer became a “formal movement of specific practices until the fourteenth century Byzantine meditative prayer techniques, when it was more closely identified with the Prayer of the Heart, or “Jesus Prayer””¹⁶. However, for the Desert Fathers, this was their *modus operandi*, the way they communicated with the Trinity. It wasn’t the constant babbling of prayer, but like Jesus, it was Spirit-to-spirit communication. They worked like Jesus in relationship with the Trinity and that’s how things manifested through them.

5 – Mark 4:39 (NKJV)
 6 – Matthew 9:5 (NKJV)
 7 – Matthew 8:13 (NKJV)
 8 – Luke 8:48 (NKJV)
 9 – Luke 8:31-32 (NKJV)
 10 – Mark 8:23 (NIV)
 11 – Philippians 2:7 (AMPC) – “But stripped Himself [of all privileges and rightful dignity], so as to assume the guise of a servant (slave), in that He became like men and was born a human being.” classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians%202:6-8&version=AMPC
 12 – en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Desert_Fathers
 13 – John Crowder (2006) ‘The New Mystics’ p:65 [paperback] www.amazon.com.au/Miracle-Workers-Reformers-New-Mystics-ebook/dp/B0051GN2JE
 14 – en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hesychasm
 15 – en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Desert_Fathers
 16 – en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hesychasm

* Read ‘The New Mystics’¹⁷ chapter 3 for more information about their deeds which flowed from their spiritual relationship with Heaven. There’s also a great section on “Getting Past The Mind”. The mind is where Christians pray from when it’s their spirit that should be communicating with the Trinity. Incidentally, this is why praying in the Spirit (AKA praying in tongues) is so important as it bypasses the mind.¹⁸

(3) Saint Patrick¹⁹ of Ireland and his fellow monks were an offshoot of the Desert Fathers. They followed the same principles of lifestyle and Hesychast prayer, and they were also able to achieve miraculous tasks such as translocation, shape-shifting, and much more. Those who reject Christian mysticism²⁰ regard these miraculous activities as legends, not facts.²¹

* Read ‘The New Mystics’²² chapter 5 for more information about Saint Patrick.

(4) The ‘Ladies of Gold’ were a group of praying ladies in California who had spiritual experiences which came out of their prayer time. These experiences with Holy Spirit and Jesus developed because they came into The Presence²³. It wasn’t their prayer that led to the experiences, but sitting quietly and focussing in the spirit. This is the same method as the Hesychast prayer used by the Desert Fathers and Patrick of Ireland.

Here’s a spiritual instance arising from being in the Lord’s presence. It was recorded from memory in ‘Ladies of Gold’, the book of their memoirs:

“In January, 1942, the Lord began to speak to me in the most vivid way about rapture. For many years a little company of us had been hidden away in a ministry of intercession and worship. During this time the Holy Spirit had led us continually, and had blessed us with true prophecy and many revelations about the great End-time plan of God. We all were preparing our hearts for the glorious day when our Lord would pour out the promised rain of His Spirit in double portion, and send us forth to work the "greater works" in His Holy Name.

It was, therefore, a great surprise to me when our Lord indicated that this earthly prayer ministry was being terminated, and that I was to enter into rest and be taken into another realm. I was puzzled at His Word and wondered if I were going to die. One night, as I was engaged in earnest prayer with a few others, I was suddenly rapt in the Spirit: I had the sensation of passing up and up and on into the third heaven!

"The universe is thy inheritance in Me", the Lord said. "Thou hast possessed an earthly inheritance in My Kingdom, but now thou shalt spy out and possess a heavenly inheritance by faith". ”²⁴

* Read ‘Ladies of Gold’²⁵ & “Two Listeners”²⁶ for more information.

Effective Spiritual Prayer

Religion has taught us to pray by repetitious verbal prayers. As I have written above, this technique is supposed to be forceful entreaty which is designed to twist ‘God’s’ arm and make him do what we want – all based on the Bible, of course. However, what is forgotten is that that’s OC (Old Covenant) thinking. Even if it’s based on the Gospels, it’s pre-New Covenant (NC) and the spiritual dynamics were not fully in play.

Under the NC, we’re back where Adam was before The Fall, as a spiritual being with a physical body and a

17 – John Crowder (2006) ‘The New Mystics’ www.amazon.com.au/Miracle-Workers-Reformers-New-Mystics-ebook/dp/B0051GN2JE

18 – 1 Corinthians 14:14

19 – en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_Patrick

20 – These are those who connect so deeply with the Trinity in relationship that they are taught some the mysteries of Heaven and the spirit realm.

