


Praying for Others

From the teachings of
A Course in Miracles



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By the Circle of Atonement
Prayer Ministry



Prayer is the greatest gift with which God blessed His Son at his creation.

— *The Song of Prayer*

If you are interested in praying for others based on *A Course in Miracles*, this booklet provides you with a series of resources for doing so. We have included an overview entitled “18 Principles of Praying for Others” that outlines the Course’s distinctive approach to this topic and is drawn from references to prayer in the Course, *The Song of Prayer* (a supplement to the Course), and personal guidance given to scribe Helen Schucman. You will also find “Sample Prayers for Others” which provides a number of prayers that you can use in praying for people. In the back of this booklet, these prayers are also specially designed as table-tents so you can display them wherever you need a reminder. Finally, the article “Praying for Others: Is It Part of *A Course in Miracles*?” by Robert Perry covers such issues as what we pray for and how we pray.

Here at the Circle, we consider prayer to be a sacred function. We host weekly online Sacred Silence Gatherings every Monday from 11am-11:30am (EST) where we pray for the needs of others and for peace in our world. You’re welcome to attend these gatherings inside our Course Companions online community at community.circleofa.org. We would love to see you there and, in the meantime, we hope you find these resources helpful in your own prayer journey.

With love,

Circle of Atonement Prayer Ministry

PS: If you or anyone you know would like to submit a prayer request so our team can pray for you, we invite you to visit circleofa.org/pray.

18 Principles of Praying for Others based on the teachings of *A Course in Miracles*

The power of prayer

- 01 Never doubt that your prayer is heard and answered. Trust that it cannot fail to reach the receiver.
- 02 Think of yourself as a very powerful receiving and sending channel, designed to receive God's love and send it out through prayer. Recognize "the vast radiation range of your own inner illumination."
- 03 Through the act of praying with others, "you have established there an altar which reaches to God Himself and to His Son."
- 04 Though receivers don't need you there physically, they may need you to respond immediately to their urgent need.

How to pray for specific concerns

- 05 Pray for the healing of the receiver's mind, in the understanding that illness deep in the unconscious mind is the *cause* and any problem on the surface is merely the *effect*.
- 06 Don't pray for specifics, for resolution on the level of form. Even if you remove an effect, the cause will remain and simply take a new form.
- 07 Your prayer is an appeal to the receiver to change her mind and accept her healing. In prayer you can address this need in her more directly than you can in speech.

08

Pray by uniting with the song of God's love, leaving it in His hands to resolve the specific problem as He knows best. This resolution is merely an echo of the real reply, which is the song of His love.

09

Through prayer, you can stand beside the receiver and elevate his level of prayer. You "help him by offering your love and support that his asking be holy and his true need recognized."

How to see the one you are praying for

10

Pray by extending forgiveness to the receiver, which also means lifting your projections of guilt from her. This wipes away the guilt in her that is the source of illness.

11

Pray by seeing the receiver as he really is. Overlook his body and his ego and recognize him as the holy Son of God who is deserving of everything.

12

Pray by joining your mind with the mind of the receiver and recognizing them as one.

13

To truly join with the receiver entails seeing him as your complete equal. Be vigilant for any sense that you are superior.

14

Your prayer should be "impersonal," in the sense that, even though you pray for a particular person, you understand that the need in her and the light in her are universal, and that by praying for her you are praying for everyone.

Desire, words, and guided prayer

15

The prayer is the *desire*; words are only there to facilitate and focus that desire. The earnestness and intensity of your prayer matters far more than your words.

16

Let the words of your prayer be guided. You may want to ask the Holy Spirit how He would have you pray for this person.

17

Join with Jesus in your prayer. He is praying for this person and asks you to join with him in this.

Your benefit

18

Praying for the healing of the minds of others will correct the errors in your own mind.

