



Prayer

THE DOCTRINE OF PRAYER

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The Doctrine of Prayer

Prayer comes in many sounds, styles, forms, concepts and variations as it is linked with every religion. Most members of the human race practice it but very far from Biblical perspective and principles. The prayer of the unbeliever is no less than a composition of pious words added with emotional flattery, most of which are borrowed from a Christian dictionary reversed with invented meaning.

God will hear only one prayer from the lips of the unbeliever and that is Lord, save my soul through Jesus' death on the Cross". Prayer apart from salvation is nothing but waste of time for any unbeliever. God will not listen to their prayer because they are not His children. The prayer of the reversionist and carnal believers are all rejected except the prayer of rebound, which is Lord, I have sinned against you.

Prayer is God's provision of grace for all believers in the world as a means of communicating with Him. Prayer indeed involves faith, but there is no recognition for the faith of the unsaved souls (unbelievers) and of the carnal believers. Prayer operates in the same way as grace. Faith is non-meritorious but God hears the prayer of the unbeliever for salvation through the merits of Christ who paid the sins of all men in full on the cross.

Faith is non-meritorious but God hears the prayer of the carnal believer for rebound through the merits of Christ on the cross in behalf of all men. God does not honor our faith based on our perception of Him. He is never moved by our sincerity, affection, devotion, sacrifices, penances or human-righteousness.

God does not answer because we deserve it or that we have earned it. Our prayer is answered because of who and what God is and not because of who and what we are. God's answer is totally dependent on His character, on His divine will and purpose for the Church Age believers.

God will never answer our prayer because of our faith; otherwise God will put the purpose of Christ's redemption out of divine perspective. God will not accept man apart from the spiritual death of Christ. We ask God "in Jesus name" and not in our name, because it is Christ Who have the power, not our faith, not our prayer. We did not receive the power of God but the authority to use such power inside the power system of God, the divine dynasphere.

Those who are trying to portray themselves as men and women of fasting and prayer are also bragging that God will answer their prayer, are indeed ignorant of Bible doctrine. Their confidence is not based on the character (essence) of God; their hope is not based on the Word of God but on man's misconception and misunderstanding of prayer. Their prayer is based on satanic and human viewpoint.

Those who believe that God will bless them in answer to their prayer are missing the greatest blessing while they are in this world, and that is intimacy with God. The major purpose of our spiritual life is to know God, and not to get our desires. The purpose is not to get from God what we wanted, but to make us accept what He wanted for us. One of the greatest areas of modern heresy is in the field of prayer.

All prayers are directed to God the Father (Mat. 6:9), in the name of the Son (John 14:13-14), in the power of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 6:8). Since prayer is an extension of the faith-rest exhales toward God (Mat. 21:22, Mark 11:24), it demands familiarity with the plan, purpose and the will of God.

It must be offered in the status of the filling of the Holy Spirit. Prayer is effective only when the believer is operating under the grace provision for perception of the Word of God. The believer is effective only inside the will, plan and purpose of God. The god of this world (2 Cor. 4:4) answers the prayer of those who are outside the will, plan and purpose of God. Satan answers the prayer that falls into the satanic viewpoint and satanic will (2 Tim. 6:9-10).

The devil will give worldly glory to his children, to whoever ask for it (John 8:44, Luke 4:5-7). The irrevocable permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the sealing of the Holy Spirit guarantees the eternal security of the believer (Eph. 1:13 & 4:30) but it does not guarantee the answer to our prayer.

Several reasons why prayer is not answered:

- They pray with unconfessed sins in their hearts (Eph. 4:19).
- They are not filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 6:18)
- They are controlled by the old sinful nature (Eph. 4:27)
- They are committing habitual sins (Ps. 51:4)
- They pray without faith-rest function (Matthew 21:22)
- They lack domestic tranquility (1 Peter 3:7)
- They are without grace orientation (Proverbs 21:13)
- Non-compliance to known will of God (1 John 5:14)
- They are disobedient children of God (1 John 3:22)
- They have lust-type selfishness (James 4:2-4)

Everything is under His divine decree. God knows all the events in the life of all human beings in the entire human history. Every event is dependent on the decision of the soul (volition). God respects the decisions of every person, whether it is good or bad. Some events God causes to happen, others He allows to happen. All events that happened and all that will happen are all in the divine decree. Prayer is powerless to change the divine decision. Prayer is powerless to change the will, the purpose and plan of God.

Prayer is the fellowship of the soul (with imputed righteousness and Bible doctrine, living in experiential spirituality) with God. Prayer is designed to know God through the diligent study of His Word. Some worship their prayer life and prayer habit. Prayerfulness is not the measure or sign of true spirituality. Never trust anything including your prayerfulness except the grace of God. It is easy to slander God by sincere prayer life and habit without knowing God. God answers our prayers because of His imputed righteousness in us, not because of our effective prayer and fasting.

The following are examples of myths about prayer:

Prayer is conversation with God: Whoever propagated the idea of this myth is unaware of several major doctrines related to Divine essence and attributes. God is perfect and man is imperfect. Man cannot simply approach God the way we use a telephone to call our fellow man. God is not interested with our nonsense talking. Prayer is to get God's blessing. Prayer is to know God not to get material things from God. The children of the world ask for the things of the world, but the children of God ask for the things of heaven.

The Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles did not ask for things of the world. It is easy to deceive the ignorant with their so-called great faith by asking God when in reality it is the devil that is answering their petition and requests. Some Christians pray because they get spiritually high, thrilled, excited and feeling spiritual without laboring on the line of God's direction.

