



Good News from ...

## Soul Food Unity Ministry

“The Word of God is true Soul Food”

~ Charles Fillmore

Volume 2

*Shining the Light of Truth on Contemporary Issues*

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### *Unity's Prayer Ministry—Silent Unity*

Healing others has been central to Unity's work from its earliest beginnings. In the spring of 1889, Charles and Myrtle Fillmore began working with people, both individually and at a distance, as practitioners of spiritual healing. The organization they developed to help them with distance healing became known as **Silent Unity**. It evolved from a prayer group in the living room of a Kansas City couple to the organization it is today. About the purpose of these healing prayer meetings Myrtle Fillmore said, “*In this healing meeting we intend to show you our faith by showing you our works. We want you to be so one with us in spirit that you will know the mighty healing power of God as we know it. We want to have an illuminating revelation within our souls and a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit. We have come together for a purpose, not aimlessly, not to be amused or entertained; we have gathered here to lay hold of the healing power of Jesus Christ.*” (Weekly Unity, August 9, 1924)

Unity students were urged to sit in the silence at 9 p.m. each evening and to hold in mind an affirmation entitled the *class thought* which was a central feature of the spiritual work assigned to students. The *class thought's* purpose was to help Unity

students make their own personal connection to the Spirit of God within. By silently holding it in mind, Unity students were connected with the Silent Unity prayer group.” (Unity, October 1, 1896) To hold the *class thought* means to silently repeat it over and over until we realize the presence of the Spirit within us and all about us.

***“He said to them, ‘When you pray say: Father, hallowed be your name. Your Kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.’”***  
**(Luke 11:2-4)**

This prayer is taken from the Sayings Gospel Q by both Luke and Matthew. Luke's version has nearly preserved the original form; Matthew's version [Matthew 6:9-13] has amplified several of the affirmations, but he has also best preserved two of them. In the Sayings Gospel Q it probably read:

*“Father,  
Hallowed be thy name.  
Your kingdom come.  
Give us the bread we need for the day.  
Forgive our debts  
To the extent that we have forgiven those in  
debt to us.”*

Jesus undoubtedly employed the term *Abba* [Aramaic for Father] to address God. Among Judeans, the name of God was sacred and was not to be pronounced. Jesus used a familiar form of address and then asked that the name be regarded as sacred—a paradox that seems characteristic of Jesus' teachings. While Jesus probably did not teach his disciples to pray the prayer as it was assembled in *Q*, he probably did make use of the four individual affirmations. His disciples learned the individual affirmations from him. Someone, at a later time, put them together in the form as we now find it.

The use of these, and other affirmative prayers by Jesus, shows that he prayed in affirmations of Truth spoken aloud. But, this was not the only way he prayed. The gospels portray Jesus as a man of prayer who regularly withdrew into solitude for long hours of prayer. Such lengthy hours of prayer accompanied by solitude do not imply verbal prayer but contemplation or meditation. Quietening the mind and directing the heart toward God is a classic spiritual practice to become present to the world of Spirit. Going back to Jesus' use of *Abba* [Father] to address God, Marcus Borg points out that *Abba* is the word used by very young children to address their father; *Abba* is like the English *Papa*. Borg writes that the intimacy of Jesus' experience of Spirit is pointed to by his use of this term. Its usage shows the intensity of his spiritual experience. At the heart of Jesus' prayer life was his personal experience of the spirit of God, when he prayed affirmatively and silently. (Jesus, A New Vision, Marcus Borg)

***"He [Jesus] said to them, 'When you pray say: Father, hallowed be your name.'"***

Jesus speaking to his followers represents the Christ within speaking to our thoughts and feelings. *Father* represents our God focused orientation, the true point of beginning in prayer. This declares our unity with God at the outset, which is our only need. The prayer begins on this note not to get God's attention, but to direct our attention to the Spirit of God within.

***"Your Kingdom come."***

God's Kingdom is the perfect creation. Each of us is a perfect idea in God Mind, a divine possibility of infinite capacity. Like the pattern in the seed, there is a plan for every one of us in God Mind, which gives rise to our desire for fulfillment. In the prayer, this statement affirms: *"Let that perfect idea, which I am in spirit, unfold in me and through me. Let this perfect idea lead me into a manifestation in the outer, of what I am within."*

***"Give us each day our daily bread."***

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