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Get Well

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Get Well

When we hope that a friend will be healed of sickness we might send a "get well" card, but we have no intention of issuing a command to do something that is ultimately not under human control. We want to convey our desire that the person who is ill would cooperate fully with the process of healing and do nothing contrary, such as skipping medications, going back to work too soon or other such unhelpful actions. By using simple straightforward words such as "get well," we express urgency in our desire that he or she do everything possible to promote healing.

Some of our prayers too might appear almost as if they were commands, though we do not actually intend to impose our will in thinking or speaking them. We do not give orders in situations where we have neither power nor control. But we do at times use statements lacking "please" or similar words. We might be so much in need, and so trusting, that we speak very directly, with little concern for proper grammar.

The Psalms are full of communications that appear as perhaps presumptive or a bit pushy, but are quite acceptable in the context of a personal relationship with God. Think of how rude it would be to tell someone we do not know well, "give me that book." But with a friend or family member we could likely use the same words, and "please" would be understood by the inflection of our voices. In many Scripture passages, the words directed to God are often blunt, but they do not assume that we are in a position of telling God what to do. Rather, as trusting and loved children of God we are able to put our needs forward without adornments of any kind in the immediacy and spontaneity of our thoughts and feelings.

The most common and universal expression of prayer might be: "Help!" Similar prayers arise from heartfelt and urgent need, just as do many of the requests we make of one another in human society. We make a trusting assumption that people will be disposed to assist us when we are in real need. Of course we usually make choices about which persons are more likely than others to help us in particular situations. With specific persons, our relationship, or lack thereof, makes a difference. But the only limits to trust in God arise from our hesitancy, not God's.

Though we might know and even say to others that God is utterly trustworthy, we are not generally capable of complete trust in every set of circumstances. Every new challenge, and even some that are similar to those we have faced before, are for us unique in at least some aspects as we undergo them. We begin each incident with a somewhat different perspective than we had even the day previously, as we are constantly

changing and adapting in response to our experiences. Though we have trusted in God before, we have not yet done so under quite the same conditions as in the present. So we come to God as we are: perhaps doubting, maybe only a bit unsure, or fairly certain in our minds but not yet in our hearts. As long as we do not turn away, we will receive inspiration and guidance in working through the issue before us until we conclude with a sense of peace that flows from trust.

Whether we start with "please" or not, we know in our hearts what we mean when we say to someone, "get well."