

**SERMON – 7/2/00
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL WAUWATOSA**

TEXT: Matt 6:5-8

FOCUS: Prayer is all the time.

“Near as Your Breath”

AS PAUL ADDRESSED HIS CHURCHES, I GREET YOU...

**GRACE, MERCY AND PEACE FROM GOD OUR CREATOR AND
LORD AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST. AMEN.**

**RECENTLY I RECEIVED AN E-MAIL EXPLAINING GOD
FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF AN EIGHT YEAR OLD.**

READ E-MAL

**I AM NOT EXACTLY SURE I AGREE WITH THE THEOLOGICAL
PERSPECTIVE OF DANNY’S LAST FEW WORDS...**

“AND HE CAN TAKE ME BACK ANYTIME...”

BUT THAT IS A TOPIC FOR ANOTHER SERMON ANOTHER DAY.

**I HAVE ATTENDED A PAROCHIAL GRADE SCHOOL
A CHURCH AFFILIATED COLLEGE
I HAVE BEEN ACTIVE IN CHURCH CAMP AS CHILD AND ADULT
I HAVE TAUGHT IN A CHURCH RELATED SCHOOL
AND I HAVE ATTENDED SEMINARY.**

**AND.....I WONDER,
IF I WOULD BE ABLE
TO EXPLAIN GOD WITH SUCH CLARITY.??**

-----I NEVER HAD TO TACKLE THAT ONE

**WHAT ABOUT EACH ONE OF YOU?
EXPLAIN GOD!!**

AS I READ THIS

**THE THEME WHICH SEEMED TO COME TO THE FOREFRONT
THE MOST..... WAS PRAYER.**

**8 TIMES DANNY REFERENCED GOD AND PRAYER
GOD LISTENED TO PRAYERS
HEARS EVERYTHING
SEES EVERYTHING
JESUS HELPS HIS DAD OUT BY LISTENING TO PRAYERS
PRAY ANYTIME
THEY ARE THERE TO HELP YOU
HE'S AROUND YOU ALWAYS
...SHOULDN'T JUST ALWAYS THINK OF WHAT GOD
CAN DO FOR YOU....**

PRAYER....

**IF YOU GREW UP IN A "CHURCH" FAMILY
I WILL BET ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS YOU LEARNED
WAS TO SAY YOUR PRAYERS AT BED TIME.**

**ALSO, SOME OF YOU LEARNED
TO PRAY BEFORE MEALS
AND SOME OF YOU LEARNED
TO SAY A THANK YOU PRAYER AFTER MEALS.**

**SOME OF YOU WENT TO SUNDAY SCHOOL
AND LEARNED TO SAY PRAYERS.**

----AS YOU ENTERED ADULTHOOD, YOU ATTENDED CHURCH.

**-----
THERE YOU EXPERIENCE AN HOUR, WORTH OF PRAYER.**

*******WE BEGIN CHURCH WORSHIP SERVICE WITH A**

--CALL TO WORSHIP (FORM OF PRAYER)

--WE SING HYMNS – FORM OF PRAYER

--THERE IS THE PRAYER OF INVOCATION –“ INVITATION”

--THEN THE GLORIA PARTI

**--THEN SOMETIMES THE PSALTER –
THE OLD TESTAMENT FORM OF PRAYER
THROUGH AN ANCIENT FORM OF POETRY OR
HYMNITY**

--THEN THERE IS A TIME OF SILENT PRAYER – [YOUR TIME]

--THEN THE PASTORAL PRAYER

**---SOMETIMES WE HAVE INTECESSORY PRAYER –
SPECIFIC PRAYERS FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE ILL OR
SUFFERING IN SOME WAY.**

--SOMETIMES A PRAYER IN THE SERMON

**--THEN THE PRAYER OF DEDICATION –
DEDICATING OUR MONEY TO GODS WORK ON EARTH.**

**--THEN THE BENEDICTION OR FINAL PRAYER OF BLESSING
=====**

YOU HAVE JUST EXPERIENCED 60 MINUTES OF PRAYER

**MOST OF THIS IS WHAT WE CALL CORPORATE PRAYER.
PRAYER WITH THE COMMUNITY GATHERED.**

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NOW BE HONEST WITH YOURSELVES.....

