



7. Prayer Changes Us

BRUNCH talks

progressive christian ideas worth sharing

Progressive in approach: Christ-like in action!

Progressive?

?

open

scholarly

inclusive

Christian?

?

Jesus

way/justice

peace

Religion?

?

awe

connection

wholeness

LOVE

Progressive in approach: Christ-like in action!

Progressive?

?

Christian?

?

Religion?

?

religion

“re”

“lig”

awe

connection

wholeness

ONE

Super-natural Theism

exoteric

Panentheism

esoteric

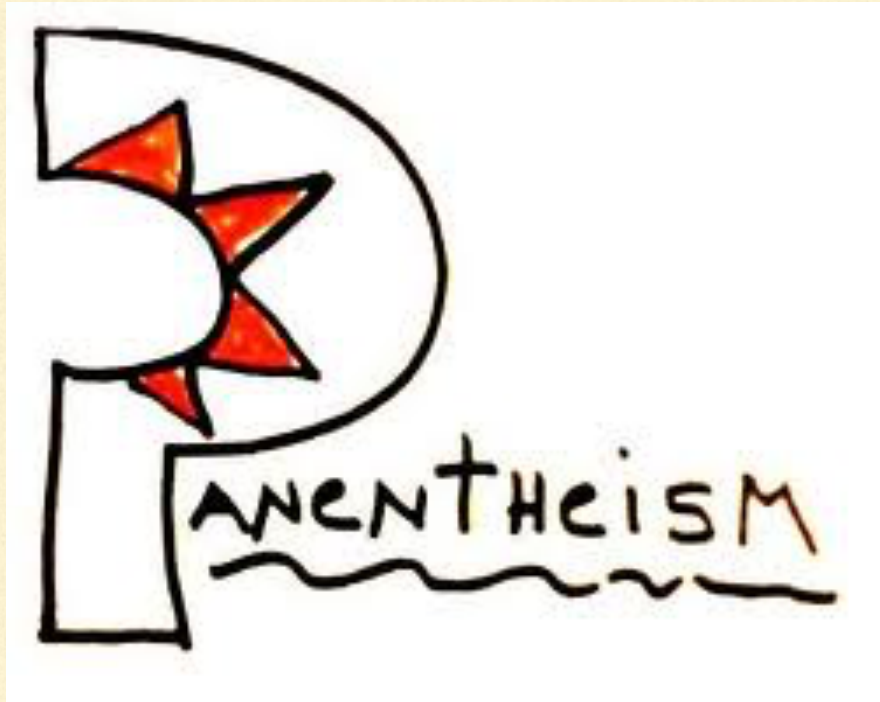
Prayer, understood as a request made to an external, theistic deity, to act in human history, is little more than an hysterical attempt to turn the holy into the service of the human.

Most of our prayer definitions arise out of the past and are thus dependent on an understanding of God that no longer exists.

The God who answers our prayers has ceased to be a believable God in our day.

A new way to understand prayer cries out to be developed.”

John Shelby Spong



A painting of a swan on water with mountains in the background. The swan is in the foreground, facing left, with its wings slightly raised. The water is dark and reflects the swan and the mountains. The mountains are in the background, with a prominent peak on the left. The sky is a mix of blue and green, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall style is impressionistic.

BATH
QOL

*Daughter
of a Sound*

communion

connection

consciousness

attention

action

communion

radical response to life

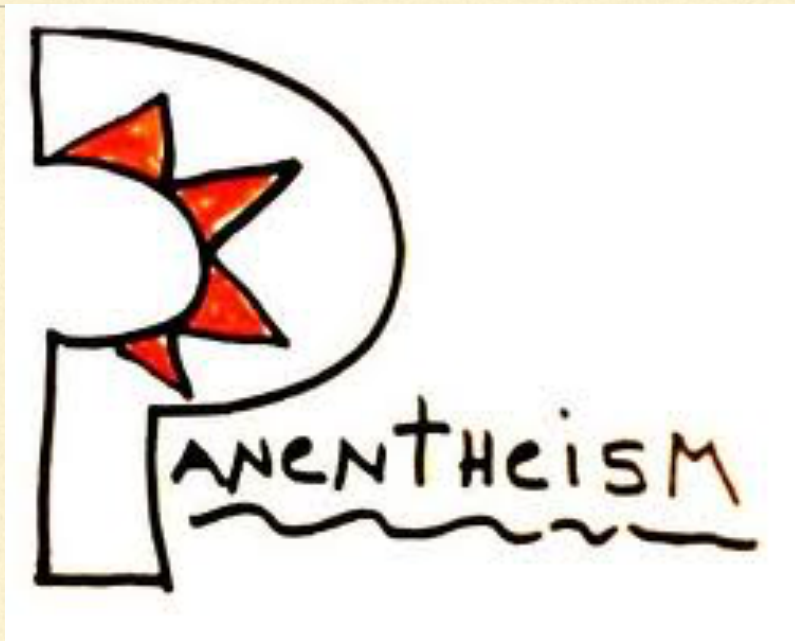
Attention, taken to its highest degree, is the same thing as prayer. It presupposes faith and love. Absolutely unmixed attention is prayer.

