

**Series: The Unexpected Responses of Jesus**

**Episode: 13. Believe you have already received it**

— a new perspective on intercessory prayer?

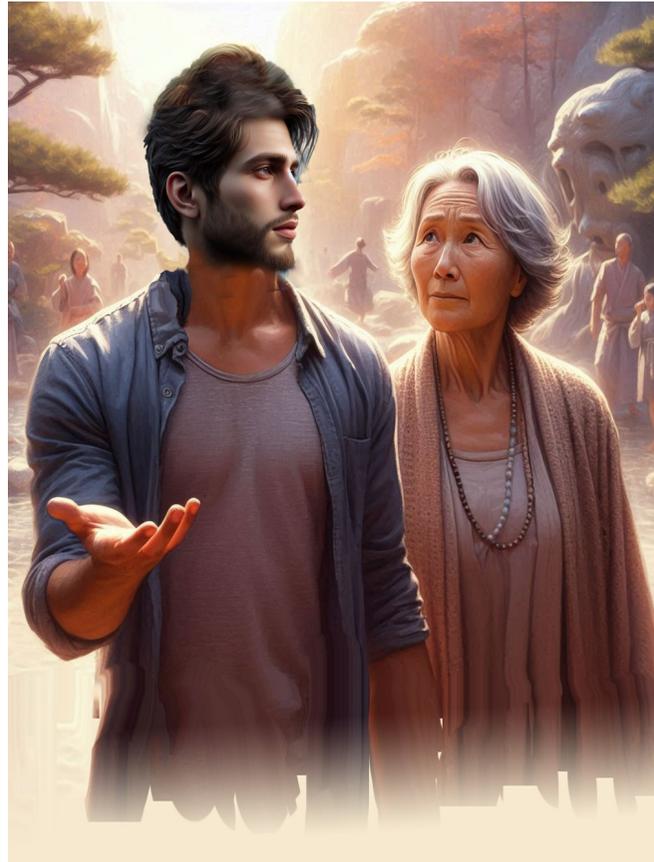
Tony Macelli

## From the Fullness of Love

When Jesus said, ‘Believe that you have received it, and it will be yours,’ was he inviting magical thinking—or something more subtle, more radical? Was he really describing a technique? In this quiet dialogue between a contemplative seeker and his mentor, we explore what it means to pray FROM divine Love, rather than TOWARD an imagined result.

In St Mark’s Gospel, we hear Jesus say “Believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.” From any perspective, this must have sounded strange. It still does. This is especially true from the perspective of a Christian who is trying to walk deeper along a contemplative path.

Believe in a fantasy? Cultivate a desire? These sound bizarre from a contemplative perspective. Terry is struggling with this, and talks to his mentor Magda.



**Terry:** Magda... may I ask something that’s been bothering me?

**Magda** (smiling): Only if you promise it won’t be the last time.

**Terry:** It’s about this. Should I pray ... for somebody’s healing, for example? You know the verse — “whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours” (Mark 11:24)? It unsettles me. In my path, which I hope is increasingly a Christian contemplative one, I have been trying to re-

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23 “Truly I tell you, if anyone says to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and does not doubt in their heart but believes that what they say will happen, it will be done for them.

24 Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

25 And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.” — *Mark 11:22–25 (NIV)*

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8 Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. — *Matthew 6:8 (NIV)*

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20 He replied, “Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.” — *Matthew 17:20 (NIV)*

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22 If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer. — *Matthew 21:22 (NIV)*

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6 He replied, “If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it will obey you.” — *Luke 17:6 (NIV)*

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19 Jesus gave them this answer: “Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.” — *John 5:19 (NIV)*

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7 “What are you, mighty mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become level ground. Then he will bring out the capstone to shouts of ‘God bless it! God bless it!’” — *Zechariah 4:7 (NIV)*

duce desires, and just do what needs to be done. So is Jesus saying that I should cultivate desires and then believe they have been granted?

Or is there some way of desiring that is not from ego? Like a pure desire that isn't grasping. I'm not sure I know how to do that.

**Magda:** Right, let's see what that passage actually says:

**Terry** (reading from the New Testament):

*22 "Have faith in God," Jesus answered. 23 "Truly I tell you, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in their heart but believes that what they say will happen, it will be done for them. 24 Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. 25 And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins." (NIV)*

**Magda:** Yes. That verse has challenged and enlightened countless people in the past. It's a challenge for contemplatives who are trying not to emphasise their ego. The key isn't to manage desire—it's to let it be re-sourced entirely. If you first align quietly and deeply with Love, and offer the goal to be integrated with that Love, what emerges is no longer desire in the ordinary sense. It becomes something more like participation—a movement of

Love itself. That's very different from wanting something just to feel secure or complete.

**Terry:** That's lovely. But not easy. Especially with my aphantasia—my inability to picture things mentally. I can't see a picture of what I'm praying for, the way most people say they can.