**HOW MANY OF YOU
CAN SIT THROUGH AN ENTIRE WORSHIP SERVICE
AND NOT FEEL ANYTHING!**

**HOW MANY OF YOU SOMETIMES GO AWAY FROM THIS PLACE
AND SAY...**

**“WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED PRAYER,
TO FEEL LIKE?**

**I JUST COULD NOT MAKE A GOD
CONNECTION**

THIS MORNING!"

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I WILL BE VERY HONEST WITH YOU....

**THERE ARE SOME SUNDAYS I CAN SAY THE PRAYERS
AND NOT EVEN REMEMBER WHAT I SAID
JUST A FEW MINUTES BEFORE...**

.....LET ALONE FEEL SOME SORT OF GOD CONNECTION.

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**I AM THE CLERGY PERSON
I AM SUPPOSE TO HAVE SOME
"SPECIAL" CALLING FROM GOD
TO LEAD PEOPLE TO THEIR GOD
CONNECTION.**

**BUT I AM HERE TO TELL YOU ...
WE ALL HAVE TIMES LIKE THAT...
IT IS OKAY.....JUST KEEP AT IT.**

**IF YOU NOTICE I KEEP COMING BACK EVERY SUNDAY
AND DOING IT AGAIN.**

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TODAY, I WANT TO EXPLORE THIS THING WE CALL PRAYER!

**WE HAVE ALL SAID THE LORD'S PRAYER
AND HEARD SERMONS ON THE LORD'S PRAYER.**

**I WANT TO LOOK AT WHAT JESUS SAID IN THE SCRIPTURE
TODAY**

**"BUT WHENEVER YOU PRAY, GO INTO YOUR ROOM AND
SHUT THE DOOR AND PRAY TO YOUR FATHER WHO IS IN
SECRET."**

**I THINK JESUS IS SAYING
THAT DEEP CONNECTION WITH OUR FATHER
DOES NOT ALWAYS COME IN PUBLIC PLACES.**

I WOULD LIKE TO EXPAND THAT ANOTHER STEP AND SAY...
BEFORE WE CAN TRULY COME
TO CONNECTION WITH THE GOD IN A GROUP
WE MUST COME TO CONNECTION –
ALONE WITH GOD.

CONNECTION WITH GOD IS

****NOT BECAUSE WE ATTEND CHURCH**

****NOT BECAUSE WE HAVE BEEN ASKED
TO GIVE THE INVOCATION PRAYER
AT THE BUSINESS MEETING...**

****NOT BECAUSE WE HAVE BEEN ASKED
TO GIVE THE DEVOTIONAL
AND PRAYER IN A COMMITTEE MEETING.**

THOSE PRAYER MOMENTS ARE IMPORTANT..
THEY ARE VITAL IN OUR CHRISTIAN GROWTH,
THEY ARE VITAL FOR OTHERS AROUND US...

BUT OUR TRUE, HONEST, DEEPLY PERSONAL
GOD CONNECTION..... THROUGH PRAYER....
MUST OCCUR -- ALONE WITH OUR GOD
BEFORE PRAYER IS TRULY FELT
IN A COMMUNITY OF THOSE GATHERED.

MARCUS BORG WRITES IN HIS BOOK "JESUS A NEW VISION"

"MOST OF US ARE AWARE PRIMARILY OF A FORM OF
PRAYER
IN WHICH GOD IS ADDRESSED WITH WORDS,
WHETHER OUT LOUD IN THE CONTEXT OF PUBLIC PRAYER,
OR INTERNALLY IN PRIVATE PRAYER.
SUCH 'VERBAL PRAYER' IS TYPICALLY RELATIVELY BRIEF,
ORDINARILY NO LONGER THAN A FEW MINUTES,
PERHAPS SOMETIMES LONGER IN PRIVATE DEVOTION."

BUT AS BORG STATES

**VERBAL PRAYER IS ONLY ONE FORM OF PRAYER
IN THE JEWISH-CHRISTIAN TRADITION.**

HE GOES ON TO STATE....

**“IT IS ONLY THE FIRST STAGE OF PRAYER, BEYOND IT ARE
DEEPER LEVELS OF PRAYER CHARACTERIZED BY INTERNAL
SILENCE AND LENGTHY PERIODS OF TIME.”**

WHEN WE REACH THESE DEEPER LEVELS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

WE ACTUALLY COME INTO THE REAL PRESENCE OF GOD.

THIS IS USUALLY REFERRED TO AS...

**MOMENTS OF CONTEMPLATION
OR MEDITATION.**

IT IS A COMMUNION OR UNION WITH GOD.

JOEL GOLDSMITH STATES....

**“MEDITATION IS AN INVITATION FOR GOD TO SPEAK TO US
OR TO MAKE HIMSELF KNOWN TO US;
IT IS NOT AN ATTEMPT TO REACH GOD,
SINCE GOD IS OMNIPRESENT. THE PRESENCE ALREADY IS.
WE ARE NOT SEEKING TO REACH GOD,
BUT RATHER TO ACHIEVE SUCH A STATE OF STILLNESS
THAT THE AWARENESS OF GOD’S PRESENCE PERMEATES
US.”**

**“ONE ENTERS THE REALM OF SPIRIT
AND EXPERIENCES GOD.”**

MARCUS BORG FEELS THIS TYPE OF EXPERIENCE

THIS DEEP FORM OF MEDITATION...

IS NOT REALLY PRACTICED IN MODERN CULTURE.

STEPPING BACK IN TIME

WE READ ABOUT MOSES AND ELIJAH ...

WHO SPENT LONG PERIODS OF TIME IN SOLITUDE

AND COMMUNION WITH GOD.

AT THE TIME OF JESUS THERE WERE GALILEAN HOLY MEN
WHO REGULARLY SPENT AN HOUR
'STILLING THEIR MINDS' IN ORDER TO DIRECT THEIR
HEARTS TOWARD HEAVEN.

THIS FORM OF MEDITATION
WAS FOUND IN JEWISH MYSTICISM.
THIS WAS THE MYSTICISM OF JESUS' TIME AND
BEFORE.

BORG STATES...

THAT "MERKABAH MYSTICIS', AS THEY WERE KNOW
WAS A CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER
AND THE VEHICLE FOR ASCENDING
THROUGH THE HEAVENS
TO THE ULTIMATE VISION OF BEHOLDING
THE THRONE OF GOD
THAT IS, OF EXPERIENCING
THE KINGSHIP OF GOD."

THE GOSPELS PORTRAY JESUS AS A MAN OF PRAYER
WHO PRACTICED THIS FORM OF PRAYER
INCREASINGLY UNKNOWN IN MODERN WESTERN CULTURES.

JOEL GOLDSMITH STATED...

"WE HAVE BEEN TRAINED TO PRAY
WITH OUR THINKING MIND
AS IF GOD COULD BE REACHED THROUGH THOUGHT.
GOD CAN NEVER BE REACHED WITH OR THROUGH
THOUGHT.
NO ONE CAN EVER REACH GOD WITH THE MIND;
NO ONE CAN EVER REACH GOD WITH CONSCIOUS THINKING;
GOD CAN ONLY BE REACHED THROUGH A RECEPTIVE STATE
OF CONSCIOUSNESS."

