

PRAYER WORKS!

Swami Kriyananda



I simply don't know how people live without prayer. What would a symphony orchestra sound like, if the players ignored the orchestra conductor? What would a violin sound like, if the violinist never bothered tuning his instrument? And where would any of us be, if we refused to accept that we need help from anyone as we barge our way callously through life?

In a lifetime of prayer, I've had countless demonstrations not only that prayer works, but that without prayer *nothing* works satisfactorily.

Some years ago I completed a writing project. It was one that I'd offered, from the beginning, as a service to God. As I often do at the finish of a major project, I decided to celebrate the completion of this work. Since I'd done it for God, and in the thought of His guidance, the celebration also had to be something that I shared lovingly with Him.

I drove six hours to Carmel-by-the-Sea, in California. Though I had little money at the time, I reassured myself that even a day there would add up to a worthy celebration. What I failed, however, to take into account was the fact that it was August, the high tourist season for Carmel. For some time it seemed no rooms were available. At last, through the central booking office, I learned of one room. It was the only vacancy in town.

Arriving at that hotel, I was assured that yes, the room was available. But the price! It proved to be far more than I could reasonably afford.

After a worried mental debate with myself, I concluded, "I've come here to celebrate with You. *You're* going to have to see that I have enough funds left to get home again!" Pulling out my wallet, I offered the desk clerk full payment for one night.

"Don't pay me," he said.

"Actually, I'd rather pay now," I replied. I didn't mention my fear that otherwise I might not have enough money left the next day to pay for my room.

"I don't want you to pay me at all," he explained. "I'll just write you down as a travel agent."

"But—why?"

"I don't know," he concluded. "I just like you."

The next day I lunched in a restaurant. The owner came over and sat with me. "I heard you lecture a few years ago," he announced, "at the University of California in Davis."

Later, when I took out my wallet to pay, he said, "I want you to be my guest."

Now then, how often in your life have things like this happened to you? The lunch? Maybe. But the free hotel room? I can tell you how often that's happened to me: once.

