PUBLIC PRAYER AS RHETORIC AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

A Thesis
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for the Degree Master of Arts

by

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And finally, for their understanding, a special thanks to my friends. . . .
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. Introduction</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justification for the Study</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods and Procedures</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of Thesis Chapters</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II. The Audience and Content of Public Prayer</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Audience of Public Prayer</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Purpose</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Language of Public Prayer</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III. The Theological and Rhetorical Purposes of Public Prayer</strong></td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Prayer as Instruction</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Prayer: Epidictic Oratory</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Prayer as Persuasion</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IV. An Ethical Evaluation of Prayer as Public Address</strong></td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics and Persuasion</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Components of Dialogue</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monologue</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue and Persuasion in Public Prayer</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>V. Summary and Conclusions</strong></td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Justification for the Study

Most studies concerning religious speaking have dealt primarily with the art of pulpit oratory. Absent from rhetorical analysis, however, are studies dealing with public prayer as public address. John J. Makay and Paul Tuchardt suggest that this void might be attributed in part to uncertainty about the existence of a Receiver, and an inability to determine the effectiveness of the communication (i.e., "How does one accurately measure feedback from a deity without relying solely on faith?"). However, they also suggest that the audience (or receiver) of public prayer is not God alone, but religious constituencies as well. Indeed there is justification for considering prayer as a form of rhetoric in public discourse.

The challenge issued by Makay and Tuchardt in their article, "Public Prayer: A Field for Research in Public Address," inspired this student to investigate the nature of public prayer as a rhetorical form. They
acknowledge that, "There can be no doubt that homiletics is a highly significant research area, but the studies of sermonology are piling up while scholars overlook an equally important phenomenon in the rhetoric of religion."² They go on to say that,

In recent days prayers have been spoken about the flight of Apollo 11, the Black Manifesto, and the War in Viet Nam. These prayers have served to communicate with a deity and refocus human attention on human concerns and could be as revealing from a rhetorical point of view as the study of sermons or other forms of communication in the rhetoric of religion.³

Taking up the challenge to investigate this field of research, I turned to the available literature concerning prayer and found no studies dealing with prayer as a form of public address. Only a handful of dissertations have dealt with some aspect of prayer, and none of these have been in the field of speech communication. Several books dealt solely with public prayer. Foremost seemed to be The Practice of Public Prayer by J. Hillis Miller,⁴ and Leading in Public Prayer by Andrew W. Blackwood.⁵ Other books contained chapters on public (or corporate) prayer. Typical among them are the classic by Friedrich Heiler, Prayer,⁶ and Douglas Rhymes's Prayer in the Secular City.⁷ These and other books concerning prayer will be referred to throughout this thesis, but none of the works
consulted dealt specifically with prayer as a form of rhetoric or public address.

The scarcity of literature concerning corporate prayer as a form of rhetoric is itself a justification for investigation into this area. Moreover, if one admits that the audience of public prayer is all those who experience it, one may infer that public prayer is a potential means of influence upon its audience, and that it is, in fact, often designed to have such an influence. Makay and Tuchardt recognize the influential nature of public prayer and observe that it may be used as a means of persuasion and instruction.\textsuperscript{8} That this is possible suggests another justification for the study of public prayer as rhetoric and public address, for rhetors and rhetoricians ought to be aware of and sensitive to "available means of persuasion" in this form of influence, as well as sermons, pamphlets, and other specific sender to receiver religious stimuli.

Statement of the Problem

At this point a most significant question to raise is, What might one hope to determine by a study of public prayer as a rhetorical form? A number of additional
questions emerge in such an investigation which ought also to be considered. The purpose of this thesis is to determine the nature of public prayer as a rhetorical form by endeavoring to answer these fundamental questions: Who is the audience of public prayer? To what degree do the organizational patterns of public prayer resemble those used in other forms of public address? What is the nature of the language used in public prayer? What are the theological and rhetorical purposes of public prayer? What are the ethical implications of public prayer as public address? Answers to these questions will significantly contribute to our knowledge and understanding of public prayer as rhetoric and public address, aimed at a human audience as well as the Divine.