LIKE MOSES AND ELIJAH,
JESUS REGULARLY WITHDREW
INTO SOLITUDE FOR LONG HOURS OF PRAYER;

THROUGH OUT THE GOSPELS WE FIND
STORIES ABOUT JESUS GOING INTO THE WILDERNESS
GOING TO THE MOUNTAINTOP
GOING OUT TO SEA
AND IN ALL SITUATIONS,
JESUS WITHDREW FOR “PRAYER” OR
MEDITATION AND CONTEMPLATION
UNION WITH THE FATHER.

SO WHEN MATTHEW RECORDS JESUS TELLING PEOPLE
TO GO INTO THE ROOMAND SHUT THE DOOR....
AND PRAY IN SILENCE.
THIS IS PROBABLY WHAT HE IS MEANING.

[GO INTO NON-VERBAL MEDITATION
TO CONNECT WITH GOD.]

JOEL GOLDSMITH SAYS...

“WHETHER YOU ARE ONE OF THOSE
WHO PRAY IN HOLY MOUNTAINS
OR IN GREAT TEMPLES IN JERUSALEM,
OR WHETHER YOU DO NOT PRAY IN ANY PARTICULAR
PLACE,
THE TRUTH IS THAT THE PLACE WHEREON YOU STAND
IS HOLY GROUND AS LONG AS YOU ARE CONTEMPLATING
THE PRESENCE AND THE POWER OF GOD WITHIN YOU.”

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DURING THE LAST SEVERAL WEEKS

I HAVE ASKED SEVERAL PEOPLE
TO THINK ABOUT THESE THINGS

FIRST----- WHERE DO YOU HAVE
YOUR MOST POWERFUL PRAYER EXPERIENCES?

OR IN OTHER WORDS ---- WHERE IS YOUR HOLY GROUND?

REFLECT FOR A MOMENT.....
SOME OF YOU MAY WANT TO JOT OFF A NOTE TO YOURSELF
IN THE CORNER OF THE BULLETIN

OR OTHERS OF YOU MAY JUST PLACE YOUR SACRED SPACE
OR HOLY GROUND: IN THE FOREFRONT OF YOUR MIND.

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OKAY, LET US RETURN TO THIS PLACE.

I WILL BET SEVERAL OF YOU DID NOT MENTION CHURCH
AS YOUR MOST IMPORTANT, HOLY GROUND,
OR ENJOYABLE PLACE FOR PRAYER EXPERIENCE.

PRAYERS IN CHURCH ARE A CRUCIAL PART
OF THE CONFSSIONAL, COMMUNITY LIFE OF FAITH.

OFFERING PRAYERS OF PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING TO GOD
AS A CHRIST CENTERED BODY OR COMMUNITY
IS A NECESSARY ACTIVITY.

HOWEVER, CORPORATE PRAYER
OR PRAYER-BOOK PRAYER
WILL NEVER REPLACE
THE NEED FOR A PRAYER LIFE
OUTSIDE THE DOORS OF THE CHURCH.

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SO NOW, LET ME SHARE WITH YOU
SOME OF THE ANSWERS
FROM THOSE OF US SITTING HERE THIS MORNING.

WHERE IS YOUR INNER SANCTUARY...
YOUR HOLY GROUND?

WHEN DO YOU EXPERIENCE THE GOD PRESENCE?

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***ONE PERSON WHO TRAVELS IN HIS CAR A LOT SAID
HIS CAR IS HIS PRAYER CLOSET.
HE INTENTIONALLY TURNS OFF THE RADIO AND TAPE
SYSTEM AND PHONE AND SPENDS TIME IN THE
PRESENCE OF GOD.

***A SIMILAR COMMENT WAS EXPRESSED..BY SOMEONE....

WHEN SHE IS STUCK IN ALL THIS SUMMER TIME
CONSTRUCTION TRAFFIC,,,
SHE USES IT AS A TIME
TO COME INTO FOCUS AND MEDITATE.

