

# The Facets of Prayer

Series: Mountain Moving Prayer

Paul Bradford, Covenant

Text: Philippians 4:6-7

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## Scripture Reading

Philippians 4:6-7: <sup>6</sup>Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer & petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts & your minds in Christ Jesus.

## Introduction

Today was going to be the final sermon in our series **Mountain Moving Prayer** but I had too much material, so this is the next to the final sermon. These next 2 sermons are intensely practical, meant to equip you in your daily prayer. Today we'll talk about some of the main elements in prayer. Our topic is **The Facets of Prayer**. Next week we'll look at several ways to pray that people over the ages have found to be helpful & meaningful.

◆ In my early years as a Christian, I knew prayer was good, but I rarely knew what to pray about. Many Christians share this same challenge. I heard teachings that greatly helped me. Some were on the Lord's Prayer, which we've already discussed in depth, but which we'll review today. The other was the prayer acrostic ACTS, which I'd like to discuss in a slightly expanded form today. Together these provided valuable structure to prayer & helped guide me through things that were valuable to include in my prayers, I hope they're valuable to you. So let us turn to God's Word to examine each of these six facets of prayer.

## God's Word

### ❖ The FACETS of prayer.

◆ The word **facet** refers to **one side of something many-sided, especially of a cut gem**. Imagine prayer as a beautiful multi-faceted diamond. During your time of prayer you'll move through each facet of this gem. Most Christians would recognize several key elements of prayer that would normally be in every time of prayer. One popular way to remember these is with the acrostic ACTS. ACTS stands for...

**A**doration  
**C**onfession  
**T**hanksgiving  
**S**upplication

◆ Today we'll discuss each of these in depth. But I want to add 2 additional elements. The first is **Focus**. It's sometimes called **centering prayer**. This is simply the process of becoming still within, getting our hearts right. We'll soon see the importance of this.

**F**ocus  
**A**doration  
**C**onfession  
**T**hanksgiving  
**S**upplication

◆ Finally, I want to add the element of **Enjoyment**. This is related to adoration & thanksgiving, but there's a reason I've added it. Prayer is being with God in relationship, and an aspect of healthy relationship is always joy.

**F**ocus  
**A**doration  
**C**onfession  
**E**njoyment  
**T**hanksgiving  
**S**upplication

◆ We now have the acrostic FACETS. Perfect. Let's dive into each of these facets.

## ① Focus

◆ **Psalm 46:10** “Be still & know that I am God;” ◆ Life can be full of activity & pressure. But the activity isn't just outward, we can be very busy in our heads, & in our hearts. We rush around inwardly, sometimes even when we're doing nothing outwardly. We try to enter prayer in this hurried pace. But prayer isn't a task, it's a relationship. Prayer is like sitting down in the family room with a close friend & giving that friend your undivided attention, allowing them to open their heart to you, & opening your heart to them. To be truly present with a friend, we need to calm our body & soul. We're so often like Martha in the Bible.

◆ **Luke 10:38** As Jesus & his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. <sup>39</sup> She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. <sup>40</sup> But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him & asked, “Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!” <sup>41</sup> “Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried & upset about many things, <sup>42</sup> but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, & it will not be taken away from her.” We've invited Jesus into our home, he's sitting in the family room but we're busy in the kitchen. Like Mary we need to calm down & sit at Jesus' feet.

◆ You're entering your prayer time, sat down in your favorite chair or knelt down, stopped moving, that's good. But now you need to stop moving on the inside. ◆ Over the centuries Christians have learned a way to slow down that is sometimes called **Centering Prayer**.

There's a wonderful little book by [J. David Muyskens](#) called [Forty Days to a closer walk with God: The Practice of Centering Prayer](#), which has been greatly beneficial to me. Muyskens writes, **The method, called Centering Prayer, will enable you to take at least a few minutes of your day simply to be in God's loving embrace, free from the noise & tension of the world around you. And you will discover how to deal with the hardest part of silent prayer: the many thoughts that arise from within. Centering Prayer goes deeper than words can express & beyond thought & imagination. It offers a way to enter the heart of God. The words from Psalm 46 are familiar: "Be still, & know that I am God!"**

In Centering Prayer you simply sit quietly in a relaxed posture, usually with your hands open & lifted up to receive. Breathe deeply. As you inhale, invite the Holy Spirit to fill you as the air fills your lungs, as you exhale release your tension and cares to your Father. Let him calm your busy, troubled heart. ◆ Muyskens explains, **As you begin to pray, what is the name of God you commonly choose? The name you use to address God can be a word that helps you stay in an open attitude of silent prayer. You approach & address God & then you go no further; you simply commune with God in a loving relationship for the Centering Prayer period. Later you listen for God's word & make your verbal prayers. For now, you enter silent communion... When a thought comes to you, let go of it for the time being by gently returning to your familiar name for God. Every time you recall that name, it will open your heart to the loving presence of God. Muyskens encourages 20 minutes of centering, but even a minute or two is of great value. Give the Lord your full attention. Enjoy his presence. Receive his love. ◆ Practice.**

[Centering Prayer app](#) (by [Contemplative Outreach](#)).

