

Poems
Inspired By
A Course in Miracles

Volume 2

Alan Steinle

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Desire Is Prayer

If every desire's a silent request,
and prayer begins as a warmth in your chest,
which god is your agent—below or above—
to act on your prayer for vengeance or love?

(The "god" in this poem could be our Creator or an ego.)

Relationships

Relations don't ever begin or conclude
but can be neglected or gently renewed.
Our spirits, created as one by our Source,
cannot be divided by hate or divorce.

The World Is Healed

The world is healed as we forgive—
undoing guilt, we've strength to live.
Release another from the past,
and see the light in all at last.

What Is Forgiveness?

An unforgiving mind sees sin as real
and does not doubt that guilt is justified.
It hates the truth, rejecting its appeal,
for honest, open thoughts it can't abide.

Forgiveness sees no sin or guilt at all.
It doesn't try to change what's real or true,
and thus it frees the self to heed the call
of God's one will and seek what He would do.

The will of God's the same for everyone.
The truth is one and does not change or bend.
Forgiveness is the task that we've begun.
The goal of holy vision is our end.

When we can see our brothers as they are,
we will rejoice and heaven won't be far.

The Dilemma

This poem explores some ideas found in the edition of A Course in Miracles published by The Circle of Atonement.

Don't tell me that you love me when
you do not love all other men.
For love, like hate, cannot be bound—
it spreads to everyone around.

The problem comes when we equate
and cannot yet discriminate
between impulses from above
(the ones that cause our hearts to love)
and those impulses from below
(the ones that cause our lust to grow).

Each impulse has its proper place:
With lust we propagate the race.
With love we fill the world with good
and live together as we should.

If we feel love, we have no needs,
and everything we do succeeds.
If lust comes first, then we can't see
that love was meant to set us free.

Love has no limits, but imparts
itself into all willing hearts.
But if we think that love is lust,
we feel confused and can't adjust.
We either try to love just one
or try to mate with everyone.
With one we will become obsessed,
or limits make us feel distressed.

So this is our dilemma here.
It leads to worry, guilt, and fear.
But if we could divide the two,
our love for others would shine through.
Our lust would have its proper place
and wouldn't lead to loss of face.
Our love could then embrace the whole,
and light would shine from soul to soul.

The Will of God

The will of God can sometimes seem
to be a foreign will. In dreams
we think we have usurped His place
and that we have to flee His face.

In dreams, we made another will
opposing His, and we feel ill,
for we believe He's now our foe,
and we must fear revenge and woe.

We can't endure this guilt and fear—
we don't know when He might appear
to strike us dead with righteous ire
or banish us to endless fire.

We can't endure, so we forget
we have angry foe, and yet
the thought that we are sinful stays
and haunts our mind in many ways.

We see another make mistakes,
and these mistakes are all it takes
to bring to mind our effort to
create a different will and view.

And we remember what we did.
Our opposition must be hid
from our great foe, or we will be
cast into hell eternally.

But hell is what exists within
our mind when we believe in sin.
We cannot really overthrow
His will, although we think it's so.

We need to bring our guilt to truth—
the truth we've fled since early youth.
Then we will find that each mistake
will be dissolved as we awake.

For only in our dreams can we
oppose His will successfully.
His will cannot be threatened by
another will that goes awry.

The will of God has always been
our own real will, but when we sin
we only alter things unreal,
as our forgiveness will reveal.

The fear that in our heart still burned,
the punishment we thought we earned,
was just a time-bound dream of night.
When we awake, all will be right.

Release the guilt, the fear, the hate
and enter Heaven's open gate.
The will of God is full of peace.
His endless mercy does not cease.

The World We See

Our minds have made the world we see.
The world is not the earth, per se.
The world is lack of unity.

Through separation, we are free
to cast our hated guilt away.
Our minds have made the world we see.

We nail our brothers to a tree
and place our guilt upon our prey.
The world is lack of unity.

Oh, what a tragicomedy!
Our thoughts of guilt bedim the day.
Our minds have made the world we see.

We have a painful history,
which our attacks cannot allay.
The world is lack of unity.

But if we pardon joyfully,
then all will gain, and none will pay.
When we have changed our minds, we'll see
a shining world of unity.

Real Love

We feel a need we can't ignore.
Real love is what we're longing for.

Forgiveness is its way on earth.
It looks past faults to see our worth.

As the fulfillment of the law,
it sees no sin, mistake, or flaw.

It keeps no record of a wrong,
thus keeping friendships whole and strong.

It doesn't limit kindness to
a special group or just a few.

