

Thirsting for Prayer

by Jacques Philippe

Session 1

(Part I and Part 2)

1. What resonated or resonates in your heart most as you read the first two sections of this book? Personally? As a Spiritual Director?
Any surprises, affirmations, desolations that you would like to share with us?
2. Why is faithfulness in prayer more important than the actual prayer itself? How does this knowledge influence our willingness & that of our directees “to waste time” with God – to pray? How does faithfulness in prayer ensure that we give God first place in our lives & help establish a right relationship to things & healthy detachment?
3. Jacques Philippe writes on page 17; “The main aim of this personal revelation of God, the essential fruit of prayer, is to know Him as Father. Through Christ, in the light of the Holy Spirit, God reveals Himself as Father.” Is it possible to achieve this understanding any other way than by praying? How does it relate to understanding this quote on page 24: “ In God’s heart, in the mystery of the Church, each of us has a unique place, a unique & irreplaceable role, a fruitfulness that is all our own & cannot be taken on by anyone else”? Do we as Directors feel the grave responsibility we have of helping our Directees initiate & deepen their knowledge of God & self in this School of Prayer?
4. Discuss the following quote: “It is good to understand truths about God, but we should bear in mind that everything we understand about God is still not God”. How can we help ourselves and our Directee move from an intellectual understanding of God to a personal relationship with God? Have you as a director ever been an obstacle to this happening?

Session 2

(Parts 3, 4, & 5)

5. What resonated or resonates in your heart most as you read the remainder of the book? Personally? As a SG? Were there any surprises, affirmations, desolations that you would like to share with the group?
6. How does God make His presence known to you? Can you describe an incident when Faith & love came together to reveal or make visible God’s presence in that situation?

7. "Holy Scripture is the basis for all genuine dialogue with God. The more our prayer life is nourished on scripture, the more truthful & profound it will be, & the more it will entail a genuine encounter with God." (pg.85). Can you describe an experience of prayer (or that of a directee) when scripture acted as a "mirror" that enabled you to see yourself as you truly are? Can you think of a situation where scripture enabled you "to discern between a psychological construct (stemming from (y)our wounded human nature) & what is spiritual (proceeding from the dynamics of love)" (pg.89)?
8. What piece or pieces of practical advice for personal prayer was most helpful to you? Will be most helpful to you as a Director?
9. Jacques Philippe states that intercessory prayer "is one of the most beautiful expressions of trust in God and love of neighbor" (pg. 138). Who has never been the recipient of intercessory prayer? How has intercessory prayer changed your life & that of your family? How has it contributed to your spiritual growth? How has your heart been touched by knowing that others are praying for you or for one of your petitions?