

Principles of the Spiritual Life's series  
(0/12)

# Jesus Loves Sinners (1)

By  
House of God's Love

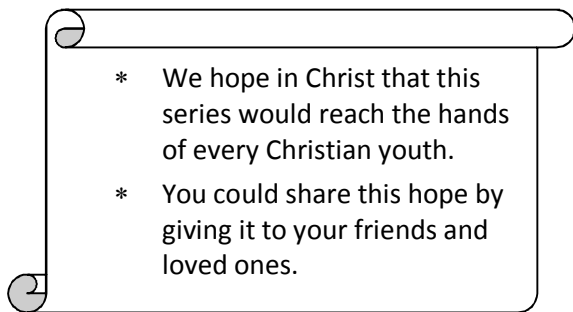
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**Note:** To get the full benefit of this series, please read it in order because reading it out of order can lead to disarray and discontinuation may lead to frustration.



**His Holiness Pope Towardos II**

Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of Saint Mark  
(118)

## **Introduction**

Jesus loves sinners is a beautiful word for the ear and it has a wonderful effect in every heart because we are all sinners. It is written that all are gone astray and become corrupted which means we are all corrupted.

Despite this corruption, we are loved and accepted because God sees us as sick children in need of cure, not as enemies worthy of punishment.

This series is considered an introduction and forward to the way so that we concentrate on knowing God and his view of us. We will focus on his view of us sinners and how He deals with us because we are all sinners. Please finish reading this series if you want to experience the love of Jesus, His acceptance and transformation.

This series is a simplified course and practical steps in the spiritual life. May the Lord grant us the renewal of the mind and acceptance of His love, in the intercession of Our Lady St. Mary and the prayers of our blessed father, His Holiness Pope Towadros II. Glory to our God in His Church now and forever. Amen.

**I** WALKED in my way to my father and one of the brothers was with me. I would like for this brother to start the spiritual course that I started. I have learnt a lot since I started the spiritual life and the time has come that I tell others about this course and how they start a relationship with Jesus. Because I am only in the beginners' stage, I can only help those who are willing to come to my father and he will continue with them and he told me that I can start with them after a period of time.

My friend is a very good hearted and meek person, but he changed completely because of past events and the influence of the environment. He became violent and an addict. He walks in the evil way and sin. This is not casting judgment on him because he admits this much and all his friends know that to the extent that he is now forsaken by the church and the servants because of his bad reputation. However, when you sit with him, you will find a meek child who is so eager to return to Jesus and the quiet life, but How? He is forsaken by all and nobody is patient with him!

His vocabulary cannot be changed suddenly and he cannot be freed quickly from the things he is used to

doing for a while because he experimented with that so many times. He only heard “YOU are freed. YOU are a new creature!”, but he returns to his old ways just a few days after that. He despaired and said “I am hopeless” and this is not his road. Sometimes he says that those who are walking this road are hypocrites because there is no change or anything and they are the same without change. They are servants, preachers in the church, but they live as hypocrites outside, using stumbling words and dirty talk.

He tried to attend the church meetings regularly, but he heard that the true repentance is never returning to sin. He tried very hard and he failed every time and fell in the same sin another time. So he despaired also “If my repentance is not true, why bother?! But when he knew that the spiritual life is a road and not only one step, he was encouraged.

When I told him about my father, he was enthusiastic to come to my father to help him along the way which I started many months ago.

We walked the road together and we were talking about the love of Jesus for sinners. My father was waiting for us when we arrived and he welcomed us and I

introduced my friend to him. I left them together and departed.

I was so embarrassed when my friend left me with the father because my hair was curly and long hair and it was annoying the priests and servants in my church. This was my nature and I like that and I was saying to myself “Does God care if I have long or short hair?” I felt embarrassed despite the fact that I am outspoken on so many issues, but I become very shy when it comes to talking about God and the spiritual matters.