The answer to your material requests from God is not a guarantee that you are a man of faith. The man of faith is a man of God's Word. His soul is focused on the things above not on the things of the world. Prayer is the ultimate power source. Prayer by itself has no power and there is no way that it can provide some kind of power or strengthened capability to the believers. Our faith has no power. God is the only and ultimate power source in the entire universe. Genuine prayer of the genuine believer is not mystical.

Prayer is designed to make us one with Him and not to claim power for ourselves. Spiritual power is the result of Bible doctrine in the soul of the believer not by prayer and fasting. Some false teachers and prophets are always excited to pray anywhere and anytime. They are exhibitors of their so-called super faith, making false impression to the ignorant. Their faith and their prayer is nothing but a show. Being prayerful does not prove that we are in good relations to God. The cults and pagans are more prayerful but they are not acknowledged by God. There is no place for boasting with regards to our prayer life.

Prayer prepares us for the greater work. Prayer does not prepare us for the greater work because it is the greater work. We do not pray to ask God for some power. Prayer is the exercise of drawing on the grace of God. Praying at all times is like banking progressively. We cannot separate the habitual praying and the habitual studying of the Bible doctrine.

The most difficult task inside the secret place of prayer is to concentrate on God. Prayer is the effort of the soul and mind to concentrate on the very presence of God. A soul without Bible doctrine will talk to God with his tongue from his brain (not from his kardia) and sometimes with his tongue only. Prayer is the communion of the soul with God, not just a conversation with God using the tongue the way we communicate with people.

Those who are known to men as very prayerful are seldom holy, and those unknown as prayerful Christians might be holy, because the godly will never advertise his prayer life. The carnal and pseudo-Christians are building their faith in their experiences rather than in the Word of God. Their prayer life is nothing but a show. Their faith is as good as their prayer life.

Prayer is not to have great spiritual experience. Prayer is not for the sake of spiritual experience but for the purpose of spiritual discernment. The "super faith prayer warriors" are surprised when the answer is different from what they have asked for and different from the way they expected God to answer their prayers.

We are here not to prove that God answers prayer but to be the living evidence and monument of God's grace. God did not save us in order to get answers from God, but to live for Him, to know His will and His purpose for our lives. It is dangerous to think that God wanted us to be His showroom of His power. God's purpose is to make us one with Him and not to show off the heavenly power in this satanic territory.

Prayer is a therapeutic agent for all kinds of ailments. Majority of the cults and pseudo-Christians are prescribing prayer as all-purpose remedy for all kinds of sicknesses and ailments. Some combine prayer with fasting in order to be more effective. It is not the will of God for everyone to be perfectly healthy. This is a chaotic world of imperfect human beings. Only a perfect person will be free from all kinds of sicknesses and diseases. If it is God's will for us to be perfectly fit and healthy, then we are not going to die physically. Such teaching of false teachers is not supported by Bible doctrine.

The real fasting is not from food, but from self (old sinful nature), from our ego and pride, self-glory, self-dependency, self-righteousness and anything that hinders us from true spirituality. Food has nothing to do with spirituality. The mature believer can eat with God as the focus of his life and in the same way; anybody can fast without God in his life. Fasting is not the mark of Christianity nor is a sign of spirituality. Satan has substituted the non-essential (like fasting) to the most essential (like spirituality).

Prayer can change our destiny. The famous slogan of the reversionists that prayer changes things is a big paganistic idea. Some believers are praying asking God to change their circumstances, situation, and the course of their life. They are asking God to change the course of human history, rejecting God's purpose and plan. They pray to change the historical events, people and the course of nature (like asking God to change the path of typhoon or stopping the rain).

One of the many dangers of intercession is to pray and intercede in sympathy with those under divine discipline or judgment, by pleading God to stop their sufferings. Such prayer is rooted from the old sin nature and magnified by arrogance. They lack the ability to discern the very purpose of God in that particular situation. Spiritual discernment is the result of stored and resident Bible doctrine in the soul.

Prayer could become the exaltation of our own compromise feelings and sympathy. In our act of kindness for men, we have disregarded God. Only Bible doctrine can change man. No amount of intercession can remove and stop bad habits, bad temper, and habitual sins. Such things do not go away by praying and fasting but by an act of spiritual surgery through the daily study of Bible doctrine. Radical actions without Bible doctrine can produce only bad results. If God is listening to human clamors and selfish requests, then God is out of control.

Prayer moves the hands of God. No human being can dictate or tell God what to do or what not to do. Prayer is not for man to give direction or guidance to God. God controls human history apart from the will and request of man. We cannot dominate His total and perfect sovereignty. All the above-mentioned myths about prayer are heretical and reversionistic doctrines.

There are things we do not ask God in Prayer:

We do not ask God for the filling of the Holy Spirit. The status of being filled with the Holy Spirit is the automatic result of being restored, cleansed, forgiven, and resumed position for blessings (1 John 1:9). The filling of the Holy Spirit is the result of obedience to rebound and not by asking or requesting God (Eph. 5:18) for it. The filling of the Holy Spirit is the result of positive decision of the soul to rebound as an act of obedience. We do not ask God to bless the unbelievers. The unbelievers are spiritually dead, separated from God. They are under the plan of salvation but not entitled to receive blessings. The only appropriate prayer is for their salvation.