Methods and Procedures

Since none of the literature on prayer dealt with public prayer as a form of public address, I composed a set of interview questions designed to help obtain answers to the above questions. A copy of these interview questions can be found in the Appendix. Tape-recorded interviews were conducted with theologians at seminaries and churches in the Columbus area. Since I found that the subject of public prayer as public address is considered controversial at best, heretical at worst (in some conser-
vative circles), an effort was made to speak with ministers from various religious or doctrinal affiliations in order to obtain a wide scope of opinion on the subject. Those interviewed included Dr. Roy A. Reed, The Methodist Theological School in Ohio, Delaware, Ohio; Dr. Allan H. Sager, The Lutheran Theological Seminary, Columbus, Ohio; Father William Dougherty, St. Thomas More Newman Center, Columbus, Ohio; The Reverend Marideen Visscher, Indianola Presbyterian Church, Columbus, Ohio; Dr. Carl Brown, University Baptist Church, Columbus, Ohio; and Dr. Burton Cantrell, Wesley Foundation, Columbus, Ohio.

In addition to the tape-recorded interviews, an effort was made to secure information through correspondence. A cover letter explaining the purpose of this thesis and requesting copies of public prayers was sent with a copy of the interview questions to the offices of the following people: The Reverend Dr. Billy Graham, Montreat, North Carolina; Dr. Ralph Abernathy, Atlanta, Georgia; Mrs. Martin Luther King, Atlanta, Georgia; and Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, Pawling, New York. Dr. Graham and Mrs. King responded. In addition, since their schedules did not permit a personal interview, Dr. Harold H. Zietlow of The Lutheran Theological Seminary and Dr. Robert A. Raines, First Community Church, responded to the interview
questions by mail.

Finally, I made tape-recordings of ten prayers at campus area churches so that the prayers could be studied within their rhetorical contexts. A few prayers were recorded from Sunday morning or afternoon radio broadcasts. Mrs. Grace Lane, Secretary at First Community Church, sent me transcriptions of thirteen sermons delivered at the church which also contained copies of the pastoral prayers which followed the sermons. In addition, popular books of prayers were consulted for this study and will be referred to by way of example throughout this thesis. Examples of these include The Prayers of Peter Marshall, edited by Catherine Marshall; Lord, Could You Make It A Little Better? by Robert A. Raines; Are You Running With Me, Jesus? by Malcolm Boyd; and Prayers by Michel Quoist.

Description of Thesis Chapters

This study will be descriptive rather than prescriptive; that is, it will describe what takes place in actual public prayer, rather than suggest a new model for public prayer. However, according to Scott and Brock, rhetorical criticism must not stop with description, it must include interpretation and evaluation as well. It is my hope that this thesis will accomplish those three purposes as they apply to an analysis of public prayer.
My approach to answering the questions raised in the Statement of the Problem will be eclectic, for various contemporary rhetoricians will be appropriately consulted. Chapter II will deal with the audience, organization, and language of public prayer. In an effort to determine who comprises the audience of public prayer and the degree to which public prayer is audience-centered, Chaim Perelman's definition of audience will be utilized. Alan Monroe's text, Principles and Types of Speech, will be used as a means of making comparisons between public prayer and other forms of public address in terms of organization. Finally, Kenneth Burke's concept of identification will provide a framework for discussing the language of public prayer.

Chapter III will be an attempt to determine the theological and rhetorical purposes of public prayer. Examples of public prayers will be cited.

Ethical considerations ought to be a part of all rhetorical criticism. Chapter IV will serve to focus the reader's attention clearly upon the ethical implications of considering public prayer as public address. Public prayer will be examined in light of the emerging

Finally, Chapter V will draw together the conclusions that seem to be warranted from this study, and will suggest further research questions into the area of prayer as a rhetorical form.
Footnotes


2Ibid.

3Ibid., p. 70.


8Makay and Tuchardt, p. 69.


CHAPTER II
THE AUDIENCE AND CONTENT OF PUBLIC PRAYER

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the audience and content of public prayer. Content refers specifically to the specific purpose, organization, and language of public prayer. Several pertinent questions will be answered. A likely starting point in this investigation of public prayer--since without an audience there is no rhetoric or public address--is to determine Who comprises the audience of public prayer? Other questions that need to be answered are: What comparisons can be drawn between the organizational patterns of public prayer and other forms of public address? What is the nature of the language used in public prayer? Answers to each of these questions will help determine the degree to which public prayer may be considered a form of public address.