The father surprised me with his smile and simplicity and more so with his acceptance of me without any comment. I hated it when someone invaded my privacy to ask about my personal life in detail. Almost everyone I meet was asking me what’s wrong with you? why is your hair long?! I was thinking to myself “Why do you care? Is it my hair or yours? mind your own business.” This father was one of the few people who did not ask, but I felt as if I knew him for a long time. He shook my hands and asked me “How are you, my son?

I replied: Thank God, my father!

He said: How are you doing?

I said: As my friend mentioned that I am very far, my father, and I have done so many shameful things. You can say that I am addicted to sin, all kinds of sin. I have tried so many times to repent and return to God, but I was unsuccessful. However, I have read a book titled” How do I start?” and I was encouraged when I learned that the spiritual life is a road, not just a single step. Therefore, I regained my hope after I despaired and I was so close to atheism and suicide. I do not know, but I am so tired and torn! I came to you, my father, when I knew that it is best if I have someone help me to discover the road. I came to you, my father, after I have seen a real change in my friend’s life and I sensed a genuine love and personal interest, not just a routine visitation. Also, the practical steps I have read make the road easy.

He said: Perfect, my son! In addition to the spiritual steps you have read about how to start which we will review together, we will talk together at first about a simple series titled” Jesus Loves the Sinners”. We must establish some basics principles before we start.

I said: Its title is beautiful and encouraging, my father! I have talked with my friend on the way about it. It appears



he benefited a lot from it, my father, but what is the proof that Jesus loves the sinners?!

He said: There are three proofs that Jesus loves the sinners:

### **First proof is the Word of God in the Holy Bible**

I said: Please tell me in details, my father, and be patient with me because I was not churched and I did not read the Bible a lot before and I do not know anything about dogma. I feel like I am in China when I attend the liturgy and the prayers are said in Coptic. I wish you start with me as a child in the spiritual affairs.

He said: Jesus loves children and He said “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.” (Luke 18:16)

It is appropriate for the person to be practice since childhood to know his value of his soul which is cherished by God and surprises the heavenly creatures. This will lead him/her to realize God's tenderness who sacrificed His only Son to restore its beauty through His precious blood. (St. Jacob Alsarogy (The Divine Love page 57)

As for His love for sinners, He said "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." (Mark 1:17

And they said about Him that "He loves sinners" (Matthew 11:19)

And also "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

God says in Isaiah" Come now, let us settle the matter," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool." Isaiah 1:18

I said: What does He mean by scarlet and crimson, my father?

He said: Scarlet is a very red color and crimson is red like worm which means no matter how disgusting your sins are, the Lord says come and He will make it white as snow and white wool.

I said: These are good news, my father! How do people live without it!

He Said: If we do not believe the Word of God that He loves us and cares for us and accepts us no matter how grave our sins are, we will perish! He is a friend of

sinners. He pardon sin and His mercy is abundant (Isaiah 55:7), but the devil's main goal is to destroy our relationship with God and make us believe that God gave up on us and rejected us because we fall often. The devil is a liar and the father of lies. (John 8:44)

I said: It is true that I fall a lot and my sins are difficult!

He said: There is a very dangerous statement, my son, and we repeated it often and we do not know that it is the reason that our relationship with God is destroyed and we think that we are being meek for using this statement.

I said (surprised): What is it, my father?

“God is upset with me”

I said (hastily): I fall in sin a lot; Does not this make God upset with me?

He said: Do you love falling in these sins?

I said: No. I wish to get rid of it. Who can save me?

He said: If so, you do not upset God. God says to you “My beloved, the devil is the one who is making me and you upset.” It is like a small child who is walking on the street and an evil person throws rubbish on him. Will his father be mad at him or the evil person?

I replied: The evil person of course.

He said: In the same manner, when we fall in sin and return to God speedily and know that God loves us, cleanses us and accepts us. The saying that I make God upset is from the devil to hinder the sinner from returning to his Father and makes him afraid of God. The sinner does not feel safe with God and he expects punishment, not help. Why does he return to God to get punishment? It is better to remain in sin. The sinner may try to please his difficult and insensitive Father for the likelihood that his Father accepts him. As time goes on, it becomes difficult for this sinner to return to God and he despairs and says to himself: "God is fed up with me". At this moment, the devil laughs his devilish laugh "Ha ha you have fallen in my merciless hands."

