

The Seven Pillars of Prayer

Part I

04 - Living the Simple Gospel
Church on the Park I Sunday, 21 NOV 2016

Text: Philippians 1:3-11

Theme: Real prayer and mere routine prayer are two very different things.

Intro: Paul begins his letter to the Philippians with prayer. Here the veil is removed and we see how Paul prays in the secret place. His heart is bursting with love and affection for these people and he can't help but pray. By doing so, he leaves us a model of prayer. Prayer is how you begin and it's how Christ's work is accelerated through you. Today, I'd like to begin the seven pillars of prayer seen in the opening prayer of Philippians. We will cover three today and four next week. In it you'll learn how to pray like the apostles.

1) Pray with thanksgiving (1:3).

- Here Paul is **entering** into the **gates** of God's temple with thanksgiving (Psalm 100, esp. v.4).
- He first comes to the **altar** to offer God the fruit of the harvest—this **fruit** is the people of Philippi who have received the Gospel.
 - After blessing them with grace and peace, Paul brings **offering of thanks** that reminds us of the **peace** and **grain** offering (Lev. 7:11-14).
- *Do you know the spiritual application of the grain offering?* (Leviticus 2)
 - Remember Jesus said that “the **harvest** is **plentiful**, but the labourers are few.”
 - The harvest—the grain—is the people (**Isaiah 66:20**).
 - When someone is saved they become like grain that is reaped.
 - Remember, the **first fruits** of salvation in Philippi (Lydia) began with Paul going to the **place of prayer** (Acts 16:13).
 - **Prayer** is the **beginning** of **everything** in the Kingdom.
 - In Romans Paul describes the **Gentiles** as an **offering** (**Romans 15:15-16**).
 - The Holy Spirit reminds us of the **oil** put on the **bread** of the grain offering.
- Our **priestly ministry** is to **reap** a harvest of souls and **offer** them to God, just like Paul.
- I often hear Christians **grumbling** about **one another**. This is not good.
 - Paul could have been **grumbling**. Why? Some Christians were insincere. They made Christians look bad and that meant his suffering became worse in prison (vv. 15-18; see also ***1 Cor. 1:4-9**).
 - **A.W. Tozer** says, “God has made us for each other, and it is His will and desire that Christian believers should understand and appreciate one another” (*Who Put Jesus on the Cross?*, 165)
 - The Lord wants you to **give thanks** for **your brothers and sisters** in Christ.
- Look at the example of the **Samaritan Leper**. He is an example of thanksgiving in an unthankful world (**Luke 17:11-19**).
 - Jesus shows lots of mercy, but **not many are thankful**.
 - Be the **one** who not only is blessed by Jesus, but **turns back** to bless Jesus.
 - Don't be just a **receiver**, be a **giver**.
- In the Greek, the words grace (**charis**), thanks (**eucharisteo**) and joy (**chara**) all have their roots in the stem **char/xar-** (meaning, ‘favour or leaning towards to share benefit’).
 - In Paul's thought, thanks and joy all flow out of the **fountain of grace**. The same goes with character (*charakter*) and gifts (*charisma*).

2) Pray with joy (1:4).

- You **begin living** out the simple Gospel through **praying for others**, who also **participate** in the Gospel.

- Jesus' gospel **finds** you through **grace**, **restores** you through **peace** and **sets** you walking through **prayer**. Prayer is the **overflow of love** that Jesus' puts in your **heart**—the outworking of his **affection in you**.
 - His **people** are his **first love**, just like a **bride** is a **bridegroom's** first love. So, if you are in Jesus you will be moved to pray and through prayer you are participating in the Gospel.
- Morning Thought: **Pray with joy**. One of the **traps** you can fall into is **feeling** prayer is **drudgery**. Real prayer is the greatest joy because you are invited to have an audience with the King. He hears you with a sympathetic and compassionate ear. He responds with grace and mercy. He acts like thunder and lightning on your behalf. Observe how Paul prays: "I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all" (Philippians 1:3-4, NASB).
- *Remember when Jesus talked about the Father's house being a "house of prayer"? Do you know where he received that phrase from?* (Matt. 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46)
 - **Isaiah 56:6-8**
 - This passage is about **foreigners** who **join** themselves to the Lord, like the **Samaritan Leper**.
 - It describes what it means to be joined to the Lord: "to minister to Him...to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, everyone who keeps from profaning the sabbath [Jesus], and holds fast My covenant [New Covenant]..."
 - God himself makes them **joyful**.
 - *Where does joy come from?*
 - **Joy** in the Kingdom is **different** than the **world**.
 - It is not **based** on **circumstances**, your **health** and what **people think** about you.
 - God's joy is an **attribute** of God himself.
 - **Jesus** himself is **JOY**.
 - Your **joy comes** from the **Lord himself** and **transcends** the world around you.
 - God's joy **does not mean** there is **no sorrow**. Yes, you will have sorrow, but joy is like a life **raft** that keeps your head **above** the water, keeping you from drowning.
 - **Beethoven's 9th Symphony** (Ode to Joy). Joy springs from and upholds you in great distress and **struggle**. This is not a joy based on circumstances, but based on Christ.
 - **Psalms 16:11 & 21:6** - **Joy** comes from God's **presence**
 - Joy comes from **seeing** things in **God's light**.
 - As you enter God's sanctuary you see your troubles in the light of eternity (Ps 73:16-17).
 - Before he came into the sanctuary, the Psalmist (Asaph) was miserable.
 - *If everything was stripped away, would you be joyful in God himself? Would your relationship with the Father and his Son give you joy?*