***SOMEONE ELSE SAID....

“WHEN I CLOSE MY EYES, I FEEL GOD’S HAND IN MY
HAND”

***ANOTHER PERSON TOLD ME THAT SHE EXPERIENCES THE
SPIRIT OF GOD AT THE END OF A PIER IN DOOR COUNTY AT
SUNSET...AS SHE LOOKS ACROSS THE WATER AND SHE
FEELS THE WIND BLOW ACROSS HER FACE.

***SOMEONE ELSE TOLD OF HER EXPERIENCE
DURING THE QUIET TIME

JUST BEFORE THE SILENT PRAYER.

AS THE NOISE OF THIS PLACE STOPS ...

THIS PERSON SUDDENLY CAN FEEL HER MIND

JUST ZOOMING ALL OVER THE PLACE.

ALL KINDS OF IMAGES AND THOUGHTS RACE AROUND IN
HER HEAD.

THEN SUDDENLY... SOME ODD THOUGHT COMES INTO
CLARITY AND SHE RELATES THAT SHE FEELS THAT IS THE
THING SHE NEEDS TO FOCUS UPON.

QUITE POSSIBLY THIS COULD BE THE CLOSEST EXPERIENCE
THAT THOSE OF US IN MODERN WESTERN CULTURE HAVE OF
A MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE.

THE MYSTICS REVEALED THAT IN QUIETNESS AND IN
STILLNESS IS OUR STRENGTH.

IN QUIETNESS AND IN STILLNESS WE FIND GOD, NOT IN
OUTSIDE WORSHIP.

THAT TAKES US BACK TO OUR SCRIPTURE...

“WE MUST ENTER THE INNER SANCTUARY, CLOSE THE
DOOR AND PRAY IN SECRET.”

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HOW MANY OF YOU CREATE YOUR OWN PRAYER CLOSET

**OR HOLY GROUND OR SACRED SPACE...
AS YOU MOW THE LAWN OR WASH DISHES.**

**SOME PEOPLE HAVE RELATED TO ME THAT THEY ACTUALLY
ENJOY AND LOOK FORWARD TO THOSE TIMES OF
“ALONENESS” FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD AS THEY DO
ROUTINE CHORES SUCH AS
LAWN MOWING OR DISHWASHING.**

SOME PEOPLE TAKE PRAYER WALKS.

**IT IS AMAZING WHAT HAPPENS
WHEN YOU STOP HANDING GOD
A SHOPPING LIST OF “THINGS”
AND JUST OPEN YOUR SELF TO GOD’S PRESENCE.**

**PRAYER IS NOT SOMETHING WE WEAR,
SUCH AS WE MAY THINK ABOUT IN THE REGALIA
OF CHURCH TRADITION
OR RELIGIOSITY FOUND IN THE TEMPLE.**

**HOWEVER IT IS..... SOMETHING WE LIVE....
SOMETHINGAS CLOSE AS OUR OWN BREATH.**

**THIS IS WHY OUR MOST POWERFUL EXPERIENCES
OF PRAYER
OFTEN COME WHILE WE ARE AWAY FROM THE SANCTUARY
AND BUSILY ENGAGED IN THE BUSINESS OF LIVING.**

**THE POWER OF THE SMALL GROUP
TO BOTH FOCUS AND MAGNIFY THE SPIRIT OF PRAYER,**

**THE SINGLE-MINDED CLARITY OF A PRAYER UTTERED
WHILE WE ARE ENGAGED IN SOME SOLITARY CHORE,**

**OR THE INTENTIONAL STALKING OF THE SPIRIT
IN AN ORGANIZED PRAYER-WALK.**

ALL, OFFER US A GENUINE EXPERIENCE OF PRAYER.

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**THIS YEAR THE CARE BOARD IS PLANNING
TO EMPHASIS PRAYER.**

**PRAYER OF THE ANCIENT JEWISH/CHRISTIAN AGE –
MYSTICISM,
SUCH AS MOSES, ELIJAH AND QUIET POSSIBLY JESUS.**

PRAYER THROUGH SINGING.

