

“For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

So now faith, hope and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 13: 12-13

Churchwarden Allan Steven gives a short personal view on prayer.

Those of us of a certain age may be conditioned to pray at the end of each day, and with a learned formality. Prayer is possible at any time, and in any place.

My kitchen is at the front of the house, and every day I see many people passing by. Some on a regular basis, others infrequently or just the once. Tea towel in hand, I might ask for a blessing on the young children with their mothers and fathers; a prayer for loving families and bright futures, and that they may come to know and accept their Saviour. A prayer often passes through the window for the elderly, and their so obvious infirmities. A plea to the Father to give them strength, perseverance, joy, and love in their lives.

I suspect that many of you, like me, wake early as age diminishes the need for lengthy sleep. In that half-world before dawn simple prayers can be offered for the rest we have received, for the day ahead, and for the security of those we love; whatever you choose – USE!

Speaking of sleep. It is my practice, on turning out the bedside light, to use ‘*Breathing Prayer*’. Inhale gently, and say the name of ‘*Jesus*’ inside your head; exhale, and say any word that comes into your head: *help, heal, joy, come, love*. The choice is yours. Sometimes I fix on one word, and it becomes a mantra. At other times, the word changes frequently. The constant is ‘*Jesus*’. When stilled and calmed I make my supplications to God; a mixture of thanks, praise and request. Of course, I know that He will grant me what I NEED, not what I WANT. His will be done.

Prayer is an inexhaustible subject, because it doesn’t fit a formula and we should try to avoid conditioned ritual that becomes empty and meaningless. At heart we are engaged in a conversation with our loving Father, and we

don't have to seek to be clever, or to indulge in high-flown language. Simplicity and sincerity are more precious to Him than evidence of our intellectual prowess.

A constant prayer life is essential to well-being, and to deepening our relationship to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Pray often; pray everywhere.

Recommended aids to prayer:

'Pray As You Go'

a free app to download; Apple for iPad, Google Play Store for other devices

***'How to pray – a simple guide for normal people'* Tom Greig**

Paperback from Amazon £9.97; Kindle £3.99