Sample Prayers for Others

“The prayer for the miracle”

*Jesus, help me see my brother [name] as he really is,
and thus release both him and me. (T-3.V.10:13)*

“The healer’s prayer”

Let me know this brother as I know myself. (T-5.I.4:6)

“The miracle prayer”

*Lord, I will leave my desire to help him in Your Hands.
If you will tell me what to do I will to do it.
(A prayer that Helen prayed for Bill; see T-1.46.9:3)*

Variation on the miracle prayer

*Whatever miracles I can do for [name], or any of her family, I will to do.
(Based on a prayer that Helen said for a dying friend.)*

Prayer for those whose illusions about themselves are being reinforced

*I pray that he recognize his problems are only illusions and have no
real meaning at all.
I pray that he realize the truth about himself.
(Based on a prayer that Helen and Bill were urged to pray while giving
psychological tests.)*

“Praying for others”

*I pray for your wellbeing,
so that I can lift my projections of guilt from you,
and thereby recognize it is not you who is hurting me.
(Based on S-1.III.1:4)*

Prayer said silently to a person suffering from old guilt

You should forget about your past mistakes and all the rest, because it does not matter.

You have showed a lot of love and should claim your forgiveness.

*You do **not** need to hurt yourself, and **must** stop these symptoms of disequilibrium and establish your freedom.*

(Based on a prayer that Helen was guided to say to her husband while he slept.)

Prayer silently spoken to a person who is ill

[Name], listen to me now and let Christ help you.

*Claim your right to forgiveness **now**.*

Our unconscious minds can reach Christ and He will unite us in prayer.

We can do it, [name].

*Help save us all, [name]. **Please** cooperate.*

*Your spirit and mine **can** unite and then the two of us **have** come together in Christ's name.*

Please, [name], don't identify with your body.

Help Christ to reach your spirit.

Leave it to Him and rest.

(Based on a prayer Helen said to a dying friend.)

Placing another's specific concerns in the hands of God

Begin by overlooking the specific concerns you are praying for and letting them go into God's hands.

This tells Him "that you would have no gods before Him; no Love but His."

Say to Him, "I trust You to take care of this need as You see fit."

"I ask before all else that Your will be done."

Now still your mind and enter "a quiet time of listening and loving."

Let go all your concerns and offer yourself into God's hands.

Give yourself up to be at one with Love.

Seek ye first the Kingdom of God.

And know that all else has been given you.

Trust that your specific concerns have been answered.

(Based on S-1.1.3-5)

Praying for Others



Is It Part of *A Course in Miracles*?

By Robert Perry

Many students assume that praying for others runs counter to the metaphysics of *A Course in Miracles*. Yet perhaps surprisingly, though, there is no real ambiguity on this issue. In addition to a few clear references to praying for others in the Course itself, there are a number of instances where Jesus told Helen Schucman to pray for someone. In this article, I will look at everything we can glean on this subject from the Course,

as well as from personal guidance and experiences that Helen had.

When combined, the result is a fascinating picture of what to pray for and how to do it, a picture that is unexpected and seems distinctive to the Course. Let's dive in.

The ancient priestess

In the months before the Course began coming through in 1965, Helen Schucman had a number of visionary experiences. One was of herself in an apparent past life as an ancient priestess who dedicated her whole existence to praying for others. She lived in the inner sanctum of a small white temple, which she never left. There, before a plain wooden altar, she prayed for what sounds like a steady stream of people who came to receive her help. She was so holy that Helen wasn't sure she was entirely solid. In Helen's autobiography (p. 32), she said, "The priestess never asked for anyone's name, nor for the details of his request. She prayed for everyone in the same way, sitting very quietly beside the flame on the altar."

In the early part of her Notes for the Course, she filled this out with more detail:

I think the Priestess responded automatically by praying directly to God, standing with upraised arms to draw down a blessing on her brother, who knelt outside. Her response was completely automatic and impersonal. She never even thought of checking the outcome, because there was no doubt.

I think this lifetime (if indeed it truly happened) remained very much a part of Helen. We see in her Notes instances of her praying for others with great intensity. We also see her being described in one of her visions (see p. 33 of her autobiography), as "a very powerful receiving and sending set" (something that Jesus reiterated twice; see T-4.VIII.8:3 and T-4.VIII.15:3). Her job as scribe of *A Course in Miracles* was only the receiving side of the equation—hearing Jesus' voice—but the *sending* side nonetheless remained a deep part of her. It is my belief, therefore, that we can trust Helen's instincts when it comes to prayer, and I will be leaning on them below.

