

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM JOEL (4/7/18)

Q: If we are not to petition God, then of what avail to say, “God bless a dear one”?

A: You know, I kept this question to the last because it's the most important of all, and I would like when you leave to carry that answer with you. Saying “God bless you” is not a power, and it is of no avail. Saying “God bless you” is of no more avail than for someone to say the opposite, “Damn you.” That also is of no avail. The saying of a statement, the voicing of it, is not the power. The power lies in what we hold in consciousness, and if we hold in consciousness the realization of God, the realization of God as every man's right, that is the blessing whether we voice it or not. And so the voicing of it merely is the human way of letting you know that it's in our heart.

It is just like our coming to the platform and saying, “Good afternoon.” There is no value to saying, “Good afternoon” except that it puts in words what we are thinking in the heart. But if you could separate the thinking in the heart from the words of the mouth you'd have no power, and so we could say, “Good afternoon,” and we could say “Aloha,” and we could say, “I love you,” and it would be meaningless, unless in here was an emotion of love, a feeling of love. Then the “Good afternoon” imparts to you in words the inner feeling and greeting. I'm sure you know this—that even if that “Good afternoon” weren't mentioned, you would feel it. You would feel it. If you never heard “Good afternoon” or “Good evening,” you would feel it.

It is very much like our dear ones. We do once in a while say, “I love you.” I don't think any of our dear ones need to hear those words because they have a better gauge than those words. They have our actions. They have our conduct. They have our attitude when we are with each other, and yet once in a while we say it because it sounds good to the ears. And so with “God bless you,” so it is with our “Aloha.” Nothing is more beautiful than that word “Aloha” to those who understand it—a greeting on meeting and a greeting on parting, a greeting of love, a greeting of affection, a greeting of warmth, a salutation, or even a “Godspeed” is in that word “Aloha.” In the same way, without that word, we have every right to say “Godspeed you,” or “God bless you,” or “God greet you.” The words themselves have no power. It is the emotion, the feeling that we have, that is the power.

Now then, what do we mean when we say, “God bless you”? We do not mean “God bless you.” We mean “God *is* blessing you.” There is no such thing as “God will.” There is no such thing as “I hope that God will,” or “I am asking God to bless you,” since man does not influence God. And so to say, “God bless you” is a reminder to you that God *is* blessing you. It is not a prayer offered up that I can influence God to bless you. Understand that the same as you do with saying grace at table. Some people voice their grace outwardly, openly. We do not, but surely we couldn't eat a bite without an inner recognition of God as the source. But that in no wise is asking God to send supply. It is a recognition of God as the source of supply.

And so when you say, “God bless you,” in the recognition that God *is* the source of your blessing, then indeed does your blessing act as a treatment or prayer. If you say “God bless you,” thinking to bring God's blessing to one, you miss the point and miss the prayer. If in saying “God bless you,” you bring to it the realization that God *is* the source of your continuous blessing, that is a treatment. That is a prayer, that is a divine realization, and it carries great power with it. So wherever we go, whatever we do, we should be remembering “God bless you.” Whether we say it openly and outwardly, whether we voice it only within our hearts, or whether it is just a form of recognition, “God *is* blessing you. God *is* the source of your

blessing.” Then you may be assured that uttered or unexpressed, it is a treatment, it is a prayer, and it is a blessing.

We always separate the essence of prayer from the voicing of prayer. In order that prayer be a blessing, there must be the essence of it, the inner recognition, not merely the outer words. I’m sure you all have been in churches and heard someone recite the Lord’s Prayer as if they are on the way to a fire and had to get it all in before they got around the corner. Now you see, that is not a prayer, and that is not a blessing. That is a recitation. It is in the same way that many of you may have heard the Lord’s Prayer voiced as an oration with gestures. Also, that is not a prayer. That is not a blessing. That is an act, but the Lord’s Prayer, voiced or not voiced, thought with integrity, with sincerity, with love, becomes a blessing, and so with all of our work.

The words that we utter are of no importance. The essence, the activity, the love that we put into the words or the thoughts are the blessing. And so above all things, let us be sure to bless everyone on their way at all times, and bless them not merely with words and not with the belief that we are asking God to bless anyone, but in the conviction that God *is* the blessing of everyone.

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