He said: wow, it is really a devilish word indeed and it is a destructive word. I did not understand the devil's trickery.

He said: There was a large village which has a small number of Christians. This type of village needs a special attention from the Church and its servants. The lack of a church building in the village or nearby and the infrequent service lead to a culture far away from the gospel and Christ among the lay people. Therefore, people become

an easy prey for the devil and his followers. A man traveled to Jordan to work there leaving behind his wife of two years and his young child. He promised to send her a letter every month and a sum of money to support her. He advised her to take the letter to her family or his to read it for her because she was illiterate and cash the check. As promised, he started sending her a letter every month and a check and she used to go to her family in her village to read the letter for her and cash the check. However, she started to take the easy way and went to a neighbor and asked him to cash the check because her village was far. As months went by, she started asking him to also read the letter for her. To save herself the trip of going to the post office, she asked the employees there to give the letter and the check.

to that person. He then started to cash the check and read the letter for her every month.

One day, the child became sick and she neglected him because of her lack of education and his condition worsened. The neighbor took advantage of the situation and he lied to her when he read the letter for her. The neighbor told her that her husband knew of the child's condition and her lack of care and that he will punish her

harshly. The wife became afraid and believed the lies. The evil person then started to talk to her with malice saying to her that “Do not be afraid. I will protect you.” He started to make her afraid of her husband day after day and he terrified her by the fake letters and made up lies. On the other hand, he started to say loving words to her. Because she was so afraid, she left Christ and married her neighbor. The husband returned after two years and saw her in the street, so she screamed “You have nothing to do with me. I will call the police if you say anything.” The man was in shock and asked “What are you saying?”

She said: “You are not my husband and I do not know you.” She was then shocked when she knew that all lies told to her by her neighbor.

Therefore, you also, if you do not accept Jesus’ teachings and His love for you as declared in the Holy Bible. If you believed the lies that God is mad at you and fed up with you and that He will punish you and that you are hopeless and the opportunity has passed you by, the fake repentance and instant salvation and that if we returned to sin, we did not truly repent and that the time has passed and we cannot be saved. This is nonsense, my son and it is neither true nor practical. That what

makes us despair and lose hope in ourselves and in God's acceptance of us.

**But Jesus loves all sinners; He loves the adulterers, He does not reject the homosexuals, He rejoices if an atheist returns without humiliating anyone, He loves and accepts us unconditionally, He did not even predicate His love on repentance and He did not even condition His salvation or forgiveness on it.**

I said: slow down, please, my father, because I am slow in understanding. What do you mean that He did not require repentance for His love or His salvation.

He said: God loved us when we did not repent. He loved us while we were still sinners. He did not say repent and I will then love you. Actually, there is a verse we call **"the transformation secret"** in the life of all

mankind. Whoever accepts it, his life is transformed from defeat to victory and from slavery of the devil to the freedom of Christ and from the darkness of sin to the light of righteousness.

I said: Which verse, my father, that contains this secret?!

He said: It is in the epistle of St. Paul to the Romans (5:8) :” While we were still sinners...”

This means that we were still sinners, we did not repent, we did not change and we did not return.

“But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we still sinners, Christ died for us.”

This means that the love of God for us was demonstrated without any conditions. His love for us did not require anything from us to be demonstrated for us. Frankly, if we did not accept the fact that God loves us while we are sinner, we will never return to Him nor will we ever repent.

I asked: How this can be, my father?

The merciful father does not hate his beloved son in his moments of weakness and despair, no matter how weak and evil this son is. He opens his arms for him and demonstrates his love to save him from his weakness and sin. God is the clever physician of souls; He loves his patients dearly no matter how malignant their disease is. This is not because of his love for the disease, but to save His patients from the heaviness of sickness.

Great teacher: Origenes  
The Divine Love P. 365



He said: Christ came to save us from sin. We cannot do that on our own. He is the physician and we are the patients; we go to Him to be healed.