3) Pray in light of the Gospel (1:5).

- Not in light of a **judgmental spirit**. Not in light of the saints **sins**. But in the light of the **Gospel** of **grace** and **peace**.
 - We are all on **equal** level before God.
- One of the classic problems is that we **see** one another after the **flesh**.
 - Look at how Paul addresses this: **2 Cor. 5:16-19** (cf. *v. 12).
 - This especially happens in **families**. It happened in Jesus family who, at one time thought he was crazy.
 - It causes us to gossip and not to pray effectively
- *What does it mean to see one another after the flesh?*
 - It means to see the **vessel** with all of its **cracks and flaws**, rather than the **treasure** within the vessel.
 - It looks at somebody's **weight**, their peculiar **personality** and their irksome ways.
 - When you know someone after the flesh you put them into a **prison** and never let them out. "You are this way and you will never change."
 - But, here is the thing with the **Gospel**. Your brother or sister is **saved** and has **Jesus in them**. And if Jesus is alive in them, they cannot stay the same.
- Look at the problem the **older brother** has with the **prodigal son** (Luke 15:25-32).

- We need to **see one another like Jesus sees them**. We need to have the **Father's heart** for one another.
- This takes an **unveiling** of the **eyes** to see one another in light of the Gospel.
- It's the only **reason** why **Paul** can pray with **thanksgiving** and **joy**.

Conclusion: You pray with thanksgiving and joy when God and his Gospel is at the centre, rather than yourself being the focus. When you see things in light of his grace and mercy, you pray effectively. So remember to pray with thanksgiving, joy and in light of the Gospel.

END NOTES

In the Greek, the words thanks (*eucharisteo*) and joy (*chara*) all have their roots in the word grace, 'charis.' In Paul's thought, thanks and joy all flow out of the fountain of grace.

'Thanks' Word Study

2168. εὐχαριστέω *eucharistéō*; contracted *eucharistō*, fut. *eucharistéō*, aor. *ēucharistéō* or *eucharistéō* (Rom. 1:21), from *eucharistos* (2170), **thankful, grateful, well-pleasing. To show oneself grateful, to be thankful, to give thanks.** It does not occur in the Sept., where instead we find *eulogéō* (2127), to speak well of (which, in some respects, embraces a more narrow concept, and in others a wider concept than *eucharistéō*). In the NT, except in Rom. 16:4, used in a religious sense with or without reference to God. In Luke's and Paul's writings, it is followed by *Theós* ([2316], God) in the dat., *tō Theō*. With the dat., it refers to thanks for any good experience (Luke 17:16; Acts 27:35; 28:15; Rom. 14:6; 1 Cor. 14:18; Col. 1:12; 3:17). The reason for thanks is designated by *hupér* (5228), for the sake of or on the part of (Rom. 1:8; 1 Cor. 10:30; Eph. 1:16; 5:20); by *perí* (4012), with respect to, with the gen. (1 Cor. 1:4; 1 Thess. 1:2; 2 Thess. 1:3; 2:13); by *epí* (1909), upon, with the dat. (1 Cor. 1:4; Phil. 1:3). Sometimes it is added on with *hóti* (3754), that (Luke 18:11; John 11:41; Rom. 1:8; 1 Cor. 1:14; 1 Thess. 2:13; Rev. 11:17); also used with the acc., referring to a person or thing, meaning to praise God for something or someone (Rom. 1:21; 2 Cor. 1:11). This construction, unknown in Class. Gr., has its origin from the absolute use of *eucharistéō*.

