

Evolution of One's Prayer Life

(Based on PW Lecture 105, ¶18, 32-34)
(Also builds off presentation of L127)

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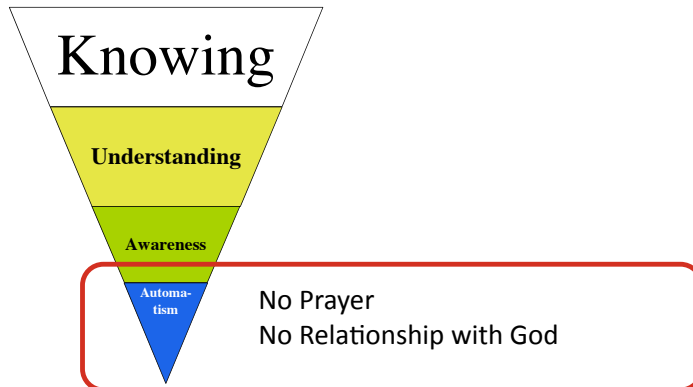
What Is Prayer?

- What is Prayer?
 - Prayer is the experience of relating to God
 - *This evolves with one's spiritual growth and level of consciousness*



Stage 1 Prayer Life (Experience of Relating To God)

1. When one is unconscious and unaware, there is **no prayer**, **NO RELATIONSHIP** to God, because there is **no God-concept**.
 - Does not look for God, does not see God
 - Is caught up in automatism



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Stage 2 Prayer Life (Experience of Relating To God)

2. One begins to **WONDER**, to ask questions about what is **THIS** all about!
 - This is a **first experience of a relationship to God**, this is first experience of prayer
 - **Spontaneous experience of wondering**
 - **Allows new considerations to fill him**

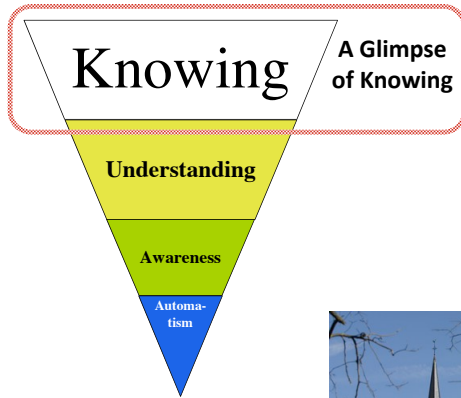


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Stage 3 Prayer Life (Experience of Relating To God)

3. Realization of a Supreme Intelligence -- THIS just didn't happen

- Prayer, or relationship to God, takes the form of admiration of the marvel of the universe and nature.
- It is *WORSHIP*

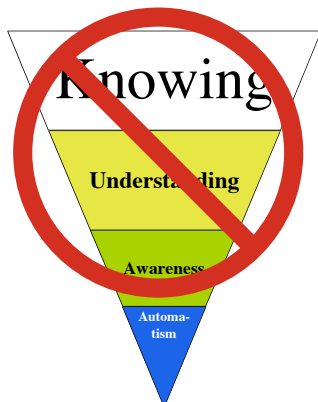


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Stage 4 Prayer Life (Experience of Relating To God)

4. Human Limitations and Confusion Set in...

- Confusion of the mind, the immaturity and inadequacy cause
 - Fear
 - Clinging
 - Helplessness
 - Dependence
- Wishful-thinking and greed, unacceptance of reality
 - *Supplication* -- asking Supreme Being for *HELP*



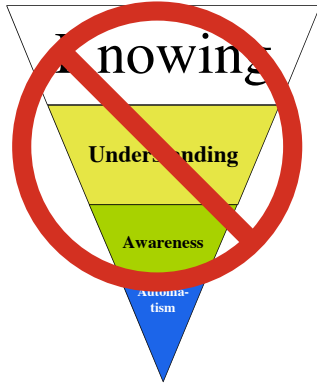
God, Please Help Me!