## ② Adoration

◆ Adoration is worshipping God for who He is & expressing our love to Him. ◆ Now that you've stilled yourself before the Lord & have been receiving his love & setting your thoughts on him, begin praising God for who He is. He's gracious, just, & perfectly good. Remind yourself of his all-powerful, all-loving character. Recite Scripture you might know about Him, like **Isaiah 40:28** “The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; His understanding is unsearchable.” Adoring God takes our eyes off ourselves & directs them up to the One we can trust.

◆The Psalms are a great aid. ◆Psalms 43:4 I will go to the altar of God, to God, my joy & my delight. ◆Psalms 96:9 Worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness; tremble before him, all the earth. ◆Psalm 105:1 Give praise to the LORD... 3 Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.

◆As we focus on God's sinless character we can become profoundly aware of our own sinfulness. Like Isaiah in the presence of the Lord, we cry out, Isaiah 6:5 "Woe to me!... I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, & I live among a people of unclean lips, & my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty." So the next natural step in prayer is...

### ③ Confession

◆Confession is admitting our sins to God, then receiving his forgiveness & cleansing. As you confess, be specific. Have you been gossiping? Spoken harsh or foul words? Acted in unkind ways towards others? Been angry, prideful, or lustful? Let the Holy Spirit guide you. Be honest. Let God search your heart & point out dark places so that His light can shine in. Ask the Lord, Psalm 139:23 Search me, God, & know my heart; test me & know my anxious thoughts. 24 See if there is any offensive way in me, & lead me in the way everlasting. Confessing breaks the hold of the sin on us & removes barriers between us & God.

Then receive God's forgiveness & cleansing. 1John 1:8 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves & the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful & just & will forgive us our sins & purify us from all unrighteousness. Because of Christ's work, Paul tells us, 1Corinthians 6:11 you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ & by the Spirit of our God. As believers in Christ, we receive the pardon that he provides us through his blood. We thank God for his mercy & forgiveness. We celebrate the unmerited favor & freedom we experience in Christ.

### ④ Enjoyment

◆Now take time to enjoy the Lord's love, his cleansing, your relationship with him. This step reminds us that prayer is about relationship, a life-giving, joy-filled relationship with God. Even as we delight in the presence of a loved one on earth, we need to take time to delight in the Lord. When I'm with Tammy, or my kids, or little Charlie, I just enjoy them. Take time to enjoy God.

◆In Philippians 2:17 Paul writes, I am glad & rejoice with all of you. 18 So you too should be glad & rejoice with me. Then in the next chapter he writes, 3:1 Further, my brothers & sisters, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, & it is a safeguard for you. And again in 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Paul knew the choice to rejoice is crucial. It gets our minds on God, on his love, goodness, & faithfulness, & off our self. When we delight in the Lord, it fills our cups. The cup that is full of the Lord, can't be filled with the Lord's goodness has no room for the poison of sin.

◆As you rejoice & enjoy the Lord, you naturally move to...

### ⑤ Thanksgiving

◆If adoration is delighting in for who God is, thanksgiving is expressing our gratitude for what he has done. We are to do both. 1Thessalonians 5:16 Rejoice always, 17 pray continually, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

◆The difference in adoration & thanksgiving is clear if we look at an example in everyday life. When I express my adoration of Tammy, I'm expressing what I love about her as a person, who she is. I delight in you because you're faithful, you're beautiful, thoughtful, compassionate, genuine, fun, insightful. I could go on, but I've embarrassed her enough already. Thanksgiving is expressing gratitude for things she has done. Thank you for this delicious meal. Thank you for being patient. Thank you for picking up the things I needed from the store. And a million other things.

◆ In our time of thanksgiving, we take time to thank the Lord for the many blessings in our lives, both spiritual & temporal. I take time to thank him that my sins are forgiven, that I'm made holy, that I'm his child, that he loves me, that I'm a new creation. I give thanks for my home, this congregation, for Tammy, for my children, & for so much more.