(All of a sudden, my father placed his hands on his stomach and screamed from pain.)

I said: what's wrong, my father?

He was in pain saying uh uh

I said (in fear): Let's go to the hospital quickly.

He said: Uh uh

I said: Let's go quickly, father!

He said: I will go. I will go, but not now. Uh uh

I said: Quickly, my father!

He said: I will go, but after I am healed.

I said: Quickly, my father!

My father started laughing here and said: I will go, but after I am healed.(Did you get it?)

I said with a smile: You terrified me, my father, but it is a clear practical example (I just wish you told me beforehand so I am not scared.)

He said: It does not make sense that I got healed first and then I go to the doctor. I go to the doctor because I am sick. Likewise, it does not make sense to get rid of

and be freed from sin and then I go to Christ and accept His love.

I said: God loves me while I am still a sinner and I fall in the most heinous sins.

He said: Yes, whenever you fall in a great sin, God loves you even more. (Romans 5:20)

I said: This is a new and strange teaching. How?

He said: An orthopedic doctor has five children; one of them was playing soccer and he broke his leg. His father took him to the hospital and they put his leg in a cast.

Which child will he pay more attention to?!

When you fall in sin, do not rely on yourself and ask how did this matter happen to me? This is a voice of pride and arrogance.

Instead, humble yourself and lift your eyes to God and say with your entire being: What do you expect from a weak and sinful person like me, my Lord, except things like that.

Thank Him after that this matter did not last longer than it did and say "Without Your unlimited mercies, oh Lord, this would not have stopped at this point but I would have fallen in worse sins." St. Theophan the Hermit (P.86)

I said: The one who broke his leg, for sure.

He said: Three days later, another son was taking the stairs down and he fell and broke his pelvis. Which child will he pay more attention to, now?!

I said: The one who broke his pelvis, for sure.

He said: A week later, the younger son was hurt in an accident and sustained a fracture in the spine and

Where the sin  
abounded, let your  
grace be much more  
abound also. The  
Divine Liturgy

some bruises. Which child will he pay more attention to, now?! Will he take care of the healthy sons or with the one who broke his leg or the last one?

I said: The last one, of course, because his condition is critical.

He said: Likewise, God loves and takes care of the sinners, as the Lord Jesus stated in the parable of the Lost Sheep, that the Shepherd left the ninety nine and was searching for the lost one because it is in a critical need. The devil lies and says “The devil is a liar and the father of lies.” (John 8:44)

**“God is fed up with you. God love the saints but He prepares hell for you.**

**Man is poor and deserves pity for trying to heal and free himself, but in vain.”**

**Because *God is preparing hell for man so he builds fear and horror in his mind subconsciously from God and sometimes he could reach the degree of hating God and rejecting Him.***

A child in the third grade was playing in Sunday School and the teacher told him: whoever plays in Sunday School God will send him to hell. The child went home and took a picture of Jesus Christ and burned on the stove. His mother went to the kitchen and screamed at him “What are you doing, son?” The child answered:” I will burn Him before He burns me.” She asked him “What are you saying?” and he replied “A teacher in Sunday School told me that the Lord Jesus will send me to hell so I wanted t burn Him before He burns me.”

Death for those who understands is immortality but for those foolish people who do not understand it is death. We should not fear this death but fear the soul is perished which happens because of the lack of knowledge of God. St. Anthony.

I said: Wow, to this extent!

He said: Yes, my son. If we do not accept the love of God for us while we are still in sin as the Bible stated, we will reach a point to reject God and even hate Him without realizing it and this is what happens with the atheists. As St. Augustine said "Behind every case of atheism is a desire." An atheist is a person who has a desire.

God hates sin very much (because it is sin) but He loves the sinner very much (because he is His son) St. John Chrysostom

**And because** he thinks that God hates him because of his desire and sin, he also starts to hate God and reject him. But if he accepted that God loves him while he is still in sin, it will be the beginning of his repentance.