The Audience of Public Prayer

In Chapter I, I referred to the suggestion by John J. Makay and Paul Tuchardt that the audience of public prayer is not God alone, but religious constituencies (both hearers and readers) as well. Information obtained
in personal interviews as well as the literature concerning prayer imply that this is so. Though most writers and theologians maintain that sincere prayer ought to be addressed to God as communication (or communion) with Him, they admit that one must take into account the simple fact that when one prays publicly, other humans are listening and must be considered part of the audience.

For purposes of this investigation, *audience* may be conceptualized in terms of Chaim Perelman's definition of audience. He points out that the audience is not always just the person whom the speaker addresses by name, nor is it necessarily simply the persons the speaker sees before him as he speaks. He cites as an example a person who grants an interview with a journalist, knowing that his audience extends beyond the journalist himself to the readers of the paper he represents. Consequently, it is difficult to determine exactly who comprises an audience, particularly in the case of a writer's audience, since it is impossible to identify the readers with certainty. Thus, Perelman arrives at a usable definition of an audience which is appropriate to this study:
For this reason we consider it preferable to define an audience, for the purposes of rhetoric, as the ensemble of those whom the speaker wishes to influence by his argumentation. Every speaker thinks, more or less consciously, of those he is seeking to persuade; these people form the audience to whom his speech is addressed.\footnote{11}

When one prays publicly, he is aware "more or less consciously" of his human listeners, and his words may have an influence upon them. Thus, the audience of public prayer is composed in part of the hearers and readers of public prayer, as well as God, "whom the speaker addresses by name."

How one prays is in part determined by how one conceptualizes God. Dr. Roy A. Reed suggests, with the support of other writers and theologians, that some viable ways of thinking of God are as person,\footnote{12} as process,\footnote{13} as being,\footnote{14} as event,\footnote{15} and even as absent (which he calls secular Christianity).\footnote{16} He points out that thinking of God as person is the majority theological view (which I found confirmed in readings and personal interviews), and that in this view, prayer is considered communication. He reminds us that in thinking of God as person, problems arise concerning prayer when one considers the omniscience and omnipotence of the personal God. One such problem is "Why pray? How can one tell
God anything He doesn't already know?" This notion suggests that perhaps one is not telling God anything as much as he is, through the medium of prayer, communicating with the human audience.

Jacques Ellul expounds upon this problem of praying to an omniscient God when he discusses "intimate and reassuring views of prayer" in his book Prayer and Modern Man.¹⁷ Ellul makes the statement, "It is certainly true, is it not, that God who knows everything is not dependent upon our prayers for his knowledge of our needs, nor even for his knowledge of our attitudes toward him."¹⁸ Later Ellul explains this view of prayer further by pointing out that all language has an information content. Perhaps such information is not for God alone, who knows all things; it may also be targeted at those humans who are listening, and who comprise part of the audience to be influenced by the information. Much of what is said in public prayer seems to be directed as much to this human audience as to the Divine.

It is instructive to note that in the past it was absolutely assumed that the possibility of prayer hinged upon a particular belief in God.¹⁹ However, according to Reed, "Today it is not unusual for theologians
or philosophers of religion to reject all 'models' of 'divinity' and yet accept the possibility of prayer,\textsuperscript{20} which suggests that the audience of public prayer may not be God as much as it is the human listeners.

Much of the literature of prayer, as well as other expressed views of theologians, supports the contention that the person praying must include the listeners as part of his audience. Andrew W. Blackwood strongly believes that a person ought to speak to God in a way unlike that in which he addresses men,\textsuperscript{21} but he admits that often in the prayer a pastor may "merely 'get across to the people' something he thinks they ought to know or do."\textsuperscript{22} He observes, further, that many young people in particular are "turned off" by traditional ways of prayer, because they seem like ministerial monologues.\textsuperscript{23} Furthermore, he acknowledges that a pastor may enforce a sermon by what he says in the prayer; though he takes a dim view of this practice, he admits that when the pastor does so, "He is trying to teach."\textsuperscript{24} The fact that prayers often seem to be methods of teaching (thus influencing) is evidence that they are directed as much to the human audience who is perceived as being in need of this instruction, as to God. Though Blackwood
disapproves of a minister's using the prayer as an opportunity to teach, he agrees with other writers and theologians\textsuperscript{26} that "the prayers in church ought to express the vital needs and aspirations of the persons present,"\textsuperscript{27} thus making them audience-centered.