**Magda:** That might be your gift, Terry.

**Terry:** My what?

**Magda:** Your gift. You're less tempted to confuse imagination with faith. Many fill their prayer with mental images, but never yield to Presence. You've been spared the crutch, which means you're more likely to fall into something real.

Most people have an endless stream of mental pictures passing through. They have to practice and practice to come to a clear mind and be better able to touch the silence of the heart.

**Terry:** Okay. So what am I actually doing, in Jesus' method, if I'm not picturing or striving?

**Magda:** You're letting yourself be aligned. You're letting your 'yes' come from a place deeper than imagery. "Do not worry... your Father knows what you need before you ask him" (Matthew 6:8). That kind of knowing doesn't require a mental image. Just trust.

**Terry:** So when I hold someone in prayer, I'm not really 'asking' in the usual sense?



**22** "Have faith in God," Jesus answered.

**23** "Truly I tell you, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in their heart but believes that what they say will happen, it will be done for them. (Mark 11:22-23)

**Magda:** You may start by asking. But gradually, the prayer shifts. You stop praying *for* something and begin praying *from* something. From the heart of what Love already is.

**Terry** (softly, as if drinking profoundly from the phrase): “Praying from Love, not toward it.”

**Magda:** Yes. It sounds subtle. But it’s the whole point. Like stepping out of the boat, not to control the sea, but to trust the water holds you. It’s the kind of faith Jesus points to when he says, “Truly I tell you... if you do not doubt in your heart” (Mark 11:23).

**Terry:** So faith does not mean being certain?

**Magda:** Faith mostly means trust in God. So we then live *from* this trust. That’s the prayer that moves mountains—because it doesn’t make anything happen. It participates in what God is already doing.

**Terry:** Magda... when Jesus says “if you have faith... say to this mountain, ‘Be cast into the sea,’” do you think he meant that literally? Or was it just... Semitic hyperbole?

**Magda:** I think you’re right to hear it as metaphor. That kind of language was common in Jewish prophetic tradition. In Zechariah, for example, a “mountain” stood for the massive obstacles facing Zerubbabel as he

rebuilt the temple. It wasn’t a physical mountain—it was everything in the way. And God says, “Before Zerubbabel, you shall become a plain” (Zechariah 4:7). So when Jesus speaks of moving mountains, he’s evoking that same sense: overwhelming difficulty, removed not by effort, but by trust.

**Terry:** So it’s not about faith making something magical happen—it’s about faith opening us to what God’s already doing?

**Magda:** Exactly. And that’s not just true for us—it’s how Jesus lived, too. “The Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing” (John 5:19). Even Jesus’s action arises from participation in divine will—not from some willpower separate from God.

**Terry:** Wow. Wonderful. But does that mean I cannot pray for somebody else’s healing because God either wants that healing or does not want it?

**Magda:** No, not at all. It means the opposite. You can absolutely pray for healing, but not by trying to override God. Instead, you root your prayer in God. You come to the present moment. Touch the stillness in the heart. Align with divine Love.

You hold the person not in anxious hope but in sacred trust. Then what arises isn’t grasping—it’s participation. That’s what we’ve



**6** He replied, “If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it will obey you.”  
- Luke 17:6

been circling around: you could sometimes pray from pressure or panic, but that's not what Jesus is talking about in Mark 11:24: "whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours." He's talking about being present to the current moment, now. Next, from the stillness where God already dwells, you pray from Love, not toward it.

**Terry:** Yes, I am getting the idea – it's very profound and practical. But have a bit more patience with me, Magda. Jesus is saying, "*believe that you have received it, and it will be yours*" (Mark 11:24). But you're saying, "*align with Love, pray from Love.*" Aren't those different?

**Magda:** They sound different, but they might point to the same depth. And they are just the same if we stop assuming that Jesus was teaching a technique. Jesus isn't teaching a technique—he's describing a state of being. When he says, "believe you have received," he's inviting us into a trust so whole, so free of inner contradiction, that we're already resting in what God gives—even before it's visible.

**Terry:**  
So it's not about convincing yourself that you've got what you asked for?

**Magda:**  
No. It's not self-persuasion. It's not a trick. It's about *abiding* in the heart of God—before, during, and after the asking. If you've aligned with that Love, you're not praying