I said: Does this mean that we remain in sin because God loves us no matter what?

He said: A father loves his son who was hurt in an accident and the one who broke his spine and the one who broke his pelvis, but he does not like him to remain sick or broke. Likewise, God loves the sinner, but He does not like it for the sinner to remain in sin.

Because sin is a disease which leads to death and destruction. If sin had anything

good and beneficial, God would not have kept it from man because He provides everything “ richly for our enjoyment” ( 1 Timothy 6:17)

Falling in sin is like walking in the street and the devil hits me on the head. When I go home to my father, he will comfort me and encourage me saying “Do not be afraid, my beloved, and I will take of whoever hit you.” BUT what would you say for someone who goes to the devil to be hit so God can comfort him?

I said: That person would be crazy. Forgive me, maybe he is stupid!

He said: God loves us when the devil makes us fall in sin. Sin is pain, hurt, guilt and fear. We need the love of Jesus and His comfort, assurance, and His healing, but no sane person will say let me get sick on purpose so God can comfort me.

I said: Exactly, my father. You clarified a very important point. You mentioned to me that repentance neither a condition for love and nor it is a condition for forgiveness. I understood that God loves me if I repented or not, but the reason for repentance

is that He loves me so I return to Him. However, what does it mean that repentance is not a condition for forgiveness? Is it possible that God would forgive me without repentance?!

He said:

**Repentance is not a condition for forgiveness**

**But**

**It is a way to receive forgiveness**

I remarked: Sorry, I could not get this point.

He answered: The Lost Son; he was staying with swine, living with harlots and wasting his father's money on dissipation. However, his father was still loving and waiting for him, watching for the road every morning in anticipation of his return. Though the son was living with swine and in sin, the father was forgiving every guilt, and his heart was full of love for his son.

**Thus, repentance was not a condition but a way**

Repentance is only the way that the son takes to receive forgiveness. , for forgiveness had been there before the son returned, but if he had not taken the way back (repentance), he would not have received forgiveness in spite of its existence.

Besides, it is written “Return to Me, for I have redeemed you” (Isaiah 44: 22) and not “I will redeem you”; I return because God has redeemed me, so I return to receive redemption.

I said: I understood, my father, that God always forgives me, and that repentance is not a condition for my forgiveness but a way back to receive this forgiveness. If I do not return, I will not receive forgiveness and will perish despite of its existence.

But I have a question: you say that God does not want man to perish, but it is man with his free will who refuses God (life) and keeps away from Him (death); thus, I do not want such a free will, I know myself that I only want wickedness and filthiness. My inside was filled with wickedness and filthiness took control of my entity. **I do not want my will, I want God to guide me in the way, even if against my will!!**

He said: **This is repentance, son.**

This is the right beginning of spiritual life, and you has begun it. It is the most difficult step that you confess your corruption and sin without

obstinacy or justification, but you accept to surrender your will to God with your own full free choice. Trust and



believe the words of God, who said: “the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out” (John 6: 37), since as long as you has surrendered your will and life to him, he is responsible for you and saves you, for he “is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy” (Jude 24).

I asked: What do you mean, my father? I will not commit any sin again?!

He answered (smilingly): I do not mean that. What I mean is that you are a patient and have committed yourself into the hands of your affectionate father, who is a good doctor as well. Therefore, the responsibility has become His; your healing is His own responsibility. However, this healing will not happen in a blink of an eye, but everything will take its time.

**You only have to keep on taking the medicine (the means**

**Of grace), to follow the doctor’s instructions (the Bible)**

**And to avoid the causes of infection (evil company)**

**And you will find yourself getting better every day**

## **Until you are fully recovered.**

And what helps you most in this is your trust in the doctor; your father.

### **First: your trust in his love**

Since the doctor's smile and His sweet words have the

greatest effect on healing the sick, and a trust that He loves you and will not hurt, reproach, nor tell you "why do you become sick? You are ignorant, unclean and unworthy."

### **Second: your trust in his ability**

Be totally sure that your doctor (God) is able to heal all your diseases, and to set you free whatever your sin is.

