

## ON PRAYER



"And in praying do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; ...for your father knows what you need before you ask him." (Mt 6:7-8)

"We should constantly and unceasingly repeat the Jesus prayer. Only the name of Christ must remain inside our heart and mind; when we neglect our prayer, that is our communication with God, the devil finds the chance to confuse us with negative thoughts. Thus, we end up not knowing what we want, do, or say."

"The soul must be constantly ready and alert and always in contact with the spiritual headquarters, that is, God. Only then, it will feel secure, full of hope and joy.

When I was in the army, during the war, I was a radio operator. I noticed that we felt secure only when we communicated with the Army Division on an hourly basis. When our communication was limited to every two hours, we felt a little bit insecure; sometimes, when we could only be in touch with them twice a day, we felt uncomfortable, lonely and lost. The same thing applies to our prayer. The more we pray, the more secure we feel, on a spiritual basis, of course."

“When someone is involved in manual labor, it helps him a lot to say the Jesus prayer and at the same time perform his task.

When someone is doing work that needs concentration, i.e. he is driving a car, or he is operating on a patient, he should also say the Jesus prayer so God can help him and enlighten him; however, he should pray with his heart, and use his mind to concentrate on his work and thus avoid doing any mistakes.”

“The more the mind concentrates on praying, and is being humbled, the more it is enlightened by the grace of God. However, the more it gets dispersed and confused due to its haughtiness, the more it becomes troubled; therefore our mind, which is clean by nature, fills up with dirty thoughts.”

“When we suffer from narrow-mindedness, we should ask for God’s intervention. If He does not intervene then, when will He do so?”

“We must pray for other people with contrition and pain in our soul. We can only achieve this, if, due to our humbleness, we consider ourselves the cause of all the problems in the world.

- But, Father, how can you accept that you are the cause for the divorce of a married couple in Athens?

- Well, I say to myself: If I were a saint, like the old fathers, I would ask God to make them love each other again, and He would help them, as He has promised to listen to saints. Since I am not a saint, God does not listen to me. Therefore, it is my fault that this family is breaking up, as well as for the evil existing in the world. This way, I never judge anyone, but I only blame myself for everything; then God will help.”

“We must not act like children and constantly ask God for minor things. When we are asking for something, which can be humanly accomplished, we must try, as much as we can, to do it ourselves. We should only turn to God, when we, as human beings, are unable to achieve what we want.”

“The Jesus prayer must gratefully and generously spring out of our soul, while, at the same time, we think of all the good things God has done for us.”

"We should always say that the Jesus prayer wherever we are; not just in the morning or at night. When we walk, we should not waste our free time, but instead take advantage of it and repeat the prayer. When we are working in a busy place and it is difficult for us to concentrate on praying, we can quietly chant without disturbing others."

"If someone prays correctly, God listens to him, as long as what he is asking in his prayer is for the benefit of the person he prays for."

"The prayer of those who pray for the world benefits the faithful Christians who have specific and serious problems, because both the former and the latter "are turned in the same frequency."

"When I wish to rest, I pray. I realised that the only effective way to get some rest is through praying. Therefore, pray and study."

"When you are about to begin your prayer, first read a section from the Holy Bible or a story from the Gerontikon, to get your mind together and your heart warmed up. Then start praying."

"Through your prayer, you can sanctify your self as well as your work. When there are new people at your place of work, first teach them how to become spiritually revived, and then show them the practical side of the work. I will give you an example to indicate that this is both for your own benefit as well as for the benefit of your fellow workers. Suppose someone owns a tailor's shop. His employees, who are not pious, curse while they are doing their work. As a result, the people who will wear the clothes they are sewing will be under the influence of the devil. Gradually, they will realise that something is wrong with this tailor shop and will start looking for another. God's grace will also abandon the tailor shop which will eventually close down. The opposite happens if the owner employs pious workers and looks first after their spiritual education, and then shows them the art of work.

In our days, people prefer to purchase their icons and other items from monasteries. They do so because they know that monks and nuns say the Jesus prayer while working and everything they do is blessed. When people visit a monastery and eat food cooked without

oil, they find it very tasty and say:

- I haven't eaten such a tasty dish even in the best restaurant. How can it be so tasty when it is cooked without oil?

When the cook of a restaurant curses while he is cooking and never goes to church, how can the food be blessed? On the contrary, the monk is praying while cooking and his heart is filled with positive thoughts; he thinks that he is preparing food for earthy angels to eat. Moreover, when monks sit at the table to eat, they say a prayer to bless the food. How is it possible then for the food not to taste good?

Therefore, when someone comes to your business to start work, first see that he is spiritually revived and then show him the work, so your business will have God's blessing and be prosperous."

Elder Paisios always prayed wholeheartedly for everyone in the world. He dedicated the day to relieve the pain of people in grief and the night to God. He rested for a few hours in the early morning, in order to regain some strength after his all night prayers and be able to help people during the day. He used to read the whole Book of Psalms on a daily basis. Sometimes, he divided the hours of the night, for instance, from 9:00- 10:00 he prayed for God to protect those who return home late from work; from 11:00- 12:00 for those who travel, so they will not be involved in any accidents; from midnight- 01:00 for God to help people stay away from ill-reputed night clubs, where they usually spend the night. In general, he prayed for every situation, for the sick people in hospitals, the married couples involved in a quarrel, etc.

Priestmonk Christodoulos (1998) "Elder Paisios of the Holy Mountain"  
Holy Mountain.

Source:<http://www.pigizois.gr/>