



Welcome to Unity's Interactive Worship Service

Today's Topic:
The Power of Poof!
Power Point notes available at:
www.unityofbakersfield.org

The Power of Poof!

Ok, be honest. When you saw the topic for today's lesson, what went through your minds?



The Power of Poof!

I guess you could say that today's lesson of discussion is in some way an activity of magic on some level to some people. However, for me:

"The poof is in the pudding!"

And what is that poof? None other than:

- Prayer
- Overcomes
- Optimistic
- Faith

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When it came to prayer, Jesus was no stranger to its power to transform, overcome, heal, transcend, and increase ones faith in God.

"For the Father knows what you need before you even ask." (Matt 6:8)

"But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." (Matt 6:6)

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While working at my home office this past week, a couple of ladies came to the door and when I answered it one of asked if I was ready for Jesus because he's coming soon.

I said, "I had a nice conversation with him this morning. In fact he's never left."

"That's not in the Bible," she responded.

"Check out Matt 28:20 and see for yourself, 'Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.', he never left."

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"And please, don't forget the words from good old St. Paul reminding the people in Colossian that the Christ Spirit was alive and well and residing within them. 'The Christ in you, your hope of glory.' (Colossians 1:27)."

She then glared at me and said, "I'll pray for you!" And they marched off.

As I shut the door, I couldn't help but think, you can pray for me all you want, God doesn't work that way.

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I don't know about you, but what I have noticed is that when people say, "I'll pray for you." what they are really saying is, "I'll pray for you to see things my way." Hasn't worked yet. And thank God it hasn't! Could you imagine what the world would be like if it did. I could just see it now... one group over here praying for things to be done their way... poof the world changes... then another group over here praying to change things back to the old way... poof the world changes again. What a mess!

The Power of Poof!

The power of prayer is when all of a sudden I realize that, "poof" I have the power to shape and change my life, and not others! For me, the power of prayer is a power that gives me the opportunity to:

1. Transform
2. Energize
3. Realign
4. Gain a new perspective

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5. Find Peace
6. Transcend
7. Change me

As Dana Gatlin (1884-1940) writes in her book Prayer Changes Things:

"Something mystical happens when we invoke the power of prayer. For a moment we have lost our pain, our worry, our doubts, our fears."

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"It is as if, for this magic moment, these things have ceased to exist. Under this gentle, nameless inflowing of Spirit we have been calmed. We feel transcendent for this is our sacred moment in time. A moment where there are no problems, no aches, no tangles, no anxieties, no despairs. The power of prayer is actually changing us."

I saw this first hand while attending hospital chaplaincy training during ministerial school.

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Each day during the 10 week training we would receive a list of new patients as well as a list of those requesting prayer. Some welcomed our prayer support and others did not. We kept records and matched them with the discharged records of the people on our lists. And what we found was this:

Those we prayed with healed faster and were released earlier than those who refused prayer.

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Something else showed up while in training at the hospital and seeing the results of our efforts. We found ourselves feeling:

1. Refreshed
2. Strengthened
3. Encouraged
4. Optimistic
5. Renewed Faith

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A point to consider:

We all remember that the disciples, who were all Jews and prayed at Temple all the time, asked Jesus how to pray. And from that we have the Lord's Prayer. However, is there a right method of prayer?

Richard and Mary-Alice Jafolla state in their book The Quest that, "There is no one method of prayer. In fact there are many different methods of praying as there are people who pray."

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The thing to remember about prayer is that, as they put it: "Prayer is simply speaking to God, aloud or silently, in whatever language, style, manner, or words that feel comfortable."

However, what is important about prayer is the reason for praying. Prayers, after all, are not done to impress God, or beseech God to do something, but to increase our awareness of God's presence so that we may lift up our consciousness to a new level of understanding.

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And with that new level of understanding we discover the power of poof:

Poof... Prayer does not change God, it changes us.

Poof... Prayer is a way to express our gratitude and thanksgiving for all our blessings, past, present, and future.

Poof... Prayer that uses our thoughts, feelings, words, and actions tend to be our strongest prayers.

Poof... Prayer puts us in God-mode to receive sustenance and renewed strength.

The Power of Poof!

Poof... Prayer can be a powerful reminder that it is always God's will for us to be blessed with the abundance of all good. That what we seek is also seeking us. It is an act of faith and trust that puts us in God's time, not ours.

So let's keep in mind, as someone once said, "God opens millions of flowers without forcing the buds, it reminds us not to force anything for things happen in the right time."