I asked: will I really be set totally free from my sins, habits and filthiness?

He answered: The holy book says: "It shall come to pass in the day the Lord gives you rest from your sorrow, and from your fear and the hard bondage in which you were made to serve" (Isaiah 14:3).

**God said, and it shall certainly be**

I said: And will that day come during this life? I mean will that day come when I no longer have sins, faults or habits?

He explained: This is neither our intention, nor our target. **What we target is a genuine love relationship with God.** There will be a day when the son recovers, rises, plays and rejoices with his father, **BUT** as long as he exists in this life, he remains

exposed to infection, **BUT** similarly, as long as he is with his father, he remains safe, and if he is infected, his father will not leave him since the responsibility for saving and healing him is his father's full responsibility and He totally guarantees that (Hebrews 7:22).

I said: your words are very encouraging and consoling, father. They renew my self-confidence that I am loved and accepted, and that there is still hope after losing hope while satan's whispers crying in my ears: **"there is no hope. You are a sinner sinner. You are filthy filthy"**, especially when I became a teenager and started to be consumed with youthful lusts and habits, and watch indecent stuff, do you understand me, father?

He said: I understand you, son. It is not your state alone, but rather the state of all youth of your age, and it is a natural war.

I said (feeling a certain relief): really, father?

He answered: when youth begin to be warred against with youthful lusts and habits, and they fall, satan fights them using despair, looking down upon themselves and the misconception that they are filthy. Consequently, they think that God refuses them, and that they provoke His anger when they are defeated by satan. But the truth is totally different.

I interrupted him (as if someone has described my state accurately): How?!

He remarked (calmly and lovingly like a doctor who is changing a wound dressing with all love and attention): Satan's wars are interim; during childhood, we are warred against with revilement, swearing and lying which we can learn from the street or from school. During youth, the war is that of lusts, habits and indecent views while after graduation and work, it becomes that of worry and busyness.

Childhood satan is young so as to suit the child, and that of after graduation starts to grow old by the time while

youth satan is very strong and tiresome. Because youth are characterized by vigor and strength, if they fall into sin, they are bothered, become sad and take it personally “how come that I fall?!” (even if a young man is defeated in a game, you will find that he becomes angry and makes a mountain out of a molehill.)

I added: you are right! If I am defeated in any game, I am bothered, and if it is a computer game, I wish I could smash the device.

He said: But in spiritual life, we are fighting Satan. If you are defeated, arise quickly, do not give up and do not give an ear to his horrible voice: “You are a hopeless case; you are a sinner sinner, and filthy filthy.”

I enquired: And when he whispers these words into my ear, what shall I do, father?

He replied: Answer him saying: **“Jesus’ blood has cleansed me from all sin. Jesus’ blood has cleansed me from all sin”**, **repeating it until this war comes to an end**, for God’s word is a sword; carry it and fight Satan with it instead of humiliating and troubling you. And be sure that you are loved and accepted, and that you are sanctified through the blood of Jesus regardless of how

many times you fall in sin, even if a million times a day; Just do not take it lightly and do not give up.

I said: These voices really caused me to give up, and not only to give up, I was about to lose my mind<sup>1</sup>. Please, father do not leave me until you complete the programme for me as you did with my friend.

He said: Jesus will never leave us. We will go step by step. How to pray? How to be freed from repeated fall? How to trust in forgiveness?

<sup>1</sup>Some youth really suffer from psychic diseases as a result of their feelings of filthiness and inferiority.

And many other things we will discuss one by one, and by Jesus' grace, we will go step by step.

I said: I want a practical spiritual practice, father. My friend informed me that every time we will take a practice to apply in my life. But I wish it to take the form of simple steps that suit my simple condition, as you see.

He said: Actually, we will take practical practices in order to feel the result. We will focus on two levels: mind and action; mind in order to change the old thoughts of the world by which we are affected, and action which is the practical level. It consists of practical applications. So,

forgive me, we will concentrate first on mind with some simple practices. And I will tell you practical steps in three points.

