

Grace Communication 1 – Introduction and Definitions

a study for the Gulf Coast Baptist Church Bible Institute

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Introduction

God seeks to communicate with His people. He has asked that his people speak to Him using eight different ways (John 4:21-24, 16:23-24). He has spoken to His people in various ways (Hebrews 1:1-2). When referring to communication with God, believers usually use the general term “*prayer*”. This can be confusing. The word prayer in the scriptures only accounts for one eighth of the types of communication that God has given to the believer (Phil 4:6, 1 Tim 2:1). The word prayer is usually the word for worship and means something totally different than someone seeking a response from God. Communication or Communion give the proper idea of all the methods that God has allowed the believer to access.

Current Teaching on “Prayer”

Believers today are told that all night prayer meetings will lead to a more spiritual life, and that prayer (the sinner’s prayer) can save someone, and that prayers can solve all kinds of problems that life presents. This is a very subjective approach. Research into definitions of prayer from multiple sources reveal that prayer is considered the only way to get anything from God (Hermes). Justin Martyr states that prayer that is not accompanied by a bent posture or bended knees will not satisfy God at all. Prayer is called the ascent of the soul to God (Thomas Aquinas). John R. Rice will define prayer as simply “Asking and Receiving”. You may have heard that definition of prayer that says it is not overcoming God’s reluctance, but laying hold of His highest willingness (R. C Trench). Men have defined prayer as striving and pleading with God, not only resigning ourselves to his will or submitting to it (Donald G. Bloesch).

There is a lot of religious superstition in these definitions and very few of them contain literal content from scripture. A literal interpretation of scripture is necessary to provide the believer with actionable steps to improve his communication with God.

Why is proper communication necessary?

New Testament revelation tells the believer that he is a believer-priest with access to God in the Third heaven. This is an incredible privilege that was not offered to any other believer before Pentecost. A saving frame of mind is necessary to live out the believer’s present tense salvation, meaning that a believer cannot overcome his spiritual enemies without grace communication. Communication with God will enable the believer to overcome anxiety and addiction. Direct access to God means that the believer can cast his cares directly to the Father and confess his sins directly to the Father. Again, this is unique to this time period.

Proper communication with God allows the believer to form a preoccupation with God, framing his mind on things above. Paul states in 1 Cor 1:30–31 he that glories, let him glory in the Lord, proper communication allows the believer to do that properly. Through communication with the Godhead, the believer participates in what God is doing currently and can see and have a proper relationship with each member of the Godhead in their current roles. This will be explored in this class.

What contradictions exist in current teaching?

There are questions that arise out of the teaching on prayer. Should the believer kneel or is any position ok? Should the believer pray in church/temple or anyplace? Should the believer have a “prayer closet”? Should the believer ask once in faith believing, or should there be ongoing communication on a topic? Is it harassment to ask God more than once for an item or situation? Should prayer be corporate, or individual in nature? Should the believer take a Yes, No, Wait a while approach or simply ask according to God’s will? Should the believer pray at a specific time or towards a specific location?

These topics arise from a casual study on prayer in Christian literature. A literal interpretation of scripture will answer each question.

Defining and Organizing the “prayer” words

Three types of communication make it possible to express a believer’s attitude and appreciation to God. They do not seek a Divine response.

- **προσευχή Worship** the act of the believer giving God His full weight of honor, by saying to God what He has said about Himself.
- **ευχαριστα Thanksgiving** expressing gratitude for a benefit that God has provided.
- **αινος Praise** expressing appreciation for the character of God manifested in His actions toward us. (a connection of worship and thanksgiving)

Three types of communication make it possible for the believer to seek a divine response.

- **ἀιτημα Asking** is the believer’s communication of a known need for himself, a request.
- **εντευχis intercession** is communication that is made for someone usually when a need is known.
- **δεασis Supplication** is a cry for help involving an unknown factor either for oneself or others.

The other two types of communication are Confession and a Vow.

- ὁμολογια **Confession** where a believer agrees with God that an act of sin that he has committed is sin.
- εὐχή **Vow** a rarely used form of communication where the believer makes a commitment

Changes

Worship to God has changed from dispensation to dispensation (John 4:23). God chooses the persons that he will listen to in any communication. God hears everything, being transcendent of his creation, but He chooses to hear and respond to those that He chooses to. Throughout time, rules for who could communicate with God have changed. Not every patriarch was heard by God under law. Only those who approached the priest properly were heard, and then only if the ritual was performed properly. God told Israel that they were sacrificing in vain and that he did not hear their cries at certain times. In this dispensation, only a spiritual believer is heard by the Godhead. This is how God has chosen to operate.