Praying for the minds of others

There is a single central theme that emerges from most of the instances of praying for others in the Course and in Helen's personal guidance and experience. This theme is praying for the minds of others, not their physical health or external circumstances. Let me take you through the various examples of this.

An “earnest mental message” sent to stop a suicide

In the summer of 1965, before the dictation of the Course began, Helen had a dramatic experience in which she said to Bill, “Quick, Bill! Joe, your friend from Chicago, is thinking about suicide. We must send him a message right away.” So they sat down and Helen sent Joe an “earnest mental message,” which was this: “The answer is life, not death.” To their surprise, Bill found out that evening that Joe had been depressed earlier in the day and had actually picked up a gun, “but something held him back” (*Absence from Felicity*, by Ken Wapnick, p. 118).

Praying for Chip to forgive his father

The day before the Course started coming through, Helen wrote about a counselling session that she had with Bill’s friend Chip. Chip recounted a series of episodes with his father that, Helen said, “clearly emphasized that his father was a bastard.” Helen wrote, “I said a prayer for him.” This prayer was part of trying to help Chip let go of “what was obviously real and very intense hatred.” Her prayer, in other words, was being employed as a psychotherapeutic tool to help move Chip toward forgiveness.

Praying for Dave, who is dying from brain cancer

On this same day, Helen said a lengthy and impassioned prayer for her colleague Dave Diamond, who was dying of brain cancer. The ultimate aim of the prayer was for Dave’s cancer to be healed, but the immediate aim was for Dave to change his mind, claim his right to forgiveness, and accept the gift of healing Christ held out to him: “Dave, help Christ to reach your spirit and don’t depend on your brain.” At points she is openly pleading with Dave: “Help save us all, Dave. *Please cooperate.*” Interestingly, rather than praying for his healing, she is praying for him to *accept* his healing.

Praying for Louis’s “disequilibrium”

In a fascinating example of prayer, Helen records in her Notes that Jesus told her to go in and pray for her husband, who was feeling out of sorts, while he slept. She says that she prayed intensely for him and was strongly aware that Jesus joined her in this prayer. “We told” Louis, she says, that he should forget about his past-life transgressions “and should claim his forgiveness” and stop punishing himself—the suggestion being that his sense of “disequilibrium” was a result of self-punishment. She implies that the prayer worked: “He woke up, and said he was feeling better but hungry.”

Praying for Dave while he is dying

While Dave was dying, Helen visited him in the hospital. Out loud, she said to him “We all love you, so don’t be afraid.” But then silently she prayed “that he would be able to love everybody in return.” Jesus instructed her to pray this last thing, since, he told her, Dave’s “only real danger” was his *own* lack of love. Thus, Helen is trying to reach Dave on a

conscious level with a comforting message—“We all love you”—but at the same time, she is trying to reach his unconscious mind to help him make the really important choice: to return the love of all those who love him.

Praying for Bill, who is in a negative state of mind

In the long discourse that appears in Cameo 14: “The Chain of Miscreation,” Jesus mentions several ways in which Bill had become “unguided,” as well as fearful and discourteous. He is clearly not in a great state of mind. So Jesus says to Helen, “I suggest to you that we pray for him, and I pray for your full cooperation in this.” Jesus then outlines the benefits: “This will correct your errors, and help him react better to the work on the bookcase.” The prayer, in other words, is meant to heal Bill’s state of mind, with the result that he will be able to approach an upcoming project—the bookcase—more constructively. And this loving gesture will in turn correct Helen’s own lack of love.

Praying for a patient undergoing a psychological test

Near the end of the Text, Jesus gave some personal guidance to Helen and Bill about how to deal with psychological tests designed to measure mental illness in patients. One danger of such tests is that they will convey to the patient that he is fundamentally sick and flawed. They will, in other words, not “teach the truth about God’s Son.” Therefore, Jesus says, “Try to say a prayer for your brother while doing this and you will call forth and experience a miracle instead.” The prayer, in other words, was an attempt to counteract the negative effect of the test on this brother’s mind, instilling in him instead the truth that he is God’s Son, whole and perfect.

