

Conversation that Cares

Step Eleven: Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

Most of us need to desire something before we will wholeheartedly seek after it. Until we realize how much God loves us and cares about the details of our life, we probably won't have the desire to pray to him. Until we sincerely believe that he has completely forgiven us, we will be ashamed to face him. If we hold to our misconceptions about God, this step will be a chore rather than a joy. The place where God lives can be a place of joy and happiness for us as we live in God's presence every day.

- ***What mighty praise, O God, belongs to you. We will fulfill our vows to you, for you answer our prayers, and to you all people will come.***
- ***Though our hearts are filled with sins, you forgive them all.***
- ***What joy for those you choose to bring near, those who live in your holy courts. What joys await us when we meet with you in the Holy Place. (From Psalm 65)***

God, I want to come close to you but I don't really know how. There are so many things in my life that make me feel ashamed sometimes. It's hard for me to believe that you care about the details of my life. Help me to let go of things about you that aren't true. Help me to let go of unbelief and come to you. You really do promise to forgive me and you already know everything I've ever done so nothing is a surprise to you. Even though I may not have recognized how you were with me, just like the footprints poem, help me to trust that you carried me when I couldn't walk alone. God, help me to come to you. Give me the gift of faith to believe in your goodness, demonstrated through Jesus Christ. Amen

Step Eleven urges us to seek caring and meaningful contact with God through the spiritual means of prayer and meditation. How can we do this? The Bible offers us five ingredients for a caring conversation with God.

- We are to quiet our anxieties by giving them to God and trusting that He will help us find a way. We are to be still and know that God really is in control
- We are to thank God for the many good things in our lives
- We are to candidly lay before God all our sincere needs and believe that He wants to meet those needs. We leave God free to choose His form of provision but we trust that He really cares and will help us.
- Our time of meditation is a time to receive peace from God, peace in spite of things not all being worked out in our circumstances.
- We are to meditate on things that are higher and bigger than our own life. We are to meditate on God's word and God's way and invite Him to live life through us.

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. ⁷ If you do this, you will experience God's peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

And now, dear brothers and sisters, let me say one more thing as I close this letter. Fix your thoughts on what is true and honorable and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. ⁹ Keep putting into practice all you learned from me and heard from me and saw me doing, and the God of peace will be with you. (Philippians 4)