We do not ask God to forgive our sins. Prior to the death of Christ for the sins of the human race, the phrase "forgive us" (Matt. 6:12) was still looking forward to that act of redemption where forgiveness was totally provided (Eph. 1:7). Our prayer of rebound is to acknowledge the finished Work of Christ at the cross for the entire human race.

The Lord Jesus Christ has settled the issue of sins once and for all. The provision of 1 John 1:9 is for the believers to confess (to name or to acknowledge) their sins before God and not to be sorry or beg God for forgiveness which He has already provided.

We do not ask for forgiveness for sins that we have already confessed. God is not absent-minded or forgetful. The effect of forgiveness and cleansing is eternal and permanent. The divine forgiveness is guaranteed by divine essence or character not by our feelings (1 John 1:9, Psalm 38:18). It is blasphemy to keep asking God for forgiveness for sins He has forgiven. We do not ask God to heal every sickness. There are 4 major cause of sickness: violation of the natural laws, divine discipline, undeserved sufferings and bondage to old sinful nature.

Each of this cause has the corresponding remedy. The cults are praying for sickness brought about by breaking the law of nature or divine discipline. If people walked under the rain without any protection and caught colds and flu he needed medicine. If a believer is afflicted with sickness as divine discipline for his carnality he needs to rebound not prayer for healing. God did not promise to heal all kinds of sicknesses or diseases.

We do not pray for things that God has already declared not of His will and plan. Such prayer is presumptuous and arrogant. We do not ask God to bless our selfish ambition or personal plan. A common error in our prayer is asking or commanding God to approve our plans and ambition. Some cults are backing up their personal ambition with prayer and fasting in order to make an impression that it is the will of God. We do not ask God to change a person or group of people, especially those in the seat of power. The right prayer for those in the seat of power is not for their effectiveness or Christian-like characteristics but for their salvation (Rom. 13:1-4, 1 Tim. 2:1-4).

The right prayer for unbelievers is for their salvation not for them to have Christian like behavior or lifestyle. We do not force the unsaved to adopt and practice Christian values without salvation. The right prayer for the carnal and those in prolonged reversionism is not for their prosperity or good conduct, or effectiveness but for their act of rebound and positive volition. We do not ask God for things He has already provided.

We must know God and His will for us, who and what He is, and what He has done for us. Otherwise, our ignorance will lead to serious errors like, asking God for the gifts of the Spirit, which God has already distributed to every Church Age believers at the point of salvation. Some are asking for re-baptism of the Holy Spirit or for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. It is ridiculous to ask God for something that He has already provided.

We do not ask God for what He has not promised in the Scripture for the Church Age believers. The exclusive and conditional promises for the Old Testament believers do not apply to us. The unconditional promises for the Tribulation and Millennial believers are not for us either. The promises in the Scripture appointed to any particular person, group of people or nation are not for to us.

God is not going to do any promise made by a certain preacher to his followers, which He did not promise in the Scripture. God will not give in to the capricious and illogical demands of man no matter how sincere and devoted his prayer might be. God answers our prayer according to His will and plan, not according to human sincerity and ability to believe.

We do not ask God for blessings given to a particular person or nation. The blessings given to some Bible character do not belong to us. The blessing of a nation recorded in the Scripture is not ours. The experience of the Old and New Testament believers does not necessarily belong to us. We cannot ask God to repeat such blessings or experiences for us.

It is very wicked and selfish to ask God to give you the experience of people living in a different time and background. Numerous illogical and irrational practices of cults have come from this satanic viewpoint.

Miracle is an act of God based on His sovereignty, which operates apart from the demands or request of man. Every act of God is free from human intervention and without human participation. Miracle is not a miracle if human will, desire and action have been involved.

We do not ask God for blessing of a conditional promise without first fulfilling the condition required. Some believers are already demanding God to give them the "all of these things" of Matthew 6:33 without seeking the kingdom of God. They are asking God for "the desires of their hearts" without the effort of taking delight in studying the Word of God in consistent basis (Psalm 37:4). Such is the prayer of the self-centered child of God without Bible doctrine in his soul.

We do not ask God for things He already terminated. Petition and prayer for things or experiences that God has already terminated is a sign of arrogance. Asking God for historical gifts like the gift of healing and tongues is a terrible mistake. Majority of ignorant believers are committing blasphemy daily every time they come to God in prayer.

For example, whenever a believer pray in tongues. Speaking in tongues today is a counterfeit because the Holy Spirit is no longer anointing such person. The gift of tongue is already a historical gift given, as a sign to the unbelieving Jews. Believers misapply literally the context of 1 Timothy 2:8 by raising his hand on the air and asking God to bless and prosper those in the position of authority. The phrase "lift up your holy hands" is not literal action but is figurative in essence.

It refers to the act of intercession not the raising of hands. The prayer for all unbelievers is for their salvation and not for anything else. Another common mistake of believers is when they spiritualize the non-spiritual things by their cultic practices such as laying of hands, anointing and prayer with fasting. Heresies and blasphemies are new part in the area of prayer than in any other part of the Christian life.

There are 10 things with religious connotation but are not essentially related in any way to genuine prayer:

Fasting: There is no command for the Church Age believers to fast when praying. There is no command for us to fast. There is no verse in the Scripture that states the effectiveness of fasting if this is combined with prayer. Avoiding food for the sake of concentration or focus on doing the will of God is a matter of one's discretion and decision.