Reed also points out that public prayer is audience-centered. He states that the two main petitions in public prayers are "teach us," and "help us." "Under 'teach us,' the minister tells the people what they ought to know; under 'help us,' he tells them what they ought to do,"\textsuperscript{28} clearly indicating the emphasis upon getting information to the listeners.

Dr. Allan H. Sager not only admitted that the person praying has this human audience in mind, but also emphasized that this is, in fact, his responsibility.

In corporate prayer the leader in prayer has a responsibility to this membership, to this people, in this context, at this moment, and if he is responsible as a leader in public worship, he has got to take into account those people. Prayer has got to be contextually conditioned if it is to be meaningful to these people.\textsuperscript{29}

Sager further emphasized the importance of relating prayers to this audience:

One word for prayer is collect in Lutheran circles (or for that matter in liturgical circles). Collect collects the impressions,
the feelings, the moods, the dreams, the
wishes, the hopes, the confessions of these
people and offers them, so that unless that
is done, you are not going to really be speaking
corporate prayer, you are going to be doing
private prayer publicly.31

Sager made it clear that he does not believe that prayer
is simply autosuggestion, or that "this is simply a
horizontal, social phenomenon; that this is simply one
other way to talk to these people and instruct them."32
He says that prayer is, instead, "addressing and reaching
sources beyond ourselves—the vertical dimension."33
He goes on, however, to say, "But that this is done
in a social context accents the fact that there is a
horizontal bar as well and someone has to be aware of
both."34

Not only do Sager's comments raise the fact that
the occasion or context must be considered in public
prayer as in other forms of public address, but they also
may be viewed within the framework of Perelman's conception
of the particular audience. Perelman points out that,
"The audience, as visualized by one undertaking to argue,
is always a more or less systematized construction. . . .
The essential consideration for the speaker who has set
himself the task of persuading concrete individuals is
that his construction of the audience should be
adequate to the occasion."\textsuperscript{35} He later points out that, "No orator, not even the religious orator, can afford to neglect this effort of adaptation to this audience."\textsuperscript{36} Perelman points out that, "Audiences are not independent of one another, . . . particular concrete audiences are capable of validating a concept of the universal audience which characterizes them."\textsuperscript{37} He says, too, that, "Each speaker's universal audience [meaning those rational and competent to judge in a particular rhetorical situation] can, indeed, from an external viewpoint, be regarded as a particular audience. . . ."\textsuperscript{38} Public prayers, especially written prayers, may be directed to the universal audience of which the particular audience is a part, particularly since (as was pointed out earlier) it is difficult to determine exactly the extent of one's influence.

Dr. Burton Cantrell\textsuperscript{39} pointed out that,

There are three audiences of prayer. One is God, but in a sense God doesn't need to hear prayers because He knows our needs before we ask them, according to all the teachings of the church. So according to Christian theology, God has directed us to pray for our own sake, for our own good, for our own mental health, so to speak. I would say the primary audience of prayer is the
audience of the self, as we pray. So there's two audiences: God and ourselves; and then the others around us. In corporate prayers which are actually said by the whole church . . . the audience is the self listening to some great words which have been passed on by other generations. 39

Cantrell's remarks also may be interpreted within the context of Perelman's conception of audience. Perelman discusses three audiences: the universal audience, the single interlocutor, and the audience of the self. 40 Perelman elaborates upon self-deliberation and points out that, "It also very often happens that discussion with someone else is simply a means we use to see things more clearly ourselves. Agreement with oneself is merely a particular case of agreement with others." 41 In public prayer God is the single interlocutor, the person praying is the audience of the self, and the other humans listening are a particular incarnation of the universal audience.

Jacques Ellul also points to the audience of the self when he says, "It is obviously true, is it not, that we make no claim to acting upon God to modify his will or to change his purpose. We are too modest for that. Our prayer, in the end, is only meant to be an action upon ourselves. It is self-instruction." 42
Several other writers pin-point the audience-oriented nature of public prayer. Friedrich Heiler, a noted scholar of prayer, points out that, "Congregational prayer is not only the expression of the collective religious experience, it contributes to the mutual edification of the members of the congregation." 43

In addition, J. Hillis Miller in The Practice of Public Prayer states that, "Public prayer, being a social institutional form through which ... vital experiences are made explicit, should be 'common,' that is, meaningful for the entire group which uses it." 44

Dr. Harold H. Zietlow 45 offered these comments concerning the audience-centered nature of public prayer:

Public prayer is both a relating of oneself to God and to others in their behalf. That is, one prays for others in their behalf as one relates himself to God. ... I think one does have his listeners in mind as he prays in public. This will sometimes show in the inflection in one's voice or in the way in which one words the statement as one relates himself to God. 46

In addition, Dr. Carl Brown had this to say concerning the audience of public prayer:

In public prayer you pray to God for the people--that's what public prayer is supposed to be. I think it has been put this way: when you preach, you speak for God to the people, and when you pray, you speak for the people to God.47
When asked if it is possible to speak to the people for God in public prayer, Dr. Brown replied that that would be preaching, and "not a very good way to pray." He does go on, however, to reiterate that public prayer must be contextually conditioned as well as audience-centered:

Public prayer takes into account the experiences of a larger body of people. The person who is praying in public prayer cannot be concerned with himself alone. He must be concerned with this whole body of people who constitute this congregation. That means that your praying will be affected by the context.48

The evidence seems to indicate that the audience of public prayer is both human and Divine, and that public prayer is audience-centered. Having determined the audience of public prayer, let us turn now to an exploration of comparisons which can be drawn between public prayer and other forms of public address in terms of preparation and organization. According to Dr. Alan Monroe, the beginning point of all speech preparation is the formulation of a specific purpose for the speech, and the evidence I have gathered indicates that this is so in public prayer.
Specific Purpose

Alan Monroe's textbook *Principles and Types of Speech*, which has remained the best selling speech text for over two decades, will be considered an appropriate framework with which to compare public prayer with other forms of public address. Monroe points out the necessity for formulating a specific purpose for a speech before the actual preparation of the speech begins. Monroe defines specific purpose as "the specific response desired from the audience by the time the speaker has finished talking. It is the exact thing that he wants the audience to do, feel, believe, understand, or enjoy."  

Several writers on prayer support the view that public prayer must begin with a formulation of a specific purpose. Blackwood points out that, "Before a minister starts to write out a short prayer, he should have in mind a definite purpose."  

Does he plan to voice the need and the desire for the pardon of sins, for a blessing on the offering, or for the self-dedication of a person who has heard the sermon? With this dominant purpose in mind, the leader should determine whom he plans to address, and in general, how. In every collect, or other brief classic of devotion, one idea dominates the whole, and all the parts move onward in the same direction. Why? Because someone planned the collect that way, before he began to write."
Blackwood reiterates the necessity of having "in view a controlling purpose";\textsuperscript{53} he says that just as "every hour of public worship ought to have its own objective in terms of human need,"\textsuperscript{54} so should the prayers. He points out that prayers should "center around one motif,"\textsuperscript{55} and should "deal with the purpose of the gathering,"\textsuperscript{56} and that perhaps the purposes of the prayers might be listed in the weekly church bulletin.\textsuperscript{57} These ideas echo those presented in Monroe's text, for he points out the importance of thinking of the specific purpose of the speech in terms of the audience and occasion, and making this purpose clear to the audience.\textsuperscript{58}

Blackwood is not the only writer who makes statements concerning the purposes of prayer. J. Hillis Miller describes four types of prayer (petition, thanksgiving, praise, and confession) in which the implied purposes, according to Miller, are the expression of need, gratitude, devotion, and remorse.\textsuperscript{59} Most theologians would agree that public prayer should lead the people "in lifting their hearts toward God," and expressing their dispositions toward Him,\textsuperscript{60} and all of these purposes express a response desired from the audience in achieving this goal. It is impossible to separate the formulation of a specific purpose from considerations of the audience to whom the speech is addressed.
Once one has determined the specific purpose for a speech or public prayer, one may consider what organizational pattern would be appropriate to helping achieve the desired response from the audience. Let us turn again to Monroe's text as the primary yardstick in making comparisons between the organizational patterns of public prayer and other forms of public address. The reader is reminded that these comparisons are not intended to be prescriptive in nature, but descriptive of what takes place in actual public prayer.

**Organization**

Makay and Tuchardt suggest that, "Public prayer can be considered in terms of components or parts not unlike those which rhetoricians assign to structure for a speech,"\(^{61}\) and my research indicates that this is the case.