PRAYER IN WORSHIP-COMMUNITY

PRAYER IN PRIVATE.

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**WE WILL BE PLACING THE PRAYER BOOK
IN THE HALL NEAR THE CHAPEL.**

**WE WILL BE MAKING AVAILABLE THE CARING CORNER FORM
FOR ALL TO TAKE A COPY HOME
AND USE FOR YOUR PERSONAL PRAYER TIME.**

**WE WILL BE PROVIDING NAMES
TO THE VARIOUS MINISTRY GROUPS,
WHO WOULD LIKE TO INCLUDE PRAYERS FOR THE
PEOPLE WHO ARE LISTED IN OUR PRAYER BOOK
AND ON THE CARING CORNER LIST.**

ADDITIONALLY, ON WEDNESDAY EVENINGS AT 5:30PM

WE WILL BE INVITING ANYONE....AT ANYTIME

THAT YOU HAVE HAD A PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT DAY

**OR MAYBE YOU HAD A JOY TO SHARE WITH YOUR CHURCH
FAMILY..**

**OR MAYBE YOU HAVE A BIG PRESENTATION OR MEETING, AT
WORK,**

OR PARENT MEETING WITH THE TEACHER
OR ALL THE MANY LIFE SITUATIONS....
STOP BY ON WEDNESDAY AND SPEND JUST A FEW
MINUTES
IN THE POWERFUL EXPERIENCE OF PRAYER....

AS YOU GO ABOUT YOUR BUSY SUMMER SCHEDULE...
AS YOU LEAVE THIS CHURCH TODAY...
AS YOU DRIVE OR WALK HOME TODAY....

MAYBE THE NEXT TIME YOU MOW THE LAWN,
WASH DISHES
TAKE THE DOG FOR A WALK

REMEMBER THE WORDS OF DANNY...
"IT IS GOOD TO KNOW GOD'S AROUND YOU....."

CARRY THIS THOUGHT WITH YOU...

IT IS NOT TOO DIFFICULT TO DEVELOP THE HABIT
OF WAITING FOR A SECOND.... AT EVERY DOOR
WE OPEN OR CLOSE TO REALIZE:
"GOD IS JUST AS MUCH ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS
DOOR AS HE IS ON THIS SIDE.
THERE IS NO PLACE WHERE I CAN GO TODAY WHERE
THE PRESENCE OF GOD IS NOT. WHEREVER I AM, GOD IS."

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ASK YOURSELF.....

WHERE IS YOUR FAVORITE PLACE TO PRAY?

AND GO THERE WITH REGULARITY

YOU WILL FIND IT IS SIMILAR TO THE FEELING
YOU HAVE WHEN YOU GET TOGETHER WITH A GOOD FRIEND
YOU WILL LOOK FORWARD TO THE TIME TOGETHER

YOU MAY FEEL GOD "NEAR AS YOUR BREATH!"

EXPLAIN GOD

**ONE OF GOD'S MAIN JOBS IS MAKING PEOPLE.
HE MAKES THEM TO REPLACE THE ONES THAT DIE,
SO THERE WILL BE ENOUGH PEOPLE TO TAKE CARE OF
THINGS ON EARTH.
HE DOESN'T MAKE GROWN-UPS, JUST BABIES.
I THINK BECAUSE THEY ARE SMALLER AND EASIER TO MAKE.
THAT WAY, HE DOESN'T HAVE TO TAKE UP HIS VALUABLE
TIME TEACHING THEM TO TALK AND WALK.
HE CAN JUST LEAVE THAT TO MOTHERS AND FATHERS.**