Posture: No prescribed posture for prayer is stated in the Scripture. There is no prescribed posture for an effective prayer. The raising of hands, the clasped hands, the clapping of hands, the beating of the chest and other irrelevant postures are all inventions of man. Postures are never related to spirituality and have nothing to do with the affectivity of prayer. There is even no command for the believers to close their eyes while praying, instead the Lord Jesus lifted up His eyes toward heaven when He prayed.

Place: There is no required place for effective prayer. No prayer house, no prayer mountain, prayer garden are necessary for God to answer our prayer. The only right place for prayer is inside the will and plan of God (John 4:21-24). God practically commands us to pray at all times and pray at a very solemn and quiet place. The believer can be alone with God in the midst of a noisy crowd. If you do not know how to be alone with God, then even in the top of the prayer mountain, your mind will be filled with the things of the world.

Preparation: The only preparation needed for prayer and worship is the prayer of rebound. No religious music or singing, fasting and praise and worship are necessary for an effective prayer.

Music only excites the emotion and the mind but leaves out the soul with sins. Religious music is the greatest heresy of our time. Majority of the contemporary music are stripped with doctrinal essence and full of emotional expression of a soul lingering in ignorance. The so-called music ministers are the greatest deceivers of the Church Age believers.

Personalities: No super-faith and super-prayerful leaders are necessary to lead the congregation for effective prayer. God answers our prayer not because of who is praying, since God has no favorites. The so-called "prayer warriors" are purely human viewpoint. Our weapon is the Word of God not prayer (Eph. 6:17).

Faith: The justice of God answers our prayer not on the basis of our faith but on the essence of God. It is not how much we can believe but who and what God is. Faith is never the key for effective prayer but the grace of God (see the Booklet: Faith pages 9-14).

Visions: The mysterious illusion of the divine revelation or manifestation of the so-called God to some super-believer is a hoax and not related to prayer.

Anointing: Some cults claimed that they have received the double anointing or double portion of the spirit (of the devil of course) and that God will answer their prayer. Such anointing is devious.

Commitment: Devotion to prayer does not guarantee effective prayer. It is easy to become devoted to prayer but never to God. Human sincerity is often sincerely wrong. Our loyalty and confidence must be in God, not in prayer.

Prayer Partners: The prayer of others has nothing to do with our own effectiveness. Celebrated and dynamic prayer partners are not required for genuine prayer. God answers our prayer based on divine essence not because of our super-prayer partner. Praying in the Spirit is not a spiritual gift (1 Cor. 14:14-15, Jude 20), it is not praying in tongues, but it refers to the biblical principle that we are to pray only in the state of spirituality, even as we worship God through the Word of God under the filling of the Holy Spirit (John 4:23-25).

Praying in the Spirit is not mystical but refers to the act of obedience to be filled with the Holy Spirit during the entire course of prayer. The believer can only obey the command to pray at all times (1 Thess. 5:17) through the rebound provision of grace (1 John 1:9). The believer can remain in the state of spirituality only through the grace provision. To be continually spiritual is to be in the spiritual praying ground at all times. Praying in the Spirit means praying while in the state of spirituality.

God did not command the Old and New Testament believers or the Church Age believers to pray with fasting. The Jewish exiles in Babylon borrowed the practice of fasting and slowly integrated it into their religion. The believers of the infant Church Age practiced fasting for 4 reasons: It was a hang-over of the Old Testament practice, for the purpose of concentration to spiritual life, there was nothing to eat (2 Cor. 6:5) due to famine and persecution, and when they have vital decisions to make.

Few Christians can out beat the cults and pagan when it comes to fasting. Fasting is not a spiritual exercise but an obsolete religious activity. Fasting is not a sign of spirituality or superiority or spiritual maturity. Prayer with fasting cannot advance your spiritual life, it cannot accelerate your spiritual growth. It is no longer necessary today to fast except for medical reason or for lack of food.

Prayer with groaning: Groaning (Stenagmos) is not crying in audible voice but something you cannot hear. It refers to silent and covert intercession of the Holy Spirit not the prayer of the one praying. The indwelling Holy Spirit intercedes for the believer according to the will, plan and purpose of God. The groaning of the Spirit is not expressed with the believer's senses and therefore, does not produce some mysterious audible and non-sense sounds.

The intercessory prayer of the indwelling Holy Spirit does not pray through speaking of tongues, because being Member of the Godhead; He will not communicate with God the Father in such foolish unknown tongues of men. There is no need to speak in tongues since the gift has already ceased. All the speaking of tongues today is not from God and they are all fabrication.

There is no need to emote our emotion, since God does not answer because of our feelings, sincerity and devotion. The Prayer in the Spirit is something man cannot imitate or forged. It is the communication of the Holy Spirit from the life of spiritual believer to God (Rom. 8:26-27). It is the work of the Holy Spirit without human provocation, intervention or emotion. The work of God is something that cannot be imitated or duplicated.

Believers who are blowing their trumpets to announce their success in the area of prayer are also blowing the reality of their spirituality. Arrogant believers worship their prayer habits more than they worship God. They worship God in their prayer without removing the high places of idolatry in their souls. They are making false external obedience without spiritual reality (2 Chron. 15:17). Any act of worship without salvation and spirituality is a religion of hypocrisy and lies.

Their prayer habit becomes their canon or measurement of holiness. They are building prayer as their altar of sacrifice; they worship their prayer not God.

The "all things" of Matthew 21:22 and "whatsoever" of Mark 11:24 do not refer to desires of the old sin nature, but the desires of the indwelling Holy Spirit to glorify God in the life of the believers. God has already provided all the basic and necessary resources for the believer to reach spiritual maturity and thereby glorify God. However, God has to wait until the believer reaches the state of maturity before He can pour out blessings (to believer) that will glorify Him to the maximum.