Simone Weil

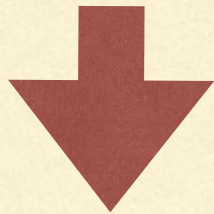




**Questions
&
Responses**



Elsewhere God



Everywhere God

**In
With
Through
Beyond**

HUMILITY

**The Natural Laws of the Cosmos
are gifts of the Creator.**

**We are only beginning to
comprehend the Natural Laws of
the Cosmos.**

MYSTERY

**All life is lived in the midst of
DIVINITY.**

**The life and teachings of
Jesus of Nazareth
point to the reality that
DIVINITY is LOVE.**

**All life is lived in the midst of
LOVE.**

**Prayer is seeking connection to
DIVINITY/LOVE.**

Prayer changes us, changing us changes creation, and so prayer changes the one in whom we live, and breath and have our being.

Prayer connects us more deeply one to another.

I believe that this connection is LOVE.

I believe that prayer opens us to the power of LOVE.

I believe that LOVE is God.

Prayer opens us to LOVE.

LOVE moves us to actions that embody LOVE.

That's what we mean when we talk about being Christ to one another.

It's about being the LOVE that is God in the world.

**Prayer opens us to the connections
that exist in the cosmos.**

**These connections change us,
and this changes the world.**

**Prayer raises to consciousness our
need for connection,
the connection itself, strengthens the
bounds that exist between us;
prayer strengthens the LOVE that
holds us together.**

We are only beginning to understand the powers of the ties that bind us together. But one of the things theologians are beginning to understand and I am beginning to feel, is that prayer is the activity that enables each of us to be givers to and receivers from one another of the deepest meaning of life—a meaning we call God.

When we give up the idea that prayer is about changing the mind of some far off deity and embrace that prayer is way of opening ourselves to the God that dwells in with, through, and beyond us, we can begin to understand the power of prayer to prepare us to be the LOVE that is God in the world.

Prayer enables us not only to connect to the source of life, love, and being, but to provide that connection to the source of life, love and being to others.

Prayer enables us to be more fully human, which in turn enables others to embrace their humanity.

St Athanasius said that,

“Christ became human so that humans could become God.”

Prayer is the activity that enables us to become more fully human so that God can live and breathe and have being in humanity.

That, I believe is precisely why the apostle Paul insisted that we are to pray without ceasing. Prayer changes the way we live and move and have our being. When we pray without ceasing our life becomes our prayer. Our lives become the LOVE that is God in the world.

Prayer is a powerful way of being in the world.

Prayer connects us one to the other.

Prayer opens us to God who is LOVE.

LOVE/God continues to call us to be the incarnation of LOVE.

I believe that the power of prayer to effect change in the world is expanded when we gather together and open ourselves to the power of the One who dwells among us.

Prayer is our response to LOVE.

**Prayer is our struggle to comprehend
LOVE.**

**Prayer is our attempt to remain open to
LOVE.**

**Prayer is everything we do to respond
with compassion LOVE.**

**Prayer is not the words we say, but the
life we live in response to our encounters
with the LOVE that is God.**

So, when we gather to pray for peace, we awaken our divine selves to be peacemakers.

When we pray for our loved ones, we are opening ourselves to be the face of God for our loved ones.

When we pray for healing we are opening ourselves to be the healing balm for the wounds of our broken world.

When we ask for a blessing we are opening ourselves and our community to be the blessing we seek.

God dwells among us and causes us to pray and our prayer evokes compassion in our community and that compassion compels us to move our prayers from words into actions, so that we become co-creators with God, companions in the ongoing work of creation. In prayer, compassionate communities become LOVE the world, the LOVE through which the ONE who dwells in with, through and beyond us, tends to the needs of creation.

**Together, we are learning
to be LOVE in the world.**

**When we gather together in LOVE
our prayers for the world we LOVE
are an expression of our desire to
love and be loved.**

**Prayer reminds us of our mutuality
so much of what we ask God to do
is within our reach to change.**

**Prayer is not the words we speak,
prayer is the life we lead;
a life connected to God,
connected to one another,
connected to creation,
connected to the universe,
connected to the stars,
connected in, with, through and by
the ONE who is was and ever more
shall be, LOVE.**

Augustine: (354-430)

**True, whole prayer is nothing but
LOVE.**

Matthew Fox:



radical response to life

LOVE in action

