

The Parts of Prayer

There are many acronyms for how to pray such as: ACTS - which stands for “Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication”; PACA - which stands for “Praise, Appreciate, Confess, and Ask”; WARP - which stands for “Worship, Appreciation, Repent, and Petition.” So what does all this mean? Let’s define and explain some of these and other terms:

Praise is an expression of admiration, adoration, or appreciation. To praise God is to acknowledge who He is. God is the Creator of all things. God is omnipotent (all powerful)(Ps 135:6, Mat 19:26, Jer 32:17), omnipresent (forever present throughout all the universe)(Ps 139:5-12, Jer.23:24),omniscient (knows everything there is to know about everything)(Ps 147:5). God is also full of grace, mercy and love. We are to praise God for His grace (Eph. 1:6), His holiness (2 Chr. 21:20), His goodness (Ps 135:3), and His kindness (Ps 138:2). God alone is worthy of our praise (Ps 18:3, 113:3). This praise should be continuous (Ps 34:1, 71:6). Also see Psalm 145, the entire chapter is a praise to God.

Worship is the attitude and acts of reverence to God. True worship requires reverence (honor and respect) to our Lord Jesus Christ through our thoughts and emotions by our will. We can worship God by bowing down to Him in praise, obeying Him in our daily life, and presenting our bodies as living sacrifices (Rom 12:1).

Thanksgiving is an attitude or display of gratitude to God. We are to humbly thank God for all things (1 Thes 5:18) especially for His work in Creation and His work in redemption (Jesus’ sacrificial death for our sins). Also thank Him for all that He has done for us, for our spiritual gifts, our God-given abilities and blessings, His answers to our prayers, His gift of Jesus, the promise of our eternal life with God, and much more.

Confession is the act of openly declaring one’s faith, but also the act of admitting one’s guilt. We are to believe in our heart and confess our faith in Jesus with our mouth to others (Rom 10:9,10). When it comes to the confession of specific sins, the Bible’s central passage on this subject is 1 John 1:5-2:2. Confession not only offers forgiveness, it restores our fellowship with God. The words of King David’s confession (Ps 51) serve as an excellent pattern for us.

Repent/repentance is a deep, radical change in a person’s perspective and to what they are committed, resulting in a moral and spiritual transformation. To repent is to turn away from evil and be truly sorry for your sin, then accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior and commit yourself fully to him. Repentance is a personal decision that changes the direction of a person’s life.

Intercession is prayer to God for another person, usually to obtain help from God. Through intercessory prayer, we believers uphold and encourage each other. Model intercessory prayers may be found in Paul’s letters (Eph 3:14-21 and Col 1:9-14).

Supplication is a specific request to God to meet a particular need.

Petition is praying for the needs of yourself and others. Pray to be in God’s will. Ask for cleansing (1 John 1:9) and wisdom (James 1:5) Pray also for spiritual leaders, our nation’s leaders and all rulers (1 Tim 2:1-4), sick believers (James 5:14,15), and even for our enemies (Mat 5:44). To assure our prayers are heard, our petitions should be made by faith, with no doubt, (James 1:6), in the name of Jesus (John 14:13).