



Crisis Management: Phil 4:6b: Prayers Not Prayed Are Not Decreed; Thanksgiving's Priority; Requests Must Line Up with the Will of God

22. Now let's note the negative aspect of these principles:

- (1) You are a believer who has a need but you have bought into an extreme doctrine of predestination which asserts that all things were determined by the sovereignty of God in eternity past, human free will cannot alter this arrangement, and therefore, *que sera, sera*, what will be, will be.
- (2) Your situation is critical and you consider praying but are halted because of this false doctrine. You believe that God knew of your circumstance which is correct, but because of a false doctrine you assume God will do as God has willed to do and your prayer is superfluous.
- (3) In eternity past God knew all that was knowable, the potential as well as the actual. The actual included His knowledge of every thought, decision, and action that His omniscience perceived would take place in human history.
- (4) Omniscience however was able to observe the potentiality of your prayer but not its reality. Therefore, since it does not occur in time it is not programmed into your PROM chip.
- (5) Since it's not on your PROM chip then God is not obligated to recognize it since He has clearly stated in His Word a desire for us to pray, for example, "Pray without ceasing," in 1 Thessalonians 5:17; or "Pray for us," in verse 25; or "With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit," in Ephesians 6:18; or our passage, Philippians 4:6.
- (6) Therefore, since there is no reality to insert into the divine decree then there is not an answer programmed into the ROM chip. You may have a fortunate outcome to your dilemma but it was not because of answered prayer but divine benevolence.

23. Therefore, prayer and its mechanics are essential to one's relationship with God, fellowship with God, and worship of God.

Philippians 4:6 -Stop worrying habitually about anything, but in every circumstance by means of prayer and entreaty ...

Next comes a very important prepositional phrase:

μετά plus the accusative plural of the noun:

εὐχαριστία, eucharista - "after thanksgivings"

24. Note that thanksgivings—plural—precede our requests. We don't just charge into the throne room to hand God a list of "things to do." We are instructed to pause and show proper deference, to recognize His grace, and to offer gratitude for His continuing mercies beginning with our salvation and including all that He has provided for us.

25. Therefore, the first requirement in using the prayer system is to express reciprocity to God:

- (1) Thanksgiving is an act of gratitude toward God and is directly proportional to one's level of spiritual maturity. John tells us in 1 John 4:19, "We love, because He first loved us."
- (2) Reciprocity is the capacity to appreciate who and what God is and to give thanks for his grace provisions.
- (3) Prayer is made possible by the Father, is empowered by the Holy Spirit, and is enhanced by Jesus Christ who intercedes for us according to Hebrews 7:24-25.
- (4) The privilege of going to God in prayer is a provision of divine grace. It is not something that the human race chooses to do as means of getting their way, assuaging their lust patterns, or getting out of trouble.
- (5) We pray because God made it available, ordained it, commands us to use it, and answers them when we do.



- (6) Therefore, the inclusion of the phrase “after thanksgivings” in verse 6 emphasizes two principles:
- (1) When we pray to God we should pause to be mindful that it is only through His grace that we are allowed to speak directly to Him in the first place.
 - (2) The fact *eucharista* is plural indicates that we are already the beneficiaries of superabundant expressions of His grace and should pause and recognize what we have already received before we entreat Him with our current requests.

Philippians 4:6 - Stop worrying habitually about anything, but in every circumstance by means of the divinely authorized system of prayer and by means of entreaties after thanksgivings ...

26. So far we have learned the following:

- (1) We are to stop worrying ... about anything. We are in the plan of God. Nothing catches Him by surprise.
- (2) Instead we are to pray utilizing the system God has established for communication with Him.
- (3) Our prayers are to be addressed to Him and contain specific entreaties regarding issues that concern us.
- (4) These entreaties are to be preceded by an expression of reciprocity and gratitude for grace provisions already received.
- (5) If our prayers line up with the will of God He hears them while we are yet speaking. His answers are in the ROM chip of the divine decrees.

1 John 5:14 - In fact, this is the confidence which we have toward Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.

v. 15 - In fact, when we know that He hears us— whatever we ourselves may have asked—we know that we have obtained the requests we have asked from Him.

27. Understanding the will of God thus becomes imperative in the formulation of a prayer. The Greek word translated “will” is the noun:

θέλημα, *thlēma* - “will”

- (1) The will of God includes His expressed purpose regarding His plan of salvation, the function of His plan for believers, and the fulfillment of His plan for the eternal future.
- (2) The word is defined by Joseph Thayer in his *New Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1981; p. 285) as “what one has determined shall be done.”
- (3) This determination is expressed in the divine decrees and incorporates human volition under the principle that in human history the sovereignty of God and the free will of man coexist by divine decree.
- (4) Our Lord clearly expressed the mental attitude necessary for compliance with the will of God. He is consistently quoted in His prayers to the Father, “Your will be done.”
- (5) This indicates that Christ was not only in complete submission to the divine plan for salvation but also knew and understood this plan.
- (6) The only way we can know the will of God is to study the only resource that contains its precepts and that is the Word of God.
- (7) Knowledge of Scripture instructs us about the will or determined purpose of God. If our prayers line up with God’s determined purpose then they will be answered.
- (8) The phrase “doing the will of God” may be understood as what God will certify as legitimate in the accomplishment of His plan.