It is impartial like the sun
and shines its light on everyone.

It brings our hidden thoughts to light,
so we don't have to dwell in night.

It is a purifying flame
that burns away our guilt and shame.

It forms a trusting atmosphere
by overcoming hate and fear.

It reconciles the separate parts
and reconnects opposing hearts.

It is the justice we should seek
and offers words for us to speak.

It can't be shared with words alone.
Experience will make it known.

Fear

our fear would be right
if we could usurp God's might
put out heaven's light

our fear has no base
if we cannot take God's place
heaven's filled with grace

Ancient Words

Some ancient words could change this sphere
and make our lives worth living here.

These words are still familiar to
most people, though they're hard to do.

These simple words that people say
are thought to be an old cliché.

Let's take them down from dusty shelves
and love our neighbors as ourselves.

Escape from Darkness

To leave the dark and enter light,
two simple steps must be applied.
When you learn darkness cannot hide,
this knowledge fills your heart with fright.

But things will change, so hold on tight,
and soon you'll see the other side.
To leave the dark and enter light,
two simple steps must be applied.

Step two will send your fears to flight,
for even if you could provide
a place for darkness, you decide
you do not want to hide in night.
To leave the dark and enter light,
two simple steps must be applied.

Fresher Thoughts

A mind that judges won't let go
of guilt—it's like a video
that keeps rewinding to repeat
a sin that should be obsolete.

Forgiveness overlooks the sin
and wills the tapes of life to spin
into the future with one flow,
without a pause to dwell on woe.

Let's overwrite the errant plots
and actors' sins with fresher thoughts.

This Isn't Love

I know this isn't really love.
It is a longing to be whole.
It is a chasm, deep and wide,
that affirmations cannot fill.

I know this isn't really love.
It is a yearning to possess
a self, replacing one that's not
acceptable in its own eyes.

I know this isn't really love.
It is a need to be confirmed.
It is a two-direction theft
of hearts, and both are left deprived.

I know this isn't really love.
It is a hole that can't be filled.
It is self-loathing waiting for
a word or touch to hide the pain.

I know this isn't really love,
for love's complete and always whole.
It doesn't lack but always gives.
It is the Self we've yet to find.

I know this isn't really love.
The lesson that we need to learn
is found within the broken heart
that pardons all and heals itself.

The Song of Prayer

This poem is based on part one (“Prayer”) of the pamphlet “The Song of Prayer,” which is now published with A Course in Miracles (Foundation for Inner Peace Edition). I wrote one stanza for each of the 32 paragraphs in this work.

1. (Intro.1.)

The song of prayer is the gift
That God imparted to His Son;
From earth to Heaven, He will lift
His Son when all his learning’s done.
And they will sing eternally,
As long before time seemed to be.

2. (Intro.2.)

The harmony of what they sing
Is formed by love and gratitude;
Their concord merges everything
Into one joyful attitude.
The song reveals we’ve reached the goal:
Awareness that creation’s whole.

3. (Intro.3.)

Lay down your idols and your dreams;
Your faith in prayer will sustain;
As you reach higher, God redeems
You from the earthly grief and pain.
You will ascend to Heaven’s sphere,
Where high and low both disappear.

4. (I.1.)

What you desire in your heart
Is what you pray for; though you might
Desire gifts or goods in part,
Those things are less than your birthright.
The goal is God, and if He’s there,
Of every good you’ll be aware.

5. (I.2.)

The problems that you see around,
The needs you think are real and true,
The answers to these will be found,
For from the first goal they ensue.
These partial goods are echoes of
The song of gratitude and love.

6. (I.3.)

The song is what you should desire,
For everything comes from the song;
When you remember to reach higher,
You will arrive where you belong.
Seek first the Kingdom, and you’ll see
That all else comes to you for free.

7. (I.4.)

Forget the things you think you need;
Leave all of them within God’s hands;
Your worries will at once recede
When you relinquish your demands.
God answers for eternity;
This covers every minor plea.

8. (I.5.)

Your holiness will come to mind
When you let go and step aside;
True love in prayer you will find,
And love will every need provide.
Then you will see there’s nothing left
For you to want—you aren’t bereft.

9. (I.6.)

This prayer level is the goal,
A goal that all, in time, attain;
A brother, joining with your soul,
Can help you reach a higher plane.
Accepting love, you have no fear,
And cannot fail to feel God near.

10. (I.7.)

Feel gratitude for what you are,
And see your Self in everyone;
Your brother’s help will not be far,
For he’ll forgive what you have done.
And if you share God’s will and heart,
You’ll see your problems all depart.

11. (II.1.)

Though prayer has no start or end,
It changes forms as people learn;
If lack is what you apprehend,
For certain things your heart will yearn.
When you accept your timeless union,
With God you will have full communion.

12. (II.2.)

All prayer is a ceaseless note;
If you knew Who you really were,
You wouldn't need an antidote,
But you perceive you're insecure.
Your ego has such endless needs,
Its prayer always begs and pleads.

13. (II.3.)

Your guilt's the source of every need:
The sinless have no needs at all;
But there's a higher way to plead:
You pray to overcome sin's thrall.
You pray for pardon, so you'll be
From sin and guilt completely free.

14. (II.4.)

If you pray for your enemies,
You must not see them as your foes;
The one who frees them also frees
Himself, and out of prison goes.
Be traitor to no brother, then,
Or you will still feel full of sin.

15. (II.5.)

The prayer for your enemies
Becomes a prayer for release;
To have a foe would cause disease
And take away your worldly peace.
Pray for the freedom of your foe;
He represents yourself, you know.

16. (II.6.)

Do not forget that prayer flows
Back to yourself, and what you see
Within a brother, you disclose
About yourself, unwittingly.
Forgive your foes for all your sins,
And you will be the one who wins.

17. (II.7.)

Your prayer is a ladder that
Ascends to Heaven and its light;
You will depart earth's habitat,
With sinless brothers to unite.
No words or thoughts will interfere
With prayer reaching Heaven's sphere.

18. (II.8.)

Because you never left your home,
Your lower prayers are not true;
But you will learn you cannot roam
When pardon fully covers you.
And, all together, we will find
Ourselves at home within His Mind.

19. (III.1.)

To pray for others is to ask
For your own guilt to be removed;
But if you see it as your task
To judge, then you will be reproved.
Your inner guilt caused you alarm,
Then you accused your foe of harm.

20. (III.2.)

The first requests that you might make
Will ask for vengeance, not for love;
But those in hell, still unawake,
Do not discern the light above.
All those who call an angry god
Cannot escape the vengeful rod.

21. (III.3.)

If you would set your conscience free,
Then make a friend out of your foe;
You must give him his liberty,
For what you'd have you must bestow.
To have a foe, there is no gain;
Your hatred hides your self-caused pain.

22. (III.4.)

When you hide guilt inside your foe,
You are afraid to set him free;
You fear his presence where you go;
A guiltless foe could never be.
But if you try to see the light
In him, your guilt might cause you fright.

23. (III.5.)

Your enemy is not to blame—
The guilt you feel is all your own;
To strike your foe would just be lame;
Your fear and hate are overblown.
A messenger of Christ is he,
So pardon him and you'll be free.

24. (III.6.)

The goal of God is always lost
When lesser goals in life are sought;
Requests for gifts or status cost
The final goal, which can't be bought.
Desire for these lesser things
Impedes the soul and clips its wings.

25. (IV.1.)

Your enemies don't share your aims,
But if they now are friends to you,
Then you can stop your senseless games
And focus on what both would do.
United now in mind and soul,
You go together to your goal.

26. (IV.2.)

To join in prayer is to rise,
But you might seek a lesser goal;
Effects are things that you might prize,
But they won't satisfy your soul.
Effects cannot exist without
A Cause by which they come about.

27. (IV.3.)

What you enjoyed before today
Is what you seek in prayers now;
You ask if there could be a way
To claim emotions lost somehow.
But prayer must release the past,
So you can have what's best at last.

28. (IV.4.)

All time-bound things will turn to dust;
Each prayer is a chance to call
A new emotion and to trust
The One who made and offers all.
Don't ask for gifts already known;
The peace of God could be your own.

29. (V.1.)

Humility brings peace to stay;
It doesn't claim you must control
Or judge all things that pass your way;
To little gods it gives no role.
Humility, at base, is strong
And leads you up where you belong.

30. (V.2.)

The humble have no goal but God
And count all others as a friend;
Although they walk upon the sod,
They know, in time, all will ascend.
They recognize this truth anew:
The will of God is their will too.

31. (V.3.)

Now prayer's lifted from the sphere
Of worldly goods and body goals;
The ladder ends and Heaven's near;
The time has come for sinless souls
To recognize they must unite
To enter Heaven's love-filled light.

32. (V.4.)

Now learning is no longer needed,
For finally your home awaits;
The world and time have both receded,
And you have entered Heaven's gates.
Now prayer is what brings you bliss.
Why did you tarry long from this?