21 – en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_Patrick#Legends

22 – John Crowder (2006) ‘The New Mystics’ www.amazon.com.au/Miracle-Workers-Reformers-New-Mystics-ebook/dp/B0051GN2JE

23 – “Learning to get into ‘The Presence’”

canberraforerunners.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Learning-to-get-into-The-Presence.pdf

24 – James Maloney (ed.) 2011, “Ladies of Gold” p:24 [PDF]

FREE COPY: princessjanet.com/books/LadiesOfGold1.pdf

25 – READ: Vol. 1 - www.amazon.com.au/Ladies-Gold-One-Remarkable-Candlestick/dp/1449729223

Vol. 2 - www.amazon.com.au/Ladies-Gold-Two-Remarkable-Candlestick/dp/144974639X

Vol. 3 - www.amazon.com.au/Ladies-Gold-Remarkable-Ministry-Candlestick/dp/1449753574

26 – READ: Vol. 1 - www.amazon.com.au/God-Calling-Devotional-J-Russell-ebook/dp/B007Y59RKI

Vol. 2 - www.amazon.com.au/God-Calling-2-At-ebook/dp/B004GXB056

soul to interact with the natural realm. Our spirit is our real self,²⁷ not our body mind and soul, and it's our spirit that's in communication with the Trinity and the spirit realm. Our King communicates with us by our spirit, not our mind and ears. He doesn't speak to us orally, he communicates Spirit-to-spirit. Once we understand that, it's obvious that verbal prayers are very limited or ineffective in the main.

We need to communicate spiritually, not verbally so we are effective communicators with him. Unfortunately, the Bible continues to talk about 'God' speaking to people, which gives us false teaching under the NC. In the OT, there were theophanies when The Son appeared to people and communicated with them verbally. Under the NC, that's very rare, because the spirit-to-Spirit method is the one we're supposed to be using – even if we aren't taught about it.

Our confusion even comes from genesis where the Bible says that 'God' spoke creation into being. As he's a spiritual being, with out a physical body with it's components, he couldn't have spoken as we know it. Instead, he spoke spiritually, as only he knows how to do. See how easily we misunderstand spiritual matters?

How do we pray spiritually?

There's 2 ways this happens:

1. Praying in the spirit (i.e. praying in tongues)
2. Praying verbally so our spirit communicates

When we pray in tongues, we circumvent our mind.²⁸ That's critical because it's our mind that gets in the way of perfect communication with Heaven. Praying in the spirit, as it's also called, is the primary way we should pray so it's effective and unpolluted. This was Paul's admonition to us, because he was more competent at it than the new believers were.²⁹

When we pray verbally, just like when we speak normally, our real self (our spirit) is communicating the same message in the spirit. This is important to realise, but it must be done properly out of our intimacy with the Trinity, and not out from religious grandiosity or a pestering intention. For it to be effective, any spoken prayer must have your spirit engaged in it and your faith in full positive agreement with your spirit - no doubt or hesitancy must exist.

CONCLUSION

Spiritual benefit is fully realised when a person enters into the presence of the Lord rather than praying from thoughts in the mind or reading written prayers. We were created for spiritual union with our Creator, not to talk endlessly at him.

Check it out for yourself. Rather than having a prayer time every day, come into the Lord's presence and spend time there loving him and chatting with him. Switch to listening, rather than talking. Practise this and see how you change spiritually. Your "prayer life" will never be the same again. After all, we're here to carry out his plans, not to make him our slave to do what we want.

Once a person comes into intimacy with Father or King Jesus, the love they share with each other causes the person to desire being in his presence and to experience the bliss³⁰ of their time together. This allows the person to see prayer as communication rather than twisting God's arm to get him to do things. This will drastically change their 'prayer life' forever.

To get proper perspective on the Trinity's love relationship with us so that prayer is exchanged for loving spiritual communication, I suggest watching (or re-watching) the mid-section of the movie "The Shack".

27 – MESSAGE: "Our True Self" (15-4-2022) canberraforerunners.org/wp-content/uploads/MESSAGE-Our-True-Self-15-4-2022.pdf

28 – 1 Corinthians 14:14

29 – 1 Corinthians 14:18 (See AMPC, YLT, WYC, PHILLIPS, ICB)

30 – "Bliss, Ecstasy and Heavenly Intoxication" canberraforerunners.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Bliss-Ecstasy-and-Heavenly-Intoxication.pdf

"How to Experience the Trinity's Bliss" canberraforerunners.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/How-to-Experience-the-Trinitys-Bliss.pdf

- **MOVIE:** “The Shack” 0:41:46-1:33:05 [DVD]

Alternatively, read this section from the book “The Shack”: Chapters 5-11

SPIRITUAL BENEFITS

In regard to prayer, there is LITTLE to NO spiritual benefit in the following activities:

1. Praying rote prayers (i.e. reciting prayers)
2. Sending a message to your friends, telling them to pray for you in your difficult circumstance
3. Praying whatever comes into your head
4. Praying and fasting when not directed by the Spirit
5. Prayer vigils
6. Praying for the dead
7. Praying for others when not led by the Spirit
8. Praying for everyone in the world and all those who are suffering
9. Praying without listening
10. Praying without pausing to listen
11. Using prayer as the connection with the Trinity instead of intimacy and oneness³¹

There **is** spiritual benefit when praying:

1. In the Spirit (praying in tongues)³²
2. What the Spirit has shown to pray
3. In alignment with Heaven
4. In line with Father’s heart
5. In agreement with Father’s plans

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(Readers will need to look up for themselves any scriptures alluded to in this document which aren't referenced)

31 – “What Father has Personally Spoken to Me About Oneness”

canberraforerunners.org/wp-content/uploads/What-Father-has-Personally-Spoken-to-Me-About-Oneness.pdf

32 – SEE: “An Analysis of Some Christian Practices and Their Spiritual Benefits-11 Tongues”

canberraforerunners.org/wp-content/uploads/An-Analysis-of-Some-Christian-Practices-and-Their-Spiritual-Benefits-11.pdf