**GOD'S SECOND MOST IMPORTANT JOB
IS LISTENING TO PRAYERS.
AN AWFUL LOT OF THIS GOES ON, SINCE SOME PEOPLE,
LIKE PREACHERS AND THINGS,
PRAY AT TIMES BESIDE BEDTIME.
GOD DOESN'T HAVE TIME TO LISTEN TO THE RADIO OR TV
BECAUSE OF THIS.
BECAUSE HE HEARS EVERYTHING, THERE MUST BE A
TERIBLE LOT OF NOISE IN HIS EARS.
UNLESS HE HAS THOUGHT OF A WAY TO TURN IT OFF.**

**GOD SEES EVERYTHING AND HEARS EVERYTHING
AND IS EVERYWHERE WHICH KEEPS HIM PRETTY BUSY.
SO YOU SHOULDN'T GO WASTING HIS TIME BY GOING OVER
YOUR MOM AND DAD'S HEAD ASKING FOR SOMETHING THEY
SAID YOU COULDN'T HAVE.
ATHEISTS ARE PEOPLE WHO DON'T BELIEVE IN GOD.
I DON'T THINK THERE ARE ANY IN SAN FRANCISCO.
AT LEAST THERE AREN'T ANY WHO COME TO OUR CHURCH.**

**JESUS IS GOD'S SON.
HE USED TO DO ALL THE HARD WORK LIKE WALKING ON
WATER AND PERFORMING MIRACLES AND TRYING TO TEACH
THE PEOPLE WHO DIDN'T WANT TO LEARN ABOUT GOD.
THEY FINALLY GOT TIRED OF HIM PREACHING TO THEM AND
THEY CRUCIFIED HIM.**

BUT HE WAS GOOD AND KIND, LIKE HIS FATHER AND HE
TOLD HIS FATHER THAT THEY DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THEY
WERE DOING AND TO FORGIVE THEM AND GOD SAID O.K.

HIS DAD (GOD) APPRECIATED EVERYTHING THAT HE HAD
DONE AND NOW HE HELPS HIS DAD OUT BY LISTENING TO
PRAYERS AND SEEING THINGS

WHICH ARE IMPORTANT FOR GOD TO TAKE CARE OF
AND WHICH ONES HE CAN TAKE CARE OF HIMSELF
WITHOUT HAVING TO BOTHER GOD.

LIKE A SECRETARY, ONLY MORE IMPORTANT.

YOU CAN PRAY ANYTIME YOU WANT AND THEY ARE SURE TO
HELP YOU BECAUSE THEY GOT IT WORKED OUT
SO ONE OF THEM IS ON DUTY ALL THE TIME.

YOU SHOULD ALWAYS GO TO CHURCH ON SUNDAY

BECAUSE IT MAKES GOD HAPPY, AND IF THERE'S
ANYBODY YOU WANT TO MAKE HAPPY, IT'S GOD.

DON'T SKIP CHURCH TO DO SOMETHING YOU THINK WILL BE
MORE FUN LIKE GOING TO THE BEACH.

THIS IS WRONG.

AND BESIDES THE SUN DOESN'T COME OUT AT THE BEACH
UNTIL NOON ANYWAY.

IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE IN GOD,

BESIDES BEING AN ATHEIST,

YOU WILL BE VERY LONELY,

BECAUSE YOUR PARENTS CAN'T GO EVERYWHERE

WITH YOU,

LIKE TO CAMP, BUT GOD CAN.

IT IS GOOD TO KNOW HE'S AROUND YOU WHEN YOU

ARE SCARED IN THE DARK OR WHEN YOU CAN'T SWIM AND

YOU GET THROWN INTO REAL DEEP WATER BY BIG KIDS.

BUT...YOU SHOULDN'T JUST ALWAYS THINK OF WHAT GOD
CAN DO FOR YOU.

I FIGURE GOD PUT ME HERE

AND HE CAN TAKE ME BACK ANYTIME HE PLEASES.

AND...THAT'S WHY I BELIEVE IN GOD.