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Stage 4 Prayer Life (Experience of Relating To God) (continued)

4. Human Limitations and Confusion Set in...

- “When prayers seem to be answered in this state, it is not because God acts, but because, in some way, *one is sincere in spite of all one's self-deceptions and evasions* and has thus opened a channel within through which laws of being can penetrate to him
- What often appears like an answered prayer is the strength of an unconflicted mind in the particular area where the prayer is answered, at least at that time.”



Prayer Answered!

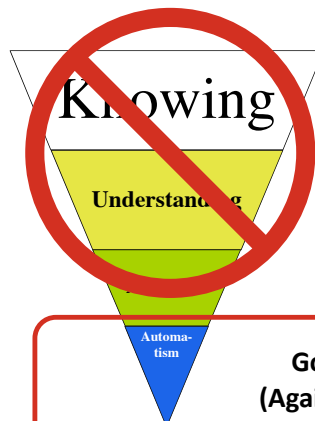
(God experienced as the Answerer to Prayer -- like magic!)

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Stages 5 Prayer Life (Experience of Relating To God)

5. From Magic to Cause and Effect Participation -- All about ME

- “When man comes into the state of *independence*, when he *lets go of this imaginary God who punishes, rewards, and leads life for him*, when he finds himself in the state of *atheism*, of *denial of any higher being*, he does not pray, of course. At least not in the conventional sense.”



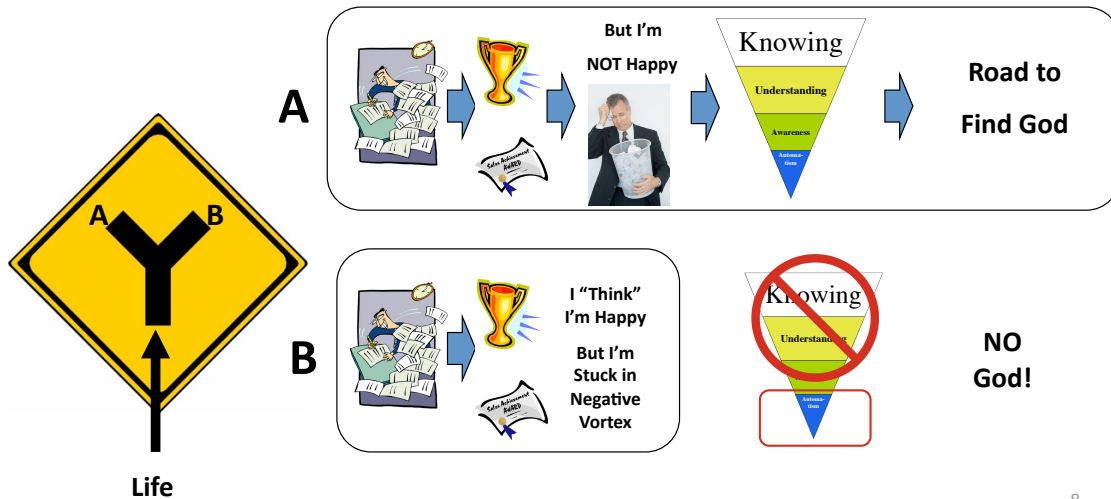
God? Who Needs “God”?
(Again, no relationship to God)

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Stage 6 Prayer Life (Experience of Relating To God)

