

Just the Facts

This article is from the "Edifying the Body" section of the Church of God Big Sandy's Web site, churchofgodbig sandy.com. It was posted for the weekend of Dec. 10-11, 2011.

By Lenny Cacchio

LEE SUMMIT, Mo.—"Just the facts, ma'am." That's what Joe Friday of *Dragnet* fame used to say. Just give him the bottom line, no embellishments, no waste of time. "Just the facts," and don't give us the obvious.

God, so we're told, knows everything. Since He knows our needs even before we ask, why waste His time and ours with details He already knows?

If that's the case, then why not pray, "Lord, You know what I need, and You know what's on my mind. Take care of it. Amen."

Yet the biblical example of prayer is altogether different. Though God might know everything, He still wants to hear us talk. He wants us to tell Him things He already knows. Look for example at Jesus' prayer in John 17.

"Father, the hour has come." Why say this? The Father already knew this.

"You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him." God knew this too.

"And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." Ditto!

"I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do." Again!

Read the entire prayer, and you'll find that this is a repeated pattern: Jesus says the obvious and His Father listens.

It is said that President John F. Kennedy, when visiting foreign countries, would write things he liked about the place on slips of paper and then drop the slips in a box.

Sometimes we pray like that: We put our concerns all in a box and then ask God to bless the box.

But if God tells us to address Him as Father it would seem that He wants us to climb on His lap and chatter away—because He likes to hear us talk.