

158. The Prayer of Thanksgiving By Arland Steen

Supreme Scripture

Ephesians 6:18: *Praying always with all prayer.*

James Moffatt: *Praying with all manner of prayer.*

NIV: *And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.*

God's Word Translation: *Use every kind of prayer and request there is.*

The word "sports" is a general classification that includes anything from baseball to golf or bowling to tennis. Each sport has its own rules, which governs its play. The word "prayer" is a general classification that includes anything from any of the nine kinds of prayer.

Sticky Statement

Each kind of prayer has its own rules, which governs its effectiveness.

You will become very confused if you misapply the rules of one kind of prayer with another kind just as you would if you misapplied the rules of one sport for another.

Two Examples of Misapplying Rules

The Prayer of Commitment with the Prayer of Consecration

The Prayer of Commitment is *when you cast something that is worrisome over on God*

Do you sometimes pray about a problem with seemingly no results? Unanswered prayers are usually due to our not praying according to the rules of prayer and in line with God's Word. Peter talked about the prayer of commitment.

1 Peter 5:7 Amplified Bible: *Casting the whole of your care – all your anxieties, all your worries, all your concerns, once and for all – on Him; for He cares for you affectionately, and cares about you watchfully.*

How wonderful it is that we can cast our cares upon the Lord in prayer.

If people would pray this prayer, it would eliminate some of the things they are praying about but only if they then do what He said to do. We must do what He said to do with our cares and anxieties.

Rules for the Prayer of Commitment

- This is a once-and-for-all prayer
- Don't include the words *if it be Your will*
- Don't repeat this prayer every day about the same thing
- When we cast our cares upon Him, we don't have them anymore
- Worry nullifies prayer

But in The Prayer of Consecration the rules change. This prayer is *when you are consecrating yourself to do God's will*

Luke 22:42: *Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not My will, but Yours be done.*

Rules for the Prayer of Consecration

- Okay to say *if it be Your will*
- Okay to repeat this prayer every day about the same thing

When you are truly seeking God's will for your life, this is appropriate.

The Prayer of Petition with the Prayer of Thanksgiving

Here's a rule to apply when you pray The Prayer of Petition. This is a prayer you pray *when you pray for your own personal needs*

Matthew 21:22: *And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.*

The prayer of petition is by far the most frequent kind of prayer prayed by most Christians.

Rules for the Prayer of Petition

- Must be prayed in faith
- Has to do with things you desire
- Has to do with things in the natural or the spiritual realms – like the fig tree that was cursed
- A prayer you pray yourself
- It is not someone praying with you
- It is not someone agreeing with you in prayer
- You only pray it once

God is interested in everything that touches our lives. He has made provision for us.

But there is a prayer that you should pray as many times as you possibly can. The Prayer of Thanksgiving is prayed *when you are worshipping God for who He is*

The prayer of petition is by far the most frequent kind of prayer prayed by most Christians.

I think a case could be made that more people are praying the prayer of petition than are praying the prayer of thanksgiving when it should be reversed. Some people think all prayer is petition. I had a

boyhood friend named Jimmy. He became a preacher and I heard him preach once. He opened up by saying, "My name is Jimmy and I'll take all you will gimme." He said it in fun but not many are saying it in fun when they say it.

Rules for the Prayer of Thanksgiving

- Prayed after the prayer of petition
- Should be prayed more than any other prayer except prayer in the Spirit
- Should be prayed over and over again

God made us humans so He would have someone with whom to have fellowship. He made us for His own pleasure. It is true that God is concerned about us and wants to meet our every need, but even more than that, He wants our love and worship. He is our Father and no earthly parent ever enjoyed the company of his children more than God enjoys the fellowship of His sons and daughters.

If it *seems like* God is not moving in your life like you think He should, I'd check up on my praise and thanksgiving life. There's an example of the power of thanksgiving and praise in the lives of Paul and Silas.

Acts 16:22-25: ²² *Then the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded them to be beaten with rods.* ²³ *And when they had laid many stripes on them,*

they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely. ²⁴ Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. ²⁵ But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Notice the phrase “but at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.”

If they were like many today, their conversation might have gone something like this:

Silas: “Paul, you still there?”

Paul: “Where else could I be? I’m in prison, Silas.”

Silas: “I guess I’m just hurtin’ so bad, I needed to hear your voice in this darkness. I tell you, my poor back is hurting me so bad.”

Paul: “I’m not feeling so great, either.”

Silas: “Paul, I just don’t understand why God let this happen to us. He knows we’ve tried to serve Him and do our best.”

Paul: “Come to think of it, I never did land in jail when I was serving the devil.”

Can you hear the voices of some who have said something similar in your presence?

Now, Paul and Silas really were in trouble, weren’t they? They were in prison but they didn’t allow a prison mentality to get into them!

Everyone has trouble of one kind or another. We’ve all been lashed by the storms of life at one time or another. But our attitude and how we look at situations makes the difference in how we come out or whether we get out at all.

In our midnight hour, when we don’t understand why things have happened as they have, look at the example of Paul and Silas. They weren’t out of the will of God in Philippi. They went there to preach not to vacation. Two of the first things people tend to think when the going gets rough is, “I must be out of the will of God” or “I must have sinned some way.” In their case, it wasn’t God that whipped them and threw them in prison. Nor did He stir up those ungodly men, who did the actual whipping. The devil stirred them up.

A characteristic of the early followers of Jesus was their continual praise to God.

Luke 24:50-53 (NKJ): ⁵⁰ *And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. ⁵¹ Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. ⁵² And they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, ⁵³ and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God.*

Acts 2:46-47 (NKJ): ⁴⁶ *So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.*

Thanking, worshipping and praising God was part of their daily lives. It wasn’t something they did occasionally.

Smith Wigglesworth:

“First thing every morning when I get out of bed, I jump out; I don’t just drag out but I jump out. And when my feet hit the floor I say, ‘Praise the Lord.’ And I praise God every morning.”

Also notice in the scripture above the expression *with gladness and simplicity of heart*. One reason their lives were so effective was that they were continually glad in their hearts and praised God.

Acts 5:42 (NKJ): And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

They never stopped talking about Jesus and they did it with gladness of heart, praising God. So when Paul and Silas were thrown in prison in Philippi, it was only natural that they should pray and sing praises to God. Not only did the prisoners hear them; God also heard them. Deliverance came while they were praising God. Deliverance will come to us also, if we will adopt a lifestyle of thanksgiving each day of the year and not just one day in November.

This is the prayer you keep praying over and over again, which is very different than the prayer of petition.