Why would God excite us to ask material blessings when in fact He rebukes our carnal desires from Genesis to Revelation? The apostles and the disciples did not ask anything related to their physical needs from God. God has already promised to provide all the needs of His children (Phil. 4:19) called the logistical grace, made available to every believer regardless of spiritual status. God has already set aside and prepared everything the Church Age believer might need while on earth (Matt. 6:33).

Prayer is exhaling the spirit of man and inhaling the Spirit of God. The purpose of prayer is not to get from God what we wanted, but to make us accept what He wanted for us.

For this reason, we can only pray on the basis of God's truth. The logistical grace covers our need in four aspects:

- Life support refers to the duration of time for the believer to stay in the world.
- Security provision, the divine protection from the hazard of the world designed by Satan for disaster and calamity of the believers
- Temporal provision, the divine supplies like food, shelter, clothing, transportation, etc.
- Spiritual provision, the divine supplies for spiritual growth and advancement like Bible doctrine, Bible teacher, the local church.

God supplies logistical blessing to all believers faithfully, constantly and unconditionally. There are no criteria for receiving the logistical blessing. No prayer is required and no need to ask God in prayer. If we say that we have faith but constantly asking God for material blessings, then we are lying. The believer continues act of asking God for his material needs is the denying of his faith (Matt. 6:25-34).

The faith that is always asking is not faith but false expectation which is just pleading without knowledge of divine essence. Logistical grace is for all believers but escrow blessing in time is for mature believers only. One of the most common forms of evil in the local churches today is the so-called prayer request. Their prayer is all about themselves, and for themselves. Prayer is just a tool for them to get what they wanted. In reality, they are not interested in knowing or serving God but to advertise their prayerfulness and pseudo spirituality.

We do not ask God to give us the inner happiness because it is not imputed or distributed. It is the result of life that nurtures on the Word of God for a long period of time. Inner happiness is the results of spiritual maturity and never the results of petition of the so-called men of faith. The cults have short cuts for everything: such as instant salvation, instant spiritual maturity, instant pastors, instant servants of God, instant spirituality and instant messages from God all comes from their super powerful prayer.

If God is perfectly immutable, infinite in knowledge and unchangeable, why do you have to pray? Does the divine essence and divine decree eliminate the need for prayer? Effective prayer makes requests which God answers. Things we ask in time are all incorporated into divine decree in the eternity past (Isaiah 65:24). Effective prayer is our powerful weapon in the angelic conflict. It is our distress call. At our own, we are not capable enemies of Satan but he is no match to our resources in Christ (Phil. 4:6, Col. 4:2).

Prayer is not actually a weapon but like a bucket we use for drawing our resources in Christ. Effective prayer is the powerful and the strategic action of the spiritually mature believer for tactical victory. We are not praying for victory but from the victory of the Lord Jesus (Rom. 8:37, Eph. 3:10). Effective prayer is enjoying the great presence of the Lord not just talking or asking Him for things. It is designed for knowing Him, knowing His plan, will and purpose through His Word (Phil. 3:10, 1 John 1:3).

The basis of God for hearing our prayer is not because of anything in the part of man, but because of the ministry of God the Son, Jesus Christ: namely:

- The imputed righteousness of God in every Church Age believer,
- The imputed eternal life of God in the believer,
- The provision for the continuous fellowship with God (through the filling of the Holy Spirit by the exercise of rebound). Our non-meritorious faith is not the basis of God for answering our prayer.

The following cautions should be borne in mind by all who lead in PUBLIC PRAYER and worship. These rules for public prayer are adapted from Peter Master's "Rules for Public Prayer" and expanded in this article.

We must mean our prayer and wholly engaged on winging our thoughts heavenward. It is terrible situation when the believer leading is not actually praying but emoting. Like some preachers who change their personality, moods or temperament during a public prayer. It is always safe to be yourself whenever you lead a public prayer. Any hypocrite can pray creating the impression of faithfulness, goodness, piousness apart from reality. They can make an impressive show of pseudo-spirituality which the ignorant of Bible doctrine mistaken for spiritual maturity.

We should not pray hurriedly or too slow. Speak at normal pace, so that others may follow your words seriously and thoughtfully. Pray in the Spirit and pray with your mind. Genuine prayer comes from the souls that communicate with God in a clear understandable language. Concentrate on the presence of God, speak at normal pace, do not hurry but do not let the worshippers wait quite long for the next words. There are no language barriers with God, but the speaking of tongue is not for God but designed for the unbelievers who must understand the Word of God.

Speak clearly and audible enough for others to hear your prayer. Pray loud enough to be heard by everyone in the room especially those with poor hearing. Mumbling is justified in private prayer but not in public prayer. In public prayer, you are praying with others who are there to agree with their thoughts. Do not deprive them with the privilege of a group prayer by keeping to yourself your prayer.

Do not adopt strange, words or expressions that are known only to you. Be natural and use words that are familiar to others. Remember, that you are praying to God, not trying to impress others with your new vocabulary. Be naturally eloquent from your soul and pray humbly before God. We should use our modern English. Refrain from using the 16th century language that is quite obsolete. It is not spiritual to use the language of the King James Version, and it is not carnal to use the modern language. If possible, better use our national language.