I asked: What are these, father?

He responded: First, reading the Bible.

I said: Father, I have not read the Bible since I was born except for almost once or twice!

In the same way the physician hates the patient's illness and works to cure the disease and heal the patient, God works in us with his grace to diffuse sin and free man. St. Augustine

He said: Well, we will have a simple beginning that suits you. Read one verse a day.

I exclaimed: Only one verse!

He said: Please, son, go with me step by step; one verse a day for a week, two verses for the second week, a paragraph for the third then half a chapter for the fourth, and continue at this rate for a year. Can you do this?

I said: It is very simple. I can even read more than this...

He said: Please, do not read more, and if you stop reading for more than two weeks, start it from the very

beginning; one verse then two and so on. The most important thing in reading the Bible is to turn its promises and words into prayers and do not only read to gain information, and with God's grace, we will discuss this in detail while talking about how to read the Bible.

I asked: Why so, father, I have heard that you make my friend read three chapters a day with prayers from Agpeya.

He said: Your friend started just like you, and he started to grow gradually and not in a blink of an eye since progression is a key principle underlying growth and continuity whether physically or spiritually.

I said: This is the Bible, what about prayer?

He said: Since when have not you prayed?

I said: I do not remember whether it is one year or more.

He said: well, one minute a day for a week then two minutes for two weeks, and keep on five minutes for three months; and as agreed, no more, no less!

I asked: What shall I say while praying?



He answered: pray according to your needs (three things: spiritual matters, physical matters and for others.)

I enquired: What does this mean?

He explained: Pray to God for protecting you from wickedness, sin,

lusts and any other sin with which you are warred against, and say “forgive me, Lord, for so and so” then ask for your physical matters, studies or work and other physical needs, and ask for others

Your family (father, mother, children, siblings. . .), and also pray for anyone who annoys you.

I said: Why shall I pray.. can I invoke against them?!

He said (smilingly): No. Pray that God may change them since the best way to get rid of an enemy is to turn him into a friend. Pray that God may give you wisdom in dealing with them and save both of you from evil because man is helpless, but Satan is the one who turns man against his brother. We pray God to save us and them

Growth happens gradually from childhood to maturity and perfection in Christ. Therefore, the forts of evil thoughts are shattered gradually until they are destroyed completely...  
St. Macarius the Great

from the work of Satan. Can you start praying now as we have just said?

I asked: How?!

He said: Tell him **something similar to these words everyday**: “Do you really love me, Lord, though I am a sinner and filthy?! Maybe, people do not know everything about me, but you, Lord, know my sins that have become like an addiction. Do you accept me while I still cannot give up them all? I want to give up every sin, but I am so weak; whenever I attempt, I fall. Help me, strengthen me for you are my father. I miss You, Lord, have not You missed me too? Come, Lord

and make me know Your love, make me know that You love me more than my father, mother and friends. Come and be my mother, father and friend. Make me know about You, and enough for these ideas that made me afraid of you and enslaved me to Satan and sin and then it turned out that you love me, and that you are not angry with me, but sorry for me; for your distant son, who lives in humiliation and slavery. It is true that keeping away from you is humiliation, slavery, fear and horror. Make me return to you. No, you have already made me return to you. I want you to keep me safe in your lap, Lord.

Do not let me go back to sin, and if I weaken, make me return to you to heal me instead of growing afraid, losing hope and giving up. Give me hope that I will be with you even if I died while fighting sin rather than despairing and giving up. Make me aware of how to answer Satan, and use the Spirit's sword, which is your word, for I am an ignorant who do not know anything; explain to me, you Lord. From now on, you are responsible for me; I am no longer responsible for myself, and I am sure that you will be with me here on earth all the days of my life, and will take me with you to the happy eternity after my departure, you my father, love and all life." Start now and say what is inside you as it is.

I said: To be honest, I do not even know how to pray, I did not use to that, and If I pray, I may repeat clichés, but not words like yours. It is difficult!

He said: Start and you will learn, and to be honest, if you do not pray in your own words and your own state and not clichés, do not expect an answer.