- (9) If we ask for things that clearly contribute to the accomplishment of His plan then we can have confidence through faith that our prayers will be heard and answered. Expansion on the definition of God's will is found in:

Thieme, R. B., Jr. *The Integrity of God.* (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 1998), 255:

God's decrees are efficacious—having the power to produce the intended effect: They actually determine all that ever was or will be. They include God's directive will, permissive will, and overruling will. These categories of divine will describe the manner in which God's sovereignty controls history; they are subcategories of divine action as related to His creation. In particular, these three categories show how divine sovereignty deals with human volition. The will of God (as to what would exist, i.e., the divine decree) calls for God's will (His attribute of sovereignty) to function toward us in certain ways (*directly* stating what He desires of us or *permissively* allowed us to go our own way or *overruling* our decision—not letting them have their intended results—in order to protect us and the rest of mankind from our own negative volition and to preserve and perpetuate His own marvelous plan).

- (10) There are some issues that are not clearly revealed to us. For example, we all pray for the sick, in fact, we are instructed to do so in James 5:15. But illness is a part of the fallen environment of the devil's world and often is a result of the gene-pool crap shoot. Illness can sometimes be the result of bad decisions. Illness can be caused of innocent exposure to others who are sick. We may extrapolate that illness can be permitted to occur as a means of executing divine discipline, enforcing providential preventive suffering, allowing suffering for blessing, or applying momentum testing. It's none of our business what the cause or circumstance. We are to pray to God that if it is His will that a certain individual be healed. God has all the facts and the Lord serves as our Intercessor and will process our prayers. Thus no matter the outcome we can be confident that God's will has been done whether the person recovers or not. It is indeed encouraging how prayers for those who are sick are so often answered.
- (11) Genuine humility demands that when we pray that we emphasize the will of God over our own desires.

28. The next phrase in our verse is, "let your requests be made known unto God." It begins with the nominative plural of the noun:

αἰτήματα, *aitēma* - "requests, petitions, or desires" It is used for the individual petitions that constitute a prayer but points to the content of the request.

29. The word can also be translated in certain contexts as a demand but not in the context of a prayer. The concept conveyed by the word request emphasizes the humility one should assume when expressing desires to God.
30. This is why we are instructed to begin our prayers with thanksgivings. All the blessings we possess are courtesy of God's policy of matchless grace from the source of His undiminished love.
31. It is by means of this policy and source that we may expect God to answer our prayers if He is approached properly, if they are submitted through humility and gratitude, and recognize the supremacy of His will as over against our desires.

Philippians 4:6 - Stop worrying habitually about anything but in every circumstance by means of the prayer network and by means of your entreaty after thanksgivings let your requests ...

32. What follows next is the verb that puts all these things into action, the present passive imperative of:

γνωρίζω, *gnōrizō* - "to make known; to reveal;" "**be made known**"



- present: Iterative; describes that which occurs at successive intervals.
- passive: The prayer receives the action of the verb: it is made known to God through the prayer network.
- imperative: This is a command.
33. Within God's perfect plan for mankind, He incorporated a means of communication between Himself and His creatures. We are commanded to utilize this system. It is an Instantaneous Extradimensional Communications Network.
34. By instantaneous I mean that although the fastest known speed is that of light, which travels in excess of 186,000 miles per second, prayer escapes the universe instantly.
35. By extradimensional I mean that even though humanity is limited within the environment of time and space, prayer transcends this dimension and enters into the eternal state.
36. This is accomplished by divine omniscience which perceives the prayer immediately. In fact, through divine omniscience the prayer was processed in eternity past and its answer inserted into the computer of the divine decree.
37. We are commanded to structure our prayers into four sequential categories: (1) Rebound, if necessary, (2) thanksgivings, (3) intercession, and (4) petition. They are to be addressed to the Father, in the power of the Holy Spirit, and in the name of the Son, Jesus Christ.
38. In Philippians 4:6 we see the word **δέησις, deēsis** which we translate "entreaty" but also means petition. Thus in a pressure situation where anxiety, worry, and dread are at issue, the believer is allowed to skip the intercession but never the thanksgivings.
39. This verse ends with the reminder that prayers are addressed to God, not the Holy Spirit or to Jesus Christ. Both the Spirit and the Lord serve as Intercessors and Advocates on our behalf:
- (1) As Intercessors, the Holy Spirit and the Lord issue prayers to the Father on our behalf. Romans 8:26-27, 34; Hebrews 7:25.
 - (2) As Advocates, the Holy Spirit and the Lord function presently on our behalf in two ways. The Holy Spirit is our Mentor providing divine enablement and assistance according to John 15:16, 26. The Lord is our Defense Attorney in heaven. When Satan brings accusations against us, He testifies before the Father that our sins have been judged in Him.

Philippians 4:6 - [Expanded translation] Stop worrying habitually about anything but in every circumstance by means of the prayer network and by means of your entreaty after thanksgivings let your requests be made known to God.