6. A Fork In The Road for the Atheist

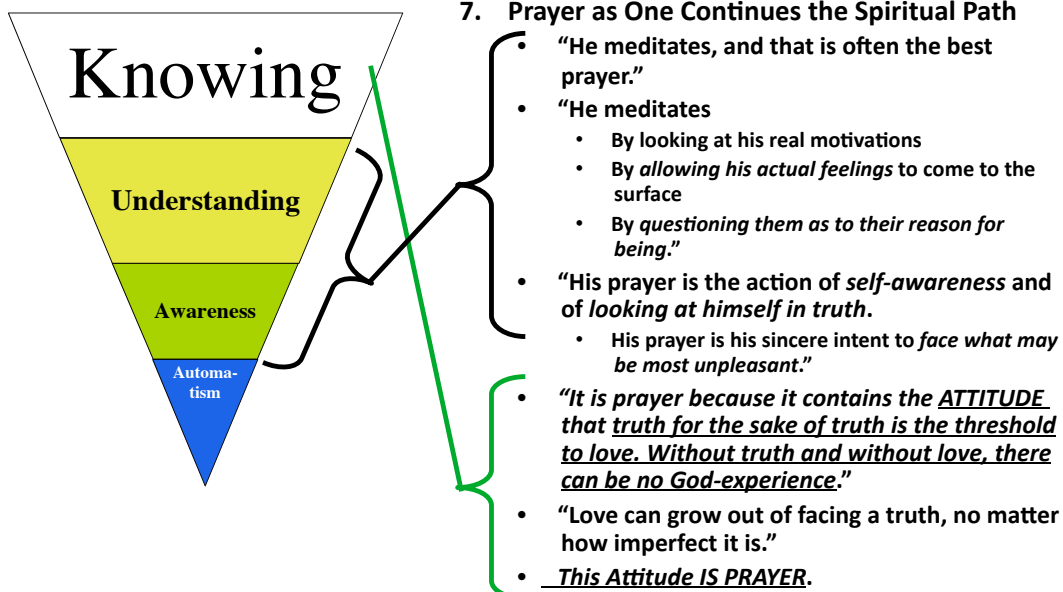
- A. "He may meditate on himself, he may look at himself in sincerity, and this, as you all know by now, is the best prayer in the true sense."
- B. "But it may also be that man, in the atheistic state, is completely irresponsible, and fails to think and look at himself. He may escape from himself the same way as the person who uses God as an escape from himself."



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Stage 7 Prayer Life (Experience of Relating To God)

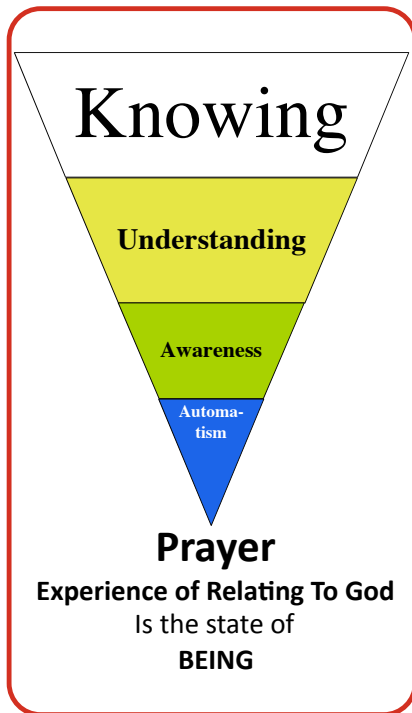
7. Prayer as One Continues the Spiritual Path



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Stage 7 Prayer Life (Experience of Relating To God)

Continued



7. Psychological and Spiritual Work

- Candor with oneself IS prayer
- Alertness to one's resistance IS prayer
- Owning up to something that one has hidden from in shame IS prayer.

When this proceeds, the state of being gradually comes into existence, little by little, with interruptions

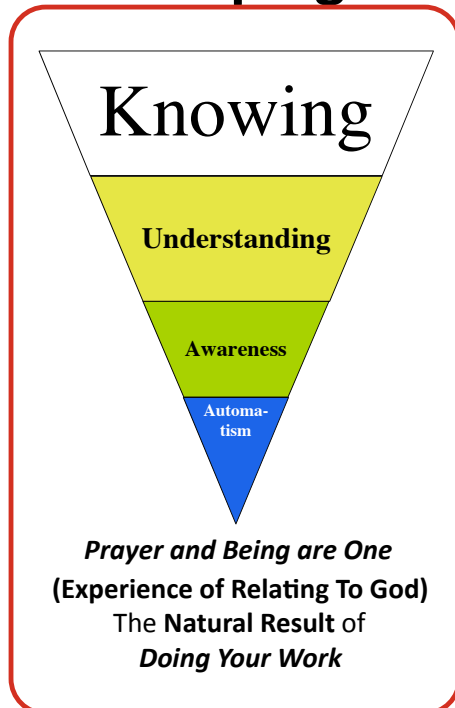
Then, *in the state of being*, prayer is no longer an action of uttered words or thoughts

Prayer is a feeling

- Of being in the eternal now
- Of flowing in a current of love with all beings
- Of understanding and perception
- Of being alive.
- It is awareness of God in His Reality.

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Developing a Prayer Life (Experience of Relating To God)

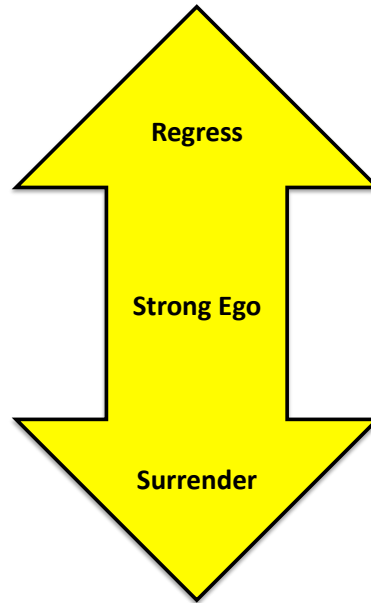


- This kind of prayer *cannot be imitated or learned through any teachings, prescribed practices, or disciplines.*
- It is the *natural outcome* of the courage and humility to face oneself completely and without reservation
- Before you reached this *highest state of relating to God*, of being, where prayer and being are one, all you can do, *the best prayer in the world, is*
 - *the renewed constant intent to face yourself without any reservation*
 - *to remove all pretenses between your conscious mind and that which is in you*
 - *and then, to remove the pretense between what is in you and others.*
- *This is the pathway, my friends.*

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Summary – Prayer, Different for Various Areas and Stages of Life, Dynamic

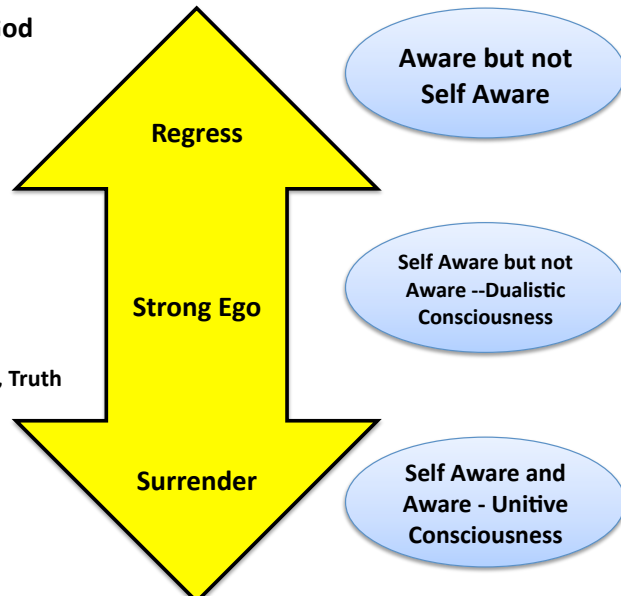
1. **No Prayer, no relationship with God**
 - Atheist
2. **Awe at Cosmos**
3. **Worship Creator God**
4. **God as Authority**
 - God Rewards/Punishes
 - We Obey, Fear, Trust, Distrust
 - We Make requests of
5. **Self (Ego) as Sole Boss**
 - Atheist
6. **Choice**
 - Surrender to Divine Mystery, Love, Truth
 - OR Stay Sole Boss
7. **Enter the Mystery**
 - Pray without Ceasing
 - Praying and Being are One



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