

The Word's Eye View

The Word's Eye View is a newspaper column written by
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"Prayer... Crisis vs. Convenience" (Article 30)

Americans were recently mesmerized by the quick thinking and heroic actions of an airline pilot whose options were narrowed to a Hudson River landing. All 155 souls aboard the craft were rescued as the result of his expert ability and perhaps an unseen Hand under the fuselage. Interviews with passengers reveal that in those frantic moments before touchdown many persons were engaged in prayer. Some sought God's deliverance silently while others were open and quite verbal in making their petitions. It is reasonable to assume that church goers and non attenders alike prayed, invading the hearing space of atheistic fellow travelers. Should the ACLU be called in to ferret out the facts of this outrage?! Is it possible that federal legislation is needed to require commercial flights add an addendum to the usual speech about seat belts, upright seats and table trays, available oxygen and life vest, emergency exits and restrooms? Prior to takeoff, should a reminder be issued that in case of an emergency only silent prayers will be tolerated?

Most reasonable individuals realize that the probability of that is negligible because prayers of all kinds have been historically accepted in case of a crisis. There are no loud objections in the event of a Columbine, a 9/11, Katrina or any other large natural disasters. This in itself is a clear demonstration of the utter hypocrisy of today's political correctness. Why is prayer embraced in time of tragedy but rejected when it initiates a high school graduation? Is the future of those students any less important than the survival of a calamity? In reality isn't it all about the same core issue----Survival! Anticipating a short term response is acceptable, but offering prayers for the long haul must be confined to the church house. This reasoning is more than hypocritical; it's insane. An ancient epigram quotes Satan revealing a demonic strategy: "Blessed is he who has no time to pray, for he will become an easy prey."

Science would suggest that prayer is at best subjective, and there is no valid evidence that it actually works. The Chicago Sun Times published an article that begs to differ. Research at San Francisco General Hospital has revealed that victims of heart attack, heart failure and other cardiac problems who were remembered in prayers fared better than those who were not. Cardiologist Randy Byrd assigned 192 patients to the "prayed-for" group and 201 patients to the "non-prayed for" group. All patients were in the coronary intensive care unit. Patients, doctors and nurses did not know which group patients were in. Prayer group members were scattered around the nations and given only the first names, diagnoses and prognoses of patients.

The researcher said that the results were dramatic. The prayed-for group had significantly fewer complications than the unremembered group. And fewer members of the former died. The latter group was five times more likely to develop infections requiring antibiotics, and three times more likely to develop a lung condition, leading to heart failure. These findings were published in the proceedings of the American Heart Association. Maybe doctors ought to be writing on their order sheets: "Pray at least three times a day."

The majority of scientists will ignore such findings in deference to the popularized agenda of ruling

God out of the public life. To pray is an admission that there is a Divine Power Who has the unseen ability to control circumstances beyond our capabilities. Such an acknowledgment foresees a final accountability that many are attempting to avoid. The proverbial ostrich will continue to prefer the head in the sand as opposed to the light and beauty of the sunrise. Prayer is an act of humble submission giving credit to the Author of the morning. Thomas Hogben once wrote. "Of what use would a mighty gift of faith be to a soul which is occupied with human slights and grievances? Could a baptism of burning love to God and man be bestowed upon one whose chief thought was for self, for position, for fame? The common prayer cry is 'Fill me and lift me up!' The Divine answer is very often: 'Be emptied out and go down.'"