I said: I may say something wrong that makes God more angry with me than he is.

He said: First, As we have agreed, He is not angry with you, but with Satan that irritates you. Second,

whatever you will say will please God in the same way He is pleased with the prayers of saints.

I said: Pardon me, father; all your talk is new and strange. Will my prayer please God, while I do not know what to say and full of sin and wickedness, in the same way He is pleased with the prayers of the saints?!

He said: If a father has many sons and a child who is still learning how to speak, who of them will please him, and whom he will hear even if he talked nonsense?!

I said: you outspoke me, father; you have examples of and answers for everything.

He said: God is a more loving father than any father that may be difficult or cruel to his son. That is why God said that his love is similar to that of the mother and even more. Not only this, but even “when my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take care of me.” Besides, He is as close as “a friend who sticks closer than a brother”, i.e., you can deal with God as a father and if the father is cruel and difficult, deal with Him as a mother, and if she is difficult and careless as well, you can deal with Him as a friend.

I asked: Is that true, father?

He answered: Yes, son. It is written: “the Lord your God carried you, as a man carries **his son**, in all the way that you went” (Documentary 1:31), and also “As one whom **his mother** comforts, so I will comfort you (says the Lord)” (Isaiah 66:13). He also says: “And I (Jesus Christ) say to you, My **friends** do not be afraid” (Luke 12:4).

I said: It is my first time to hear these words. Why do not we hear them in sermons? why no servants tell us that during puberty when we feel that we are filthy and refused by God, people and even ourselves?!

He said: God sends good laborers in his image and according to his likeness, son. Come on, speak with God.

I said: Since you are so determined that I must speak: “God, I am a sinner and do not know how to pray. I just want to tell you that I am so glad to hear today’s words that You love me even when I am a sinner, and that You will change and heal me. I will not know to do anything, but I will come to You and ask for Your forgiveness while afraid that I may fall again, but, as my father said, if I fall, I will arise and return and will not despair. I want You to teach me how to pray to You without ceasing, how to be always with You, to save me from Satan and from my

lusts, and to free me from my habits that have become like an addiction. I have no one but you, Lord, Amen!"

He said: This is the second practice that you have to do every day until we meet next week; talk with God in similar words morning and night, for prayer is what will change you and make you repent as St. Isaac remarks: "He who thinks that there is another door for repentance rather than prayer is deceived by satans."

**The third practice** is to talk with God all the time; while walking, at work, in the field, in school and in transportation. Tell Him what is inside your heart, and make him a close friend for this is what will terrify Satan of you; when God is always with you and you talk with Him constantly. That is why saints were praying all the time and were ceaselessly calling the name of Jesus even at bedtime and therefore, they were feared by satans.

I said: Honestly, father, I feel so satisfied after praying. God willing, I will always pray as long as this is prayer. It is simple and sweet. I will try to pray at work, on the road and all the time; he who is able to talk with God constantly and does not is not cut for soft life.

He said: Let's sum up what we have said:

- **The first evidence on Jesus' love for sinners is the words of the Bible.**

- **The secret behind the shift to accept God's love and to be freed from the slavery to Satan is the verse (Romans 5:8): "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners" (accepting God's love for us before we return).**

- **The practices:**

1. **One verse a day for a week, two verses for the second, a paragraph for the third and half a chapter for the fourth for one year.**

2. **Prayer:** one minute a day for a week, then two minutes for two weeks, and keep on five minutes for three months; no more, no less! **And ask God to guide you to the way and give you the trust of acceptance of forgiveness.**

3. **Talk with God all the time; at work, in the street and while asleep and awake.**

Good bye, son. Let's continue next week the rest of the evidences on Jesus' love for sinners. Start putting the practical steps into action, and let's meet every week

and take a new step (or read the next part) since the beginning is not enough, but continuity and perseverance is what matters most.

**\* If this series is a blessing to you we ask for your prayers to be able to complete printing the rest of the parts and we ask you to help us deliver it to all Christians.**

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