Praying for a prospective pupil who is not ready for the Course

At the end of the Manual for Teachers, the teacher is facing the question of whether a prospective pupil should begin with the Text, the Workbook, or the Manual. It says, “Which is for which? Who would profit more from prayers alone?” (M-29.2:1-2). The second question is our focus here. It envisions the possibility of a person who isn’t ready for the Course at all, in which case all the teacher can do is pray for him and thus give him a reflection of what he would get from the Course. This implies that the teacher of God’s ministry will partially take place through praying for others.

Praying for a “patient” at a distance

Finally, in the Psychotherapy supplement, there is a fascinating account in which a psychotherapist essentially does mind-to-mind therapy for “patients” at a distance. This is not phone therapy or Zoom therapy. These are people whom the therapist will most likely never meet or interact with. They are simply in need at that moment, and so the Holy Spirit sends them to the therapist in the form of “a name, a thought, a picture, an idea, or perhaps just a feeling of [the patient] reaching out to someone somewhere” (P-3.1.3:8). Since they are called his “patients” (P-3.1.3:1), he is presumably in some sense doing

psychotherapy here; he is sending them healing of the mind. Perhaps he even sends them a therapeutic message, as Helen did with Joe when she telepathically told him, “The answer is life, not death.” And since he is counting on the Holy Spirit to make sure that the two minds actually connect (P-3.I.3:9), so that the gift finds its target, it seems appropriate to call this prayer.

We have, then, nine instances of prayer for the healing of another’s mind. Importantly, in six of them either we or Helen are essentially told by Jesus to engage in this prayer. What is especially striking is that, as I said, they are all prayer not for someone’s physical health or life circumstances, but for someone’s *mind*. Look at the various conditions that are being prayed for in the examples above:



- The urge to commit suicide
- Intense hatred of one’s father
- Identification with one’s diseased brain and lack of acceptance of healing
- A sense of disequilibrium, stemming from guilt over past-life transgressions
- Unwillingness, on the brink of death, to return the love of others
- An unguided, fearful, and discourteous state of mind
- Treating a psychological test as a real statement about oneself
- A mind that needs the benefits of the Course, but is not ready to receive them directly from the Course
- A need for psychological healing

How interesting that these are kinds of conditions we pray for in the Course—and how fitting. Given the Course’s focus on the primacy of the mind, would we expect anything different?

How do we pray for others?

Now that we know what to pray for, how do we do it? There are a couple of prayers for others in the Course that we can draw upon here. The first appears in Chapter 3 of the Text:

The prayer for the miracle is:

Jesus, help me see my brother [name] as he really is, and thus release both him and me. (T-3.V.10:12-13)

In this prayer, we see our brother “as he really is,” and the power of this true sight is so great that it gives him a miracle. It releases him and thus releases us.

The second prayer is from Chapter 5:

It is impossible for a child of God to love his neighbor *except as himself*. That is why the healer’s prayer is:

Let me know this brother as I know myself.

Healing is an act of thought by which two minds perceive their oneness and become glad. (T-5.I.4:4-5:1)

Here, we so identify with our brother that we both love him and *know* him as ourselves, and this brings about a joyous sense of oneness between us, which heals him and frees us.

These two prayers have a great deal in common. One is labeled “the prayer for the miracle,” while the other is called “the healer’s prayer.” In both, we state our intent to see or know our brother as he is in truth. And this brings healing or release to him and to ourselves as well. We can assume that this is the essence of how we pray for another.

To see our brother as he truly is, however, we also need to lift the misperceptions we have laid on him, the ones that claim he is a sinner, not a Son of God. This is the focus in *The Song of Prayer* and its discussion of praying for others:

Praying for others, if rightly understood, becomes a means for lifting your projections of guilt from your brother, and enabling you to recognize it is not he who is hurting you. (S-1.III.1:4)

“Lifting your projections of guilt from your brother” and seeing your brother “as he really is” are two sides of the same coin. Both affirm that true prayer for a brother is *right perception* of him.