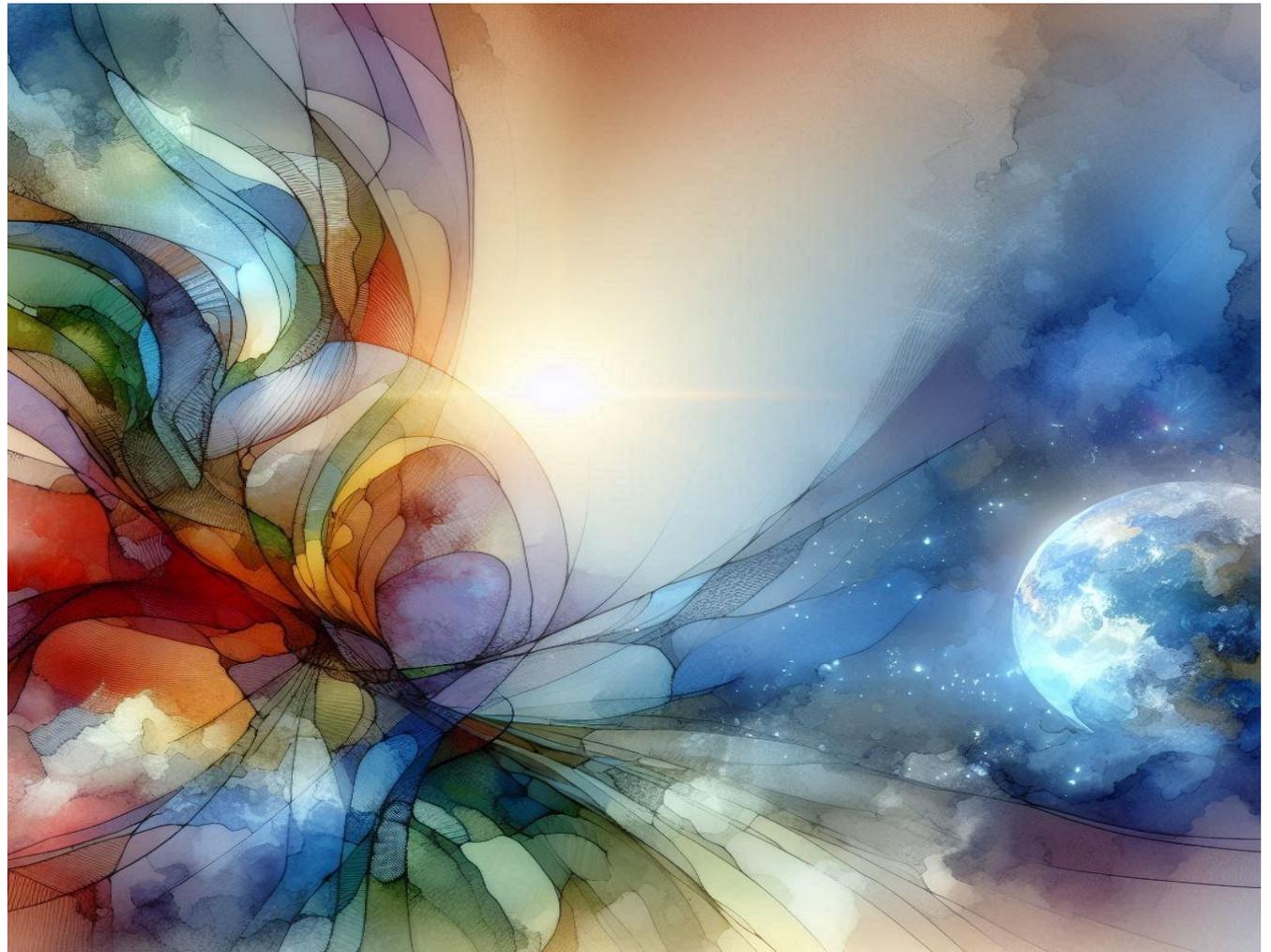
from absence anymore. You're praying from communion. That's why I say, "pray from Love." That's the place from which all true receiving happens.

**Terry:** Thank you, Magda!

**Magda:** Peace be with you, Terry

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Praying FROM divine Love, rather than  
TOWARD an imagined result.



## Faith, Trust, and the Shift in Prayer



Many contemplatives speak of a quiet shift that takes place when prayer stops being a reaching *for* something and becomes a resting *in* something already given. When this happens, there is often a sense of openness rather than grasping. The effort to believe gives way to a deeper trust. One may speak fewer words—or none at all. Prayer becomes less about intention and more about presence.

It can feel strangely certain, even when the outcome remains uncertain. Free of striving. Quietly radiant. In such moments, one might find oneself simply saying, “From the wholeness You already are, let this soul be touched.” Or just: “Yes.”

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This reflects something deeper about faith itself. In the Gospels, Jesus speaks often of faith—not as mental certainty, but as trust rooted in God. “Have faith in God,” he says (Mark 11:22), before the famous line, “believe that you have received it, and it will be yours” (Mark 11:24). Matthew 21:22 echoes the same link between prayer, belief, and receiving. In Matthew 17:20 and Luke 17:6, the emphasis shifts slightly toward the potency of small but real trust—whether spoken to a mountain or a mulberry tree.

But in every case, faith is not about force or fantasy. Not about persuasion or trickery. It is about alignment. To have faith is not to manufacture certainty. It is to rest in the movement of divine Love already at work. To trust God, and to pray from that trust, is to participate in a reality deeper than desire.

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