

Praying Honestly

11th Step - Lesson 2

11th Step: "11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out."

In a lot of evangelism tracts you'll find "the sinner's prayer" at the end, usually saying something like, "Lord Jesus, I admit that I am a sinner who deserves damnation. Thank you for dying on the cross for my sins. Please come into my heart and be my Lord and Savior." In Lutheran liturgy there's a similar prayer that says, "...I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner." But what if those prayers don't describe where you're honestly coming from? What if you aren't "truly sorry for my sins?" What if a person is uneasy about inviting Jesus into his heart? What if I'm not really and sincerely "trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ?" Does a person then have to work hard on repenting and getting a better attitude and a stronger faith before coming to God for help?

How's this for an alternate "sinners prayer?" "God, I probably should be sorry for my sins, but I'm really not. To be truthful, I like getting high. I like sexual activity you've forbidden. I'm not sorry I had my abortion. You tell me to forgive people who have hurt me, but I'd kill them if I could. And to top it all off, I'm not even sure you exist; for all I really know, I might be just talking into the air right now. Now do you want me?"

Recovery calls for honesty, openness and willingness. That's not going to happen if fear of rejection gets in the way. **Look at 1 Timothy 1:15.** What does that say to someone who's afraid God won't accept him if he's honest about how he really feels?

Look at Psalm 13.

- What feelings do you think David was having?
- How do you see him showing that he trusted God's love and acceptance here?

Look at Psalm 88.

- What feelings do you think the writer was having?
- How do you see him showing that he trusted God's love and acceptance here?

Look at Psalm 109.

- What feelings do you think David was having?
- How do you see him showing that he trusted God's love and acceptance here?