Do not fly from one idea to another but organize your thought in reflection of biblical example. Do not stagger into roving deviation from one subject into another. Your status and level of maturity will determine your ability to organize your thought. You do not need a rehearsal or a manuscript for prayer. We should not preach, because we are calling or addressing upon God. Prayer is not to be utilized as a means of making points to the worshippers.

Leading a public prayer is a doctrinal affirmation of your thought but you are not there to preach. You are directed a prayer to God the Father from source of your believer-priest privilege (Hebrews 4:16), therefore use it for thanksgiving (Eph. 5:20), intercession (Eph. 6:18) and petition. Lead the congregation in doctrinal affirmation.

Do not use prayer to indirectly give instructions or to rebuke the worshippers. The typical prayer meetings of most churches have become the pulpit of some believers who turned it into a forum, where people are free to express their opinions as they wish. We should be careful not to out pray the reasonable capacity of worshippers to follow our prayer. Make your prayer brief and short (Ecclesiastes 5:2). Long public prayer cannot edify the church. Do not use prayer to rebuke or to reprimand others. If you have something to say to someone, say it before you pray and never use the public prayer for that.

We should not make announcement to God, informing or reminding Him of various things, under the guise of telling the people what we intend to pray about. If something is entirely unknown to the people, the need should be mentioned before the prayer. Pray for the essence of the matter without the details. God knows everything and there is nothing that He needs to know.

You are there to lead others in a group prayer not a secretary of God to remind Him. In most occasions, it is good to refrain from using people's names during the public prayer. Avoid exalting the names of people because only the name of Christ counts in public prayer. Do not personalize especially anything that can become the subject of gossip and rumor.

When leading public prayer, we should focus on big things and not on little things. Do not be too specific unless the situation is quite serious. In most cases, prayer for the sick must be generalized.

A child's bruise should not be literally and specifically mentioned but included generally under the sickness of children.

Apart from the Scriptures, we should avoid quotations from Christian authors or books. Always pray in your own words and never borrow words, phrases or lines from others without truly understanding its meaning. Be yourself in your prayer using your own words. The cults are fond of mentioning their favorite authors, writers, founders and leaders even in public prayer. Their prayer sounds like a glossary of "sacred quotations" exalting people rather than God. The prayer of most Christians are altar of glorifying men (their leaders, authors or preachers) rather exalting The Lord Jesus Christ.

We should take care that the prayer does not become a systematic theology outline. Avoid extolling too many of the attributes of God at one time. Some are like the Pharisees who used more than ten adjectives every time they mentioned the name of God. Some "theologically learned" preachers are arrogantly displaying publicly their knowledge of God through their prayer. Some goes further by using Hebrew or Greek names of God. We must not lose our balance, veering to offering praise, or mainly repentance, or mainly petition. Some failed basically in the area of prayer.

We must not be gloomy returning constantly to our sins and unworthiness and dwelling on the suffering of Christ as if there had been no resurrection. These things have special place in prayer, but so do the blessings purchased by Christ. We should pray as those who have received the free gift of salvation and the fabulous blessings that goes with it.

We should not publicly confess our sins before the congregation. Some worship leader confessed their sins publicly destroying the preparation of the hearts for worship. Be sure to rebound before you lead the prayer, to avoid the devil from pointing to your guilt during the prayer.

In the church prayer meeting, praying for the same people (for their salvation or spiritual growth) on several occasions is legitimate.

Some emotional believers are easily carried away by the devil's accusation and they suddenly burst into public confession of their own sins. We must avoid the constant mention of divine pronoun or the name of the Lord. Through nervousness, some people when engaged in public prayer begin every phrase with, "Oh Lord!" and many similar expressions. Sometimes a divine name or pronoun appears after every two or three words, making it very hard for others to concentrate.

We should avoid the use of nonsense terms and phrases like, "as a matter of fact", but instead be brief and go directly to the important point of your petition or request. Do not use inappropriate terms for pleading. We should also try to avoid the clutches of habits which militate against the true feeling such as beginning every petition with such words as, "we do pray" usually with the stress on "do". Such prayer is not different from the books on prayer authored by intellectual but unregenerated politicians of this country.

We should also steer clear of a sing-song voice. The best antidote to this is real earnestness. Do not use an artificial voice and there is no need to modulate your voice like a radio announcer. Some seminaries and Bible schools are teaching their student to develop what they called "pastoral voice". We should not allow the newspapers write our agenda for prayer, especially the political section.

We pray for the salvation of unbelievers including our politicians not for God to bless, guide, protect and give them wisdom. God is not free to bless the unbeliever. We pray for spiritual growth and advancement of the believers toward maturity not for their financial prosperity or success in the world. We should take care not to be repetitive. This may be legitimate in private prayer but not in public prayer.

Prayer of intercession is the exercise of the royal priesthood function in behalf of others. The Bible outlines simple and basic principles for intercession which the religious reversionists complicated due to their ignorance of Bible doctrine. To intercede for others, several things are not necessary:

There is no need to specify their personal needs. God in His omniscience knows the details of each person all throughout the human history. God has perfect knowledge of our mental attitude and circumstances in life. He knows our specific needs more than we do. Whoever teaches that prayer must be specific has missed the doctrinal point of view of Philippians 1:3-4.

The apostle Paul simply mentioned their names before God and no specific petition were asked. Majority of the Church Age believers today are worse than the unbelievers who are asking nothing from God except specific material things (Matthew 6:31-33). Asking God for specific "material blessings" is not a sign of advancing faith but of insecurity in life.