In the NT, to give thanks, to thank, express one's gratitude. With the dat. of person (Luke 17:16; Rom. 16:4).

Elsewhere in the NT, used only in reference to God, to give thanks to God, usually followed by *tō Theō*, to God (Acts 28:15; Rom. 7:25; 1 Cor. 14:18; Col. 1:12; 3:17; Phile. 1:4; Rev. 11:17), and other adjuncts as with *perí* (4012), concerning (Col. 1:3), *hupér* (5228), on behalf of (Eph. 5:20), *hóti* (3754), that (Luke 18:11; John 11:41; 1 Cor. 1:14; 1 Thess. 2:13). Used in an absolute sense (Eph. 1:16; 1 Thess. 5:18). Pass., with the acc. (2 Cor. 1:11). Spoken of giving thanks before meals, followed by *tō Theō*, to God (Acts 27:35; Rom. 14:6); used in an absolute sense (Matt. 15:36; 26:27; Mark 8:6; 14:23; Luke 22:17, 19; John 6:11, 23; 1 Cor. 10:30; 11:24).

By implication, to praise, bless, worship (Rom. 1:21; 1 Cor. 14:17) corresponding to *eulogéō* (2127), to bless, praise, eulogize.

Syn.: *homologéō* (3670), to acknowledge, give thanks; *opheílō* (3784), to be under obligation; *eulogéō* (2127), to bless, praise.

Ant.: *krínō* (2919), to condemn, judge; *katakrínō* (2632), to condemn, damn; *elégchō* (1651), to rebuke, reprove, find fault; *apodokimázō* (593), to disallow, reject; *katadikázō* (2613), to pronounce guilty, condemn; *mémphomai* (3201), to blame, find fault; *diabállō* (1225), to accuse falsely; *kakologéō* (2551), to revile, speak evil of; *katalaléō* (2635), to slander; *katēgoréō* (2723), to accuse, object; *epikrínō* (1948), to adjudge.

2169. εὐχαριστία *eucharistía*; gen. *eucharistías*, fem. noun from *eucharistos* (2170), thankful, grateful, well-pleasing. Gratitude, thankfulness, thanksgiving (Acts 24:3). In Paul's writings and in the Book of the Revelation, it means thanksgiving, thanks, i.e., the expression of gratitude to God. Followed by the dat. *tō Theō*, to God (2 Cor. 9:11, 12; Rev. 7:12). Generally (1 Cor. 14:16; 2 Cor. 4:15; Phil. 4:6; Col. 2:7; 4:2; 1 Thess. 3:9; 1 Tim. 2:1; 4:3, 4). In Eph. 5:4, grateful speech or discourse. See Amos 4:5. Eucharist is used in modern language for Holy Communion, embodying the highest act of thanksgiving for the greatest gift received from God, the sacrifice of Jesus. It is the grateful acknowledgement of past mercies.

Syn.: *eulogía* (2129), praise; *makarismós* (3108), the ascription of the blessed state and recognition of it.

Ant.: *katára* (2671), curse.

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2170. εὐχάριστος *eucháristos*; gen. *eucharístou*, masc.–fem., neut. *eucháriston*, adj. from *eú* (2095), well, and *charízomai* (5483), to grant, give. Thankful, grateful, well–pleasing (Col. 3:15; Sept.: Prov. 11:16). Some attribute to it, by implication, the meaning of well–pleasing, acceptable to God, and others the meaning of liberal.

Deriv.: *eucharistéō* (2168), to be thankful; *eucharistía* (2169), thankfulness, giving of thanks.
Syn.: *arestós* (701), pleasing, agreeable; *euárestos* (2101), well–pleasing.
Ant.: *acháristos* (884), ungrateful

Zodhiates, S. (2000). The complete word study dictionary: New Testament (electronic ed.). Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.

‘Joy’ Word Study

5479. χαρά *chará*; gen. *charás*, fem. noun from *chaírō* (5463), to rejoice. Joy, rejoicing, gladness.
(I) Generally (Matt. 2:10; Luke 1:14 where it is joined with *agallíasis* [20], exultation or great joy; 15:7, 10; John 3:29; 15:11; 16:20–22, 24; 17:13; Acts 8:8; 13:52; 15:3; Rom. 14:17, “joy in the Holy Ghost,” meaning the joy which the Holy Spirit imparts by His influence; 15:13; 2 Cor. 1:24; 2:3; 7:4, 13; 8:2; Gal. 5:22; Phil. 1:25, joy of faith, meaning in and arising from the faith of the gospel; 2:2, 29; 1 Thess. 1:6 [cf. Rom. 14:17]; 1 Thess. 3:9; 2 Tim. 1:4; Phile. 1:7; James 4:9; 1 Pet. 1:8; 1 John 1:4; 2 John 1:12). With *apó* (575), from, and the gen., from or for joy (Matt. 13:44; Luke 24:41; Acts 12:14). With *metá* (3326), with, and the gen. meaning with joy, joyfully, rejoicingly (Matt. 13:20; 28:8; Mark 4:16; Luke 8:13; 10:17; 24:52; Acts 20:24; Phil. 1:4; Col. 1:11; Heb. 10:34; 13:17; Sept.: 1 Chr. 29:22). With *en* (1722), in, and the dat. meaning in joy, joyfully (Rom. 15:32).

(II) Metonymically the cause, ground, occasion of joy (Luke 2:10; Phil. 4:1; 1 Thess. 2:19, 20; James 1:2; 3 John 1:4).

(III) Metonymically meaning enjoyment, fruition of joy, bliss (Matt. 25:21, 23, “the bliss prepared for thee of thy Lord” [a.t.]; Heb. 12:2).

Syn.: *agallíasis* (20), exultation, exuberant joy; *euphrosúnē* (2167), good cheer, mirth, gladness of heart.

Ant.: *lúpē* (3077), grief, sorrow; *odúnē* (3601), pain, consuming grief; *ōdín* (5604), a birth pang, travail, pain; *pénthos* (3997), mourning, sorrow; *thlípsis* (2347), affliction, tribulation; *pónos* (4192), toil, pain, anguish; *pikría* (4088), bitterness; *kakopátheia* (2552), suffering affliction; *talaipōría* (5004), misery; *stenochōría* (4730), anguish, distress

Zodhiates, S. (2000). The complete word study dictionary: New Testament (electronic ed.). Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.

4) Pray with confidence.

5) Pray from the heart.

6) Pray for more love.

7) Pray to glorify and praise God.

You’ve heard it said, “God helps those who help themselves.” But really the Bible teaches: “God helps those who help others.”

Original 'Ode to Joy' adopted into Beethoven's 9th Symphony in the Fourth Movement (by Friedrich Schiller)

Joy, beautiful spark of divinity,
Daughter from Elysium,
We enter, drunk with fire,
Heavenly, thy sanctuary!
Your magics join again
What custom strictly divided;*
All people become brothers,*
Where your gentle wing abides.

Who has succeeded in the great attempt,
To be a friend's friend,
Whoever has won a lovely woman,
Add his to the jubilation!
Indeed, who calls at least one soul
Theirs upon this world!
And whoever never managed, shall steal himself
Weeping away from this union.

All creatures drink of joy
At nature's breast.
Just and unjust
Alike taste of her gift;
She gave us kisses and the fruit of the vine,
A tried friend to the end.
[Even] the worm has been granted sensuality,
And the cherub stands before God!

Gladly, as His heavenly bodies fly
On their courses through the heavens,
Thus, brothers, you should run your race,
As a hero going to conquest.

You millions, I embrace you.
This kiss is for all the world!
**Brothers, above the starry canopy
There must dwell a loving Father.
Do you fall in worship, you millions?
World, do you know your creator?
Seek him in the heavens;
Above the stars must He dwell.**

Lyrics of Beethoven's 9th Symphony,

O friends, no more of these sounds!
Let us sing more cheerful songs,
More songs full of joy!
Joy!
Joy!
Joy, bright spark of divinity,
Daughter of Elysium,
Fire-inspired we tread
Within thy sanctuary.
Thy magic power re-unites

All that custom has divided,
All men become brothers,
Under the sway of thy gentle wings.
Whoever has created
An abiding friendship,
Or has won
A true and loving wife,
All who can call at least one soul theirs,
Join our song of praise;
But those who cannot must creep tearfully
Away from our circle.
All creatures drink of joy
At nature's breast.
Just and unjust
Alike taste of her gift;
She gave us kisses and the fruit of the vine,
A tried friend to the end.
Even the worm can feel contentment,
And the cherub stands before God!
Gladly, like the heavenly bodies
Which He sent on their courses
Through the splendor of the firmament;
Thus, brothers, you should run your race,
Like a hero going to victory!
You millions, I embrace you.
This kiss is for all the world!
Brothers, above the starry canopy
There must dwell a loving father.
Do you fall in worship, you millions?
World, do you know your creator?
Seek Him in the heavens;
Above the stars must he dwell.

[The difference between Fatherly & Brotherly love. The Prodigal son. The Father wants his heart in you. Seeing in the natural or spiritual.]