

Saturday, May 29, 2010—Great Lakes Grace Bible Conference—How to Pray: The Pauline Prayer Paradigm

Purpose: Demonstrate how we should pray today (not how we should not pray).

Explain the purpose and effect of prayer given that God already knows what we will pray beforehand.

Introduction

- It is easier to articulate how **not** to do something than it is to positively explain how it should be done. Demonstrating how something should **not work** is easier than demonstrating **how it should**.
- So it is with prayer. Much as been said by Grace Life teachers about how we should not pray, while considerable less has been said about how we should pray.
- I am going to strive to say very little about what prayer is not (negative) but focus rather on what Prayer is (positive). I want to try and share with you a comprehensive Pauline Prayer Paradigm.
- Make comment about posting the resources.

Basics of Pauline Prayer

- I Thessalonians 5:17—contains a straightforward yet incredibly profound instruction regarding prayer. Pray without stopping.
- Right away this verse challenges our traditional views of prayers. Prayer by folding your hands, bowing your head, closing your eyes, is not what this verse is talking about. It is impossible for you to pray that way without stopping.
- In time past this was not the case. In the Old Testament, those who honored and obeyed God found their way to certain places to pray—places where the presence of God was said to dwell, places like the Temple.
 - Acts 3:1—there were specific hours and places where prayers were to be offered.
 - Daniel 6:10—Daniel prayers toward Jerusalem 3 times a day.
 - Psalm 55:17—how often was Daniel praying? What were the disciples doing in Acts 3:1? They were praying in line with how Israel was supposed to pray.
- One of the first things Paul teaches us is that prayer is much more than a spiritual discipline to be entered into during certain times and seasons or at certain places. It should instead be as close and as regular as your breath, integrated into every fiber of your being.
- Two spiritual realities are responsible for this change: 1) the fact that the justified believer has peace with God, 2) the fact that the believer is sealed and indwelt by God the Holy Spirit.
- In time past when Israel sinned God would not even hear the prayers of the nation.

- Isaiah 59:1-2
- Psalm 66:18
- Micah 3:4
- Romans 5:1-2—during the dispensation of Grace we who are justified are at peace with God.
- In time past the Holy Spirit would come upon people for a time in order to accomplish a task but He would not permanently indwell the Old Testament Saints.
 - Judges 3:10, 6:34, 14:6
 - II Samuel 7:15
 - Psalm 51:11—David pleads with God not to take his Holy Spirit from him.
- Today during the dispensation of Grace, God the Holy Spirit permanently indwells and seals the believer in Jesus Christ.
 - I Corinthians 12:13—God the Holy Spirit is what places us into the body of Christ.
 - Ephesians 4:30—God the Holy Spirit also takes up residence in your spirit and seals you into the Body of Christ until the day of redemption.
- God has formed the most intimate relationship possible with his saints. Read section from *Are Grace Lifers Deists?*
- Because of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit the place of prayer is now within the believer—within you—in every step as you carry out your ambassadorship in Christ’s stead. These spiritual realities are what allow us to pray without ceasing.
- As breathing is crucial to your life in the natural, so prayer is crucial to your spiritual life.
- Romans 12:12—in our fast food, instant gratification society this verse ought to make sense to us.
 - “instant” means to be steadfastly attentive unto, to give unremitting care to a thing, to continue all the time in one place
 - Romans 13:6—attending continually upon is the same Greek word translated instant in Romans 12:12
- Philippians 4:6—Paul’s formula is simple. Have a concern? Pray right then and there.
- One of the problems with how Grace Lifer teacher have taught prayer is that we have made people scared to death to pray the wrong thing. Some of us need to take some of the powder out of doctrinal cannon and stop pouncing on people every time they say or pray something that is not quite right.

- The issue in verse 6 is that God says it's okay to pray about anything that is bothering us. We're not supposed to be worried about improperly doing the very thing God gave us to combat our worries, cares, and anxieties.
- Grace gives us the freedom to be vulnerable and candid before our heavenly father. The real issue is not what you pray for but what you expect God to do for you when you pray.

Romans 8:26-27

- Much has been said about these two verses by Grace Life teachers. Before we deal with these two verses specifically I would like to look at the context by carefully looking at the first phrase in verse 26.
- Likewise—what the Spirit does for the believer in verse 26 is like something else He does for us in the passage.
 - Romans 8:16—there is a communion in your inner man between the Holy Spirit and your spirit that bears witness to the fact you are a child of God.
 - How do you know? Besides reading it in the verses how do you explain this?
- Infirmities—I have heard many different interpretations about what the infirmities are in the passage. I believe according to the context they are referring to the present physical groaning we suffer as we wait for the redemption of the Body.
 - Romans 8:18-22—the entire creation including believers groans and travails in pain under the bondage of corruption. The suffering we experience now is not comparable to the glory we will experience in eternity.
 - Romans 8:23-25—believers are asked to wait for the redemption of our bodies. Therefore, these physical ailments and fleshly problems that causes us to groan within ourselves are the infirmities that verse 26 is referring to.
- Romans 8:26—clearly says that we don't know what to pray for. Our infirmities are not ignorance as many have suggested. Rather our infirmities cause us to not know how we should pray.
- Show diagram of the train and explain it. The reason we don't know what to pray for is because there is conflict between the Facts and our Feelings.
- It is in the midst of this situation the Holy Spirit makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered just as he did in verse 16.
- And—the intercession in verse 27 is in addition to the Holy Spirit's work in verse 26.
- He—he that searcheth the hearts and makes intercession in verse 27 is not the Holy Spirit. It is a different individual.
- I Chronicles 28:9

- Revelation 2:18, 23
- Hebrews 4:12-13—not only is the word of God the discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart it is also referred to as a person in masculine terms in verse 13.
- The word of God makes intercession in a believer’s life because who knows better the mind of the spirit.
- Romans 8:34—Jesus Christ the living word also makes intercession for us.
- When we pray the Holy Spirit communes with our spirit and makes intercession for us through the conduit of the word of God.
- The Holy Spirit, Written Word, and Living Word all make intercession for the believer.
- Why pray if God already knows what will happen? Because prayer activates Holy Spirit and Word of God in your life. Just as you don’t know you are the child of God but through the Holy Spirit bearing witness with your spirit so it is in prayer.

Intercessory Results

- The results of this intercessory process are found in Philippians 4:7
- We are not promised physical deliverance or miraculous intervention. Rather we are promised that our hearts and minds will be kept by the peace of God.
- There is something about this process that we cannot enter into in our understanding. Just as there are groanings which cannot be utter or put into words.
- Keep--to guard, protect by a military guard, either to prevent hostile invasion, or to keep the inhabitants of a besieged city from flight.
 - II Corinthians 11:32
- It is important to note the connection between the intercessory process and its results.
 - Romans 8:27—the searching of the heart reveals the mind of the Spirit
 - Philippians 4:7—the promise is that our hearts and minds will kept through Christ Jesus.
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- Prayer activates within in the believer a point of connection between the Holy Spirit and the Word of God that garrisons the believers heart and mind in the peace of God.
- Use illustration of the Body
- While anything in our lives is a subject for prayer we must also understand what the promised result is.
- Philippians 4:8—this process only works when we keep our thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ. If you allow you mind to dwell on the things that caused you to be

anxious in the first place your emotions will follow and you will not have the peace of God.