How Helen prayed for others

No article on how to pray for others would be complete without describing Helen's unique method of doing so, which we see in several of our nine examples above. Rather than praying to God on behalf of another, she spoke directly to the unconscious of others, earnestly and even intensely appealing to them to adopt the new perspective that would heal their minds. We saw how she prayed directly to Joe's mind, saying, "The answer is life, not death." She spoke directly to Dave's unconscious mind, pleading with him: "Help save us all, Dave. *Please* cooperate." And she spoke to her husband's mind while he slept, saying that "he should forget about the Alexandrian library [a reference to an apparent misdeed in a past life] and all the rest, because it does not matter."

This style of prayer is uniquely suited to the goal we have already seen. If the point of prayer is to bring about change in another's mind, why not just appeal directly to that person's mind, urging him or her to adopt that change? This may open the door to trying to control someone else's mind for one's own ego purposes, but Helen would typically pray these prayers in unison with Jesus. This means that presumably the content of what she said would flow from him, and would thus reflect *his* knowledge of what that person truly needed.

All in all, this style of prayer seems perfectly suited to the goal of shifting the minds of others.

Conclusion

There is literally no doubt that Jesus wants us to pray for others. The nine examples that we looked at, plus the two formal prayers for others in the Text, make this perfectly clear. What is also clear is that the goal of these prayers is to heal the *minds* of others, which is a different focus than the more conventional prayer for their health or external lives. The primary way we do this is that we pray to see them truly, to see or know them as they

really are. Yet an important additional method is the one Helen used, in which we join with Jesus and speak directly to the unconscious minds of others, appealing to them to embrace the new perspective that would bring their minds the healing they need.

What also comes through in these examples is the unmistakable sanctity of this function. The ancient priestess devoted her entire life to praying for others. She never left the room in which she prayed for all who came. Part of how the teacher of God fulfills his mission is to pray for those who come seeking his guidance. Part of how the psychotherapist serves his patients is by sending mental healing to those who cannot come to his office but who need his healing balm right then. And through her prayers, Helen apparently saved a man from suicide, helped a friend forgive his father, and helped her husband shake off the haunting “sins” of ancient times.

Praying for others is not a plaything, and it is not something to be scorned as beneath the lofty teachings of the Course. It is a sacred act. This is a way in which we can fulfill the function for which we came. This is a way in which we can take our place among the saviors of the world.



B



Prayer for those whose illusions about themselves are being reinforced

I pray that he recognize his problems are only illusions and have no real meaning at all. I pray that he realize the truth about himself.

(Based on a prayer that Helen and Bill were urged to pray while giving psychological tests.)

“Praying for others”

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Placing another's specific concerns in the hands of God

Begin by overlooking the specific concerns you are praying for and letting them go into God's hands. This tells Him "that you would have no gods before Him: no Love but His." Say to Him, "I trust You to take care of this need as You see fit." "I ask before all else that Your will be done." Now still your mind and enter "a quiet time of listening and loving." Let go all your concerns and offer yourself into God's hands. Give yourself up to be at one with Love. Seek ye first the Kingdom of God. And know that all else has been given you. Trust that your specific concerns have been answered.

(Based on S-113-5)



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Variation on the miracle prayer

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Prayer said silently to a person suffering from old guilt

*You should forget about your past mistakes and all the rest, because it does not matter. You have showed a lot of love and should claim your forgiveness. You do **not** need to hurt yourself, and **must** stop these symptoms of disequilibrium and establish your freedom.*

(Based on a prayer that Helen was guided to say to her husband while he slept.)

Prayer silently spoken to a person who is ill

*[Name], listen to me now and let Christ help you. Claim your right to forgiveness **now**. Our unconscious minds can reach Christ and He will unite us in prayer. We can do it, [name]. Help save us all, [name]. **Please** cooperate. Your spirit and mine **can** unite and then the two of us have come together in Christ's name. Please, [name], don't identify with your body. Help Christ to reach your spirit. Leave it to Him and rest.*

(Based on a prayer Helen said to a dying friend.)



Fold along the grey lines, then connect A and B with glue or tape.

A

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A