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Regarded in itself, praying is talking with God, while taking an inward view of the things we are praying about. In answer we receive a similar kind of inflow into the perceptions or thoughts of our mind, so that there is some opening of our inner depths to God. The experience varies, depending on our mood and the nature of the subject we are praying about. If we pray from love and faith and focus on or seek only what is heavenly and spiritual, something resembling a revelation emerges while we pray. It discloses itself in our emotions in the form of hope, comfort, or an inward stirring of joy.

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[2] Let me explain about the lack of need for intervention. People who are being tested often slacken their hands, resorting exclusively to prayers, which they pour forth ardently. They do not realize that prayer does no good then and that they need instead to fight the falsity and evil the hells introduce. The weapons for the battle are religious truths, which do help, because they strengthen goodness and truth in its opposition to falsity and evil. What is more, we must fight as if we were on our own during our struggles and trials, while still acknowledging and believing that it is the Lord who acts. If we do not fight as if we were on our own, we do not adopt as our own the goodness and truth that flow in from the Lord through heaven. If we do fight as if we were on our own, believing nonetheless that it is the Lord who acts, we do make goodness and truth our own. This provides us with a new selfhood, called heavenly autonomy, which is a new will.

[3] Besides, people who engage in no other definite activity than prayer when they are being tried do not know that they would not be ready for heaven—and consequently could not be saved—if their crisis were interrupted before being brought all the way to its conclusion. This is another reason the prayers of people under trial are not much listened to. The Lord seeks the final goal, which is our salvation. He alone knows what the end is; we do not; and he does not act on prayers rebelling against the salvation he has in view.

For people who conquer in times of trial, the truth of this is reinforced. People who do not conquer, having been unheard, entertain doubts about divine aid and divine power, and sometimes, having slackened their hands, partially succumb.

These comments show what it means to say there is no need for intervention: that we are not to rely on prayer. When prayer has a divine origin, it always contains the thought and belief that the Lord alone knows whether the object of the prayer is useful or not. The person praying therefore submits the hearing of the prayer to the Lord and immediately adds the plea, “Lord, let your will be done, not mine,” in keeping with the Lord’s words during his heaviest trial, in Gethsemane (Matthew 26:39, 42, 44).

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[4] Being led away from evils, being regenerated, and so being saved is all an act of Mercy. This Mercy however does not operate by direct intervention, as people believe, but indirectly, that is, in those who depart from evils and so let the truth of faith and the good of love from the Lord into their life. The direct intervention of mercy, which everyone would experience if no more than God's good pleasure were necessary, is contrary to Divine order; and what is contrary to Divine order is contrary to God, since order begins in God and what is Divine and His in heaven constitutes order… Furthermore if the direct intervention of mercy were possible all people in the world, however many, would be saved, and hell would not exist; for the Lord, being Love itself which desires the salvation of all and the death of none, is Mercy itself.