

Let God do it all

Stillness.
Silence.

You don't have to say anything.
You don't have to do anything.
You don't have to think anything
– let alone think about anything in particular.
You don't have to stop thinking, either
– that would be difficult!



It's not meant to be difficult,
because it's simply resting in God's love,
and it's letting God do for you
what you cannot always do for yourself,
and what you will never do as well as he.

The Spirit intercedes for the saints.
So let him pray for those you love,
and for you.

Just sit there and let God do it all.
Trust.
Surrender.
Rest in God,
in his loving arms.

Stillness.
Silence.
Be.
Let God do.

Let God do it all.
Enjoy his loving embrace.
Enjoy God.
Enjoy!

The Stone

The stone just is.
It doesn't do anything.
But God made it
with its lines and veins and dimple at one end,
and its shiny smooth surface,
polished by years of erosion.
And God loves it –
because he loves all that he has created.
But it doesn't do anything.
It just is.

But no!
It does do something!
It reflects the light.
Each surface reflects in a different way
windows, lights, candles,
sun, moon, stars.

Just be
like the stone.
Do nothing, except reflect the light,
the light of God – his very being, his love.
It's up to him to do the shining.
You just have to be.



The Crucifix

I do not understand why you had to die.
God does not need to be appeased by sacrifices,
let alone human ones.
Justice is not served
by you being punished for what I have done.

But you said you had to die,
to give your life a ransom for many,
to lay it down for your friends,
to go away so that you could send the Spirit
to go to prepare a place for us in your Father's house.
You said your blood was poured out for forgiveness.

You did die, and,
when you died,
you said
you would be there
in Paradise
to welcome
the thief
who died
with you.

I do not understand why you had to die,
but what I do know is that you came back.
You came back from the dead.
I don't understand how that happened either, but...

You said all along you would come back.
You knew what you were doing.
You were in control all the time.
I can trust you, even if I don't understand.

So, for now, I can trust
that I am forgiven,
that I abide in you
that your Spirit abides in me,
that you have prepared a place for me, and
that you will welcome me there one day
as you welcomed the thief.
Maybe, on that day, I shall begin to understand.

But I don't have to understand,
just as long as I will be with you
in Paradise,
and you abide in me
now.



Prayer – a meditation

Prayer may begin as a quick word,
A simple request,
A sudden impulse,
A cry of pain,
An arrow shot, hoping it will pierce the heart of God.

All these are prayers,
God hears the briefest word, the quietest whisper.
But prayer does not have to stop there.
Prayer is more,
So much more.

Prayer is not like sending for the fire brigade – only called in emergency.
Prayer is not a chore – something you have to do and get out of the way each day.
Prayer is not a job to do, or a box to tick.
Prayer is not something to achieve or complete, been there, done that.
Prayer is not merely a good habit, like brushing your teeth or getting regular exercise – though it certainly is that!

Prayer is a holding, a longing, a wrestling.
Prayer is an intensity, an involvement, an obsession
Prayer is banging on the counter! Thump the altar!
Prayer is not much saying, but still persistent;
Not the many words babbled by the pagan, but the widow's incessant pleading.

Prayer is knowing – and getting to know better.
Prayer is loving, caring, adoring.
Prayer is closeness, with the intimacy of bride and groom.
Prayer is not a crutch for life but the stuff of it,
The very heart, the reason for living

Prayer is love in action, even when there is nothing to do.
Prayer is volume, encompassing.
Prayer is continual, unceasing.
Prayer does not rest,
Save to rest in the goodness and love of God.

God's heart does not need piercing,
His love flows unending, embracing, without limit.
At times we glimpse his love.
At times his love touches us.
At times it seizes us!

But there is only one way truly to know that love:
To eat, sleep, live, breathe and be with the lover.
That is prayer.



Two hymns about prayer
– which you may find helpful for reflection and meditation

James Montgomery, the author of these hymns, also wrote “Angels from the realms of glory” and “Hail to the Lord’s anointed” and several other hymns. Montgomery called the hymn “Prayer is the soul’s sincere desire”, which he wrote for a book about prayer written by a colleague, the most attractive hymn he ever wrote. It certainly sums up prayer very beautifully.

Prayer is the soul’s sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed;
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.

Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try;
Prayer, the sublimest strains that reach
The Majesty on high.

Prayer is the Christian’s vital breath,
The Christian’s native air,
His watchword at the gates of death;
He enters Heaven with prayer.

Prayer is the contrite sinner’s voice,
Returning from his ways,
While angels in their songs rejoice
And cry, “Behold, he prays!”

The saints in prayer appear as one
In word, in deed, and mind,
While with the Father and the Son
Sweet fellowship they find.

No prayer is made by man alone
The Holy Spirit pleads,
And Jesus, on the eternal throne,
For sinners intercedes.

O Thou by Whom we come to God,
The Life, the Truth, the Way,
The path of prayer Thyself hast trod:
Lord, teach us how to pray.

James Montgomery 1771-1854
(No 567 in Mission Praise)

Lord, teach us how to pray aright,
With reverence and with fear;
Though dust and ashes in Thy sight,
We may, we must draw near.

We perish if we cease from prayer;
O grant us power to pray;
And when to meet Thee we prepare,
Lord, meet us by the way.

God of all grace, we come to Thee
With broken, contrite hearts;
Give what Thine eye delights to see,
Truth in the inward parts.

Faith in the only sacrifice
That can for sin atone;
To cast our hopes, to fix our eyes,
On Christ, on Christ alone.

Patience to watch, and wait, and weep,
Though mercy long delay;
Courage our fainting souls to keep,
And trust Thee though Thou slay.

Give these, and then Thy will be done,
Thus, strengthened with all might,
We, through Thy Spirit and Thy Son,
Shall pray, and pray aright.

James Montgomery 1771-1854