



### **3.3. What Happens During the Prayer of the Heart?**

The Prayer of the Heart uses a short phrase that is silently spoken in the mind in rhythm with the breath - without imagery and without active thinking.

It is similar to the practice of mantra meditation and can be understood as a form of contemplation. Contemplation is a type of meditation directed toward a specific content.

The phrase could, for example, be the word "God" or "Jesus Christ."

### **The three phases of the prayer of the heart**

From my own experience, I can distinguish several phases:

#### **1. Thought and breath rhythm**

- In the beginning, the chosen phrase is consciously repeated in rhythm with the breath.
- Through regular practice - for example, 30 minutes daily over six weeks — the process begins to deepen.

#### **2. Automatic repetition**

- After extended practice, the prayer seems to speak on its own.
- It feels as though the breath is repeating the mantra.
- Conscious thought recedes into the background, and the prayer unfolds its own inner power.

#### **3. Awareness of the divine presence**

- Eventually, the phrase itself transforms into a pure awareness of the divine presence.
- The name Jesus Christ is no longer just a thought but becomes a direct experience of his presence.
- Something happens that does not originate from oneself - a spiritual realm opens up.
- Often the atmosphere suddenly changes: it feels bright, light, and full of love. The heart is often deeply touched.
- This phase is already a gift of grace from God.

### **The mantra as a gateway to the divine presence**

The prayer leads us into an awareness of what we are speaking — not through thoughts or mental imagery, but as an immediate spiritual experience.

Here, the principle of restoration through reparation also comes into effect:

- The process requires patiently enduring a longer phase in which devotion matures.
- Only after a certain period of time can the grace of expanded awareness be received.

---

**Source URL:** <https://baum-des-lebens.org/the-inner-path/what-happens-heart-prayer>