Andrew Blackwood is perhaps the most outspoken and prescriptive writer on organization and makes extensive comments regarding style in his book *Leading in Public Prayer*. Blackwood points out that, "A pastor ought to set up ideals about the style of public prayer,"\(^{62}\) and goes so far as to prescribe that, "In public prayer, as a rule, a man should confine himself to a single paragraph."\(^{63}\)
Blackwood is an advocate of careful preparation and organization (as are scholars of public address) and cites Nathaniel Micklem, who points out, "I have never understood why the Holy Spirit should require a minister to prepare the words of his sermon in his study and should disapprove of the preparation of his prayers." Blackwood maintains that, "The effectiveness of any public prayer depends partly on the way it follows a simple pattern," and turns to the Scriptures for support. He goes on to point out that, "This does not mean that any person in the Bible days followed the current practice of making an outline. It does mean that in olden times, when a leader wished others to follow a prayer, he kept moving in the same direction.

Blackwood takes his discussion of organization further by saying,

In making ready for the General Prayer, or prayers, a man needs to do more than decide about voicing Thanksgivings, Petitions, and Intercessions. Each of these main parts calls for an inner order, easy to follow, and interesting because different from the same kind of prayer last Sunday or the week before. These "main parts" correspond to the main ideas of a speech, and the "inner order" seems analogous to what Monroe refers to as the importance, for clarity's sake, of subordinating subpoints to main ideas.
Blackwood does not frown upon extemporaneous prayer, for he agrees with Robert William Dale that extemporaneous prayer is "what is carefully prepared in substance, but not in form." He does emphasize the importance of organization in extemporary prayer, however, by citing John Henry Jowett who points out that,

There is nothing more dreadfully unimpressive than extemporary prayer which leaps about on the surface of things, a disorderly dance of empty words, going we know not whither—a mob of words carrying no blood, bearing no secret of the soul, a whirl of insignificant expressions, behind which there is no vital pulse, no cry from lone and desolate depths.

Thus extemporaneous prayer as well as liturgical prayer must be organized in order to be effective.

Father William Dougherty of St. Thomas More Newman Center also provides comments on organization. Public prayer, he observed, is like a speech in that both have a beginning, a middle, and an end.

The preceding writers have indicated the necessity of organizing prayers. At this point I shall direct the reader's attention to some actual patterns of organization in public prayer. Friedrich Heiler makes several observations concerning the organizational patterns of public prayer. He points out that,

The prayer of the priestly leader, in spite of all formal freedom in particulars, shows a fixed scheme which is related to the
scheme of prayer in the Synagogue. The general outlines, the order of thought, and so the framework, as well as certain recurring forms of expression, remain fixed; only the detailed setting forth in language is the personal work of the moment.74

Heiler, who is perhaps the best historian of prayer, provides an historical overview of the development of fixed formulas of prayer. He says that, "The need arose early for formulated models of prayer which, however, exhibit no formularies but are merely examples for imitation. . . . From these pattern prayers handed down orally or in writing arose gradually fixed liturgical formulas which were recited in public worship."75 He elaborates upon what these fixed forms or formulas are. He cites thanksgiving and praise as "the two first topics of Christian prayer."76 Thanksgiving usually involves thanking God for salvation and redemption.77 Acknowledgement of sins and a prayer for forgiveness follows thanksgiving and praise.78 These in turn lead up to petition.79 Among the petitions, the most important subject of prayer in the Synagogue and in the early Christian Church was the coming of God's Kingdom.80 It is instructive to note here that this is evidenced in The Lord's Prayer, for all of the petitions in The Lord's Prayer can be traced to Jewish prayers of the Synagogue.81 Heiler argues that, "Prayers offered in common for
individual, religious, and moral benefits form the
greater part of petitions in public worship." Heiler
then adds that, "One of the most important portions of
the early Christian service is the general intercessory
prayer." Common subjects for intercessory prayer
include prayers for brethren in need and danger, and
these prayers reach out over the whole circle of devotees
of the faith. In some faiths, particularly the Roman
Catholic faith, intercession "covers not only the living,
but also the departed; for the living and dead belong
to the all-embracing communion of saints, who together
form, indeed, the Church of Christ." My research indicates that the elements Heiler
mentions do comprise the substance of most public prayers.
The definition of prayer found in the Westminster Shorter
Catechism seems to encompass those elements most often
found in public prayer: "Prayer is an offering up of
our desires unto God, for things agreeable to his will,
in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and
thankful acknowledgement of his mercies" (emphasis mine). