

Experimenting With Supra-Rational Prayers

The stress of life often causes our brains to reach a point of gridlock. We want to pray, but when we try, there's just nothing there—we feel empty, no words to say. We know there's lots of stuff building up inside that we need to resolve in conversation with God, but we just can't get there.

In times like that, supra-rational prayers can help enormously. "Supra-rational" means "above or beyond reason." When we are trying to process the issues of life, logical thought will take us only so far. Beyond that, we have to look to God to help us access something deeper and more intuitive.

One way is through spiritual songs. Another way is through singing (or praying) in the Spirit—sometimes called praying in "tongues". Both of these prayer methods are referred to in I Corinthians 14:15 and were typical for early Christians.

Exercise One: Praying In Song

1. Find a quiet place where you're all alone. Take a few deep breaths and calm yourself.
2. Think of a spiritual song that you like. Perhaps it's a hymn you learned in the past or a praise chorus we sing at church. If you know the title or some key words, you can quickly find the full lyrics in a Google search. We also have included the lyrics to a few well-known spiritual songs below.
3. Once you've selected a song, you have two options.
 - If you do a search on You Tube.com, you will quickly find a clip of the song performed by a recording artist. As the song plays, listen prayerfully, then join in singing as you feel moved. Make the words your own; sing from the heart.

You can find the song we sang together during the sermon on Sunday—*Be Still and Know*, by Steven Curtis Chapman—at the following link:
[youtube.com/watch?v=jr1CjDvO_00](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jr1CjDvO_00)

- Alternatively, you can simply sing a song quietly to yourself, without the support of any recording. Don't get stuck wondering what others would think of your singing. Let it come from your heart as a sincere offering to God. God will be blessed by your sincerity!

4. Sing the song through a few times, until the melody and the words begin to penetrate your heart. As they do so, your body will begin to chemically respond—relaxing and opening your to authentic feelings. That's how God designed us—to respond to music. Surrender to that process.
5. Once it feels like your heart has really opened itself to God and to your feelings, look inside yourself and ask: what is it that I really need to talk to God about? Whatever intuitive answer your soul gives, go with it. Talk out loud to God, just like a friend, about whatever is on your heart, then quiet yourself and listen for God's unspoken response in your heart. You may want to verbalize what you think God is saying back to you.

Exercise Two: Praying In The Spirit (Tongues)

1. Move through Steps 1-4 exactly as outlined above in the first exercise.
2. After you have sung the song a few times in English, and find yourself relaxing and feeling the beauty and emotion of the music, see if you can sing the melody with words and syllables (unknown to you) that come from somewhere deep inside. If so, go with it, trusting that the Holy Spirit is now praying through you and for you in ways you never could (Romans 8:26-27).
3. After you've sung this way for a short while, you may get a deep intuition of what the Spirit is praying about. You may sense the general topic or even more detailed specifics. The Bible teaches that, when we pray in tongues, sometimes God gives us glimpses of what the Spirit is saying through us. If you get such an intuition, after you are done praying in tongues, then pray about the same subject in your rational mind, processing your thoughts and feelings in God's presence.
4. Regardless whether you experience the intuition referred to in the foregoing step, you can still pause at the end of this process and ask yourself what you think you really need to talk to God about. Chances are, you will now be much more in touch with what's really happening inside you, and able to have a meaningful conversation with God about that.

Lyrics to some well known spiritual songs are on the back of this sheet.

Captivate My Heart

Captivate my heart
Make it all Your own
Melt away my every longing
'Til I'm Yours alone

Breathe upon me, Lord
Make my spirit new
Let me know Your holy presence
As I worship You

Chorus:
Holy, holy
Hallelujah to the King
I worship You

Last Chorus:
Holy, holy
Holy, holy
Worthy, Worthy
Mighty, Mighty
Hallelujah to the King
I worship You

Still

Hide me now
Under your wings.
Cover me
Within your mighty hand.

When the oceans rise and thunders roar,
I will soar with you above the storm.
Lord, you are the king over the flood.
I will be still and know you're God.

Find rest my soul
In Christ alone.
Know his power
In quietness and trust.

[Back to chorus]

It Is Well With My Soul

When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou has taught me to say,
It is well, it is well, with my soul.

It is well, with my soul,
It is well, with my soul,
It is well, it is well, with my soul.

Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
Let this blessed assurance control,
That Christ has regarded my helpless estate,
And hath shed His own blood for my soul.

It is well, with my soul,
It is well, with my soul,
It is well, it is well, with my soul.

How Great Thou Art

O Lord my God, When I in awesome wonder,
Consider all the worlds Thy Hands have made;
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
Thy power throughout the universe displayed.

Then sings my soul, My Savior God, to Thee,
How great Thou art, How great Thou art.
Then sings my soul, My Savior God, to Thee,
How great Thou art, How great Thou art!

When through the woods, and forest glades I wander,
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees.
When I look down, from lofty mountain grandeur
And see the brook, and feel the gentle breeze.
[Back to chorus.]

And when I think, that God, His Son not sparing;
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in;
That on the Cross, my burden gladly bearing,
He bled and died to take away my sin.
[Back to chorus.]