◆ Thanking God helps us notice all the ways He is taking care of us & helps us see God at work, calming our anxious thoughts. Calling attention to God's faithfulness today gives us confidence in his faithfulness in the future.

◆ Worship, confession, enjoyment & thanksgiving prepares us to ask for what we need. **Hebrews 4:16** Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy & find grace to help us in our time of need. This brings us to...

## ⑥ Supplication

◆ Supplication is the action of asking for something earnestly or humbly. We bring our needs to God. We also bring the needs of others. We ask for grace & provision for ourselves & others. We need God every moment of our lives. We depend upon God for everything, & so we pray to Him for help. We ask for temporal and spiritual provision & protection. **1 John 5:14** This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. **15** And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

◆ Pour out all of your needs to the Lord. Paul writes, **Philippians 4:6** Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer & petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. **7** And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts & your minds in Christ Jesus. You can be honest to God. He can take the hardest ball you throw him. God is good, he loves you, & he has commanded us to bring our needs to him.

◆ As you pray, listen to the Spirit's promptings. John tells us we are to ask according to God's will. Effectual prayer happens when God tells us what's on his heart so that we might actually have "the mind of Christ" (**1 Corinthians 2:16**). Prayer isn't a to-do list for God as much as a to-be list for us. When our hearts & minds are aligned with the Father, then Jesus makes this audacious promise. He will answer our prayers: **John 14:13** I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. **14** You may ask me for anything in my name, & I will do it.

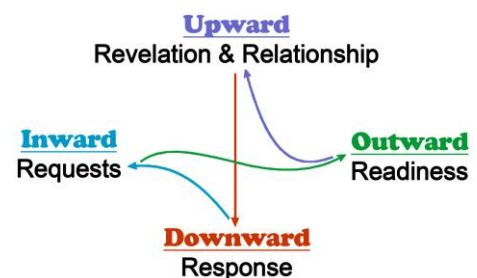
◆ During supplication is a great time to pray the Lord's prayer. The Lord's Prayer is an outline of prayer, and includes praise, confession, & supplication. You can use it separately as an outline, but you can integrate it when using these FACETS of prayer.

### ❖ Rhythm of the Lord's Prayer.

◆ **Revelation & Relationship (Upward Stroke):** Our Father in heaven. ◆ This can include adoration, enjoyment, & thanksgiving as you set your eyes above.

◆ **Response (Downward Stroke):** Kingdom petitions: hallowed be your name • your kingdom come • your will be done • on earth as it is in heaven ◆ Prayer for the coming of God's Kingdom, that God's rule being established in lives & in all creation, with the result that God's people are redeemed, & all is made right.

◆ **Request (Inward Stroke)** ◆ **Provision:** Give today our daily bread; We look to our Father in heaven as the source of all we need for body & soul, asking & gratefully expecting him to provide all our needs. Manna from above for today. ◆ **Pardon:** And forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us; We can come to our Father unreservedly to receive forgiveness & cleansing.



◆ Readiness (Outward Stroke) ◆ Purity: Do not lead us into temptation ◆ Protection: but deliver us from evil. Protection from Satan & sin.

◆ Reverence & Rejoicing (Upward stroke) ◆ Praise: For yours is the Kingdom & the Power & the Glory forever. ◆ Proclamation: Amen.

◆ We look to our Father in heaven & pray that the attributes of heaven might come to earth. We also look to our Father in heaven as the source of all we need for body & soul, asking & expecting him to provide, pardon, purify & protect.

## ⑦ Scripture

◆ Psalm 119:105 NIV11-GKE Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path. Whether in your morning prayer time, or in the evening, read a passage from the Bible. I usually read 1-2 chapters from the OT & a chapter from the NT. Some read through the in a year. I have a reading program that takes me through the Bible & read as much as I can absorb. Find your own rhythm. Jack Hayford: Turn the light of the Word on before you turn off the lights.

◆ For our response...

## Our Response

❖ **This week, pray through the FACETS of Prayer each morning. Notice the impact on how your day begins & the impact on your heart throughout the day.**

◆ Praying through the FACETS of Prayer can take a few minutes or an hour, & it's a wonderful habit to have in your life. Give it a try & watch how God uses it to bless you & others.

◆ While the order of these 6 FACETS flows well, you can pray them spontaneously in any order, & while all are key facets of prayer, prayer is a relationship, a conversation with God, & can be greatly varied. Sometimes you fall on your face in confessions or begin with a heart overflowing with thanksgiving. Sometimes you'll move in & out of each facet multiple times. Go with the flow. All facets are biblical & life-giving, whatever the order.