There is no need to command God to do specific action. we are not in position to give God instructions on how to go around certain circumstances. The problem is rooted in ignorance of Bible doctrine. Some take 1 Timothy 2:8 literally, so they raise their hands in the air when they pray. The phrase "lift up your holy hands" refers to the act of intercession for the salvation of the unbelievers. There is nothing spiritual about lifting your hands in the air whenever you pray.

Notice that in the context of 1 Timothy 2:1-8, the mandate is not to ask God to intervene in the government affairs or to ask God to bless the unregenerated government officials, but to pray for their salvation. Interceding for their salvation does not stop in the act of prayer but in the proclamation of the Gospel. By mentioning the names of the unbelievers we intercede for their salvation. By mentioning the names of the believers, we intercede for their spiritual advancement or spiritual maturity.

There is no need to wait for an emergency. Majority of Christians today pray for others under emergency situation such as accident, calamity, crisis, sickness, death or unfavorable situations. They need news of emergency before they remember to pray for others. Praying only for your favorite people most of the time is not only a sign of prejudice but the lack of virtue impersonal love, a sign of spiritual immaturity.

We are commanded to intercede for people including our enemies, those we do not like to mention in our prayer and people we are uncertain of their situation. Intercede as often as you remember their names. Some are barred from praying for others because they have no specific prayer requests. The Bible commanded us to simply mention their names before the throne of grace.

The soul occupied with Christ is always in the "praying ground" (1 Thess. 5:17) and there is no need for prayer mountain, prayer garden, or prayer closet because his soul dwells in the presence of the Almighty (divine dynasphere). To "pray at all time" requires no musical background, fasting, kneeling pillow, except a soul with Bible doctrine with residence at the divine dynasphere.

Both the prayer of the unbelievers and reversionist believers are useless and has no spiritual impact and significance. They are nothing but noisy gong or clanging cymbal. Their prayer can accomplish nothing but provide them the "good feelings" of pseudo-victorious prayer warrior. Intercessory prayer has become the source of arrogance for some Christians who thought that their prayer is more powerful than others. The effectual intercessory prayer requires three things:

- Salvation - regenerated soul
- Spirituality - a soul residing in divine dynasphere
- Scripture - Bible doctrine in the soul (epignosis)

David lifted his hands toward the holy sanctuary (Jerusalem) in order to identify with the offering up of sacrifices by the priests since he was far away in exiled (Psalm 28:2, 63:2-4). He prayed at the time the sacrifice was being made in Jerusalem. David expressed his oneness with the evening sacrifice when he was away from the holy sanctuary by raising his hands toward Jerusalem (not toward heaven) (Psalm 14:2).

Raising hands in prayer and worship is not legitimate for six reasons:

- The sacrifices of animals had ceased. The Lord Jesus Christ died to fulfill the sacrificial law once and for all.
- We do not have the altar of Israel (we are not Israelites).
- There is no command for us to raise our hands during worship or prayer.
- Physical posture has nothing to do with true worship. It is not sign of spirituality to raise your hands in worship or prayer.
- Everyone else is doing it especially the cults and unbelievers.
- Religious symbolisms without truth of Bible doctrine are "Christian traditions" which are not acceptable to God.

4 General categories of lifting hands in the Scripture:

- Lifting of hand in reference to everyday obedience to Bible doctrine (Psalm 119:48) as an expression of submission. The lifting of hands today has no spiritual significance.
- Lifting of hands in reference to priestly function of offering sacrifices in the altar (Psalm 134:2) as an expression of identifying himself to the animal sacrifice.
- Lifting of hands referring to David's personal volition to lean toward God and toward His Word (Psalm 143:6)
- Lifting of hands in prayer refers to the Church Age believer's act of praying for others, which is the ministry of intercession for the lost (1 Timothy 2:8). It has nothing to do with literal lifting of hands into the air.

The above-mentioned categories of lifting hands are figurative never literal and physical. David did not actually raise his hands in reference to Psalm 143:6. Believers do not have to raise their hands to show off positive volition toward God and His Word. We do not have to raise our hands while praying because “lifting your holy hands” means to pray for the lost (1 Tim. 2:8]).

Christianity is not a religion that blindly follows practices, rituals, traditions invented and taught by man. We have to examine every ritual, every practice, every tradition, and everything the preachers are proclaiming as the Word of God. We are not blind followers following blind leaders.

Summary of the doctrine of prayer

Prayer is not:

- Conversation with God
- Communication with God
- To get God's blessing
- The ultimate power source
- Preparation for great task
- To gain spiritual experience
- Remedy for many ailments
- Something that changes history
- Something that change man
- A tool to move the hand of the Lord
- A weapon against the devil
- A defense against self-made miseries
- A compass to find the will of God
- A guide in seeking divine plan

Three categories of prayer directed to God the Father

- From the source of the Son (Heb. 7:25)
- From the source of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:26-27)
- From the source of the believer-priest (Hebrews 4:16)

Genuine prayer is:

- Designed to know God's essence
- Designed to know the will, plan and purpose of God
- To make us one with Him
- The exercise of drawing on the grace of God
- For the purpose of spiritual discernment
- For the purpose of praise
- To receive the best from God
- For the purpose of submission
- The spiritual activity of the soul as priest
- The spiritual expression of worship
- A great spiritual privilege of every believer
- Exclusive for the regenerated believers
- An all out desire to honor and glorify God
- Not mindful of the criticism of others

Two general categories of prayer:

- Private prayer
- Public prayer

The approach to prayer:

- Addressed to the Father (Eph. 3:14, 5:20)
- In the Name of the Son (John 14:13-14)
- In the power of the Spirit (Eph. 6:18)

General Requirements for Genuine Prayer:

- Salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone
- Spirituality filling of the Holy Spirit access by rebound
- Scripture - Bible doctrine resident in the soul

Pray objectively:

Do not pray for yourself but let lead the people

Do not use the personal pronouns (I me, my)

The agenda for prayer:

- Confession (1 John 1:9) for private prayer only
- Thanksgiving (Eph. 5:20, 1 Thess. 5:18)
- Intercession (Eph. 6:18)
 - For unbelievers - for their salvation
 - For believers - for their spiritual advancement and maturity
- Petition (Heb. 4:16)
 - Petition answered - desire not answered (Psalm 106:15, Number 11:31-32, 1 Sam. 8:4-5, 6-7)
 - Petition not answered - desire answered (Gen. 17:18-19, 18:23-24, 26, 28, 32, Luke 16:27-29)
 - Petition and desire answered (1 Kings 18:21,24, 37-39, Judges 16:25-28, John 11:37-44)
 - Petition and desire not answered

Sin of prayerlessness:

- No consistent prayer routine
- Not praying for the brethren
- Not praying for the doctrinal pastor / teacher
- Not praying for the unbelievers and authorities
- Prayer can Become A Sin (Psalm 109:7):
- Praying for the praise or approval of men
- Praying for personal ambition and honor
- Praying beyond the written Word of God
- Praying for what God has already rejected
- Praying for the destruction of your enemies
- Praying fervently for something you do want
- Praying for something outside the will of God
- Praying intensely for the things of the world
- Praying for what God has already condemned
- Praying without the intention to comply with
- Praying contrary to the will and purpose of God
- Praying opposing the plan and design of prayer
- Praying based on the invented teachings of men
- Praying to “worship” your prayer and not God

Praying with some Old Testaments or Pre-Canon Church Age obsolete and no longer applicable principles (like Mat. 18:18-18).

Things You Should Beware When Praying:

- Plunging into self-importance
- Floating with the details of life
- Reflecting on emotional stress
- Resolving into self - correction
- Becoming mystical illusionist
- Becoming idiotic philosopher
- Becoming mechanical android
- Trying to draw God’s attention
- Becoming pauperized beggar
- Ending in false form of reverence
- Reviving rebellious feeling
- Focusing on pain of miseries
- Seeking inspiration or blessings
- Feeling holy and righteous
- Falling into illusion or imagination
- Having desire for God without reality
- Justifying and excusing self

We can avoid the numerous idiotic and absurd things by observing some of these basic principles of public prayer:

- Be yourself:
 - Do not try to impress the people
 - Do not imitate somebody’s prayer and voice
 - Do not borrow words, phrases, or anything
 - Avoid becoming pretentious and hypocritical
 - Concentrate on the presence of God
 - Do not pray hurriedly or too slow
 - Focus on who and what God is
 - Focus on the Person of God
 - Direct your prayer to God not on men

Speak intelligently when prayer:

- Do not use strange or non-sense words
- Do not speak in vague generalities
Do not use the 1611 English
- Do not imitate somebody's voice
- Speak clearly and loud enough
- Do not use voice modulation or artificial voice
- Do not use too many divine pronoun of God

Speak to God:

- Do not inform God of anything
- Do not pray unto yourself (Luke 18:11)
- Do not make announcement to people
- Do not preach to people through prayer
- Do not instruct or rebuke the people
- Do not try to persuade God
- Organize your mind in reflection of with biblical thought
- Do not quote from books except from the Bible
- Avoid flying from one idea to another
- Pray truthfully rational and intelligently
- Prayer is not for public confession of sins
- Do not confess your sins publicly
- Avoid emoting depression and feeling unworthy
- Do give information that can be subject of gossip
- Avoid exalting or humiliating people

Proper intercession:

- No need to specify the prayer requests
- Do not command God to do specific actions
- Do not use the newspaper as agenda for prayer
- Do not wait for emergency before you pray

The right requests:

- Do not ask God to do things contrary to His will
- Do not ask God for things He already provided
- Do not Ask God for things He already rejected

Reasons Why Prayer is Not Answered:

- Unconfessed personal sins (Eph. 4:19)
- Without the filling of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 6:18)
- Controlled by the old sinful nature (Eph. 4:27)
- Committing habitual sins (Ps. 51:4)
- Praying without faith-rest function (Mat. 21:22)
- Lack domestic tranquility (1 Pet. 3:7)
- Without grace orientation (Prov. 21:13)
- Disobeying the will of God (1 John 3:22)
- Living with lust type selfishness (James 4:2-4)

The Basis of God for Answering Our Prayer:

- The resident imputed righteousness of God in every Church Age believer.
- The imputed eternal life of God in the believer.
- The grace provision of God to believers for continuous fellowship through the filling of the Holy Spirit access by rebound. Our non-meritorious faith is not the basis of God for answering our prayer.

General Requirements for Genuine Prayer:

- Salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone
- Spirituality filling of the Holy Spirit access by rebound
- Scripture - Bible doctrine resident in the soul

He asked for courage but he remains a coward because he has no Bible doctrine in the soul. He asked for humility but remained arrogant because he has no Bible doctrine in the soul. He asked for a godly wife but marries a heathen because he has no Bible doctrine in the soul. He asked to do God's will but he is remained disobedient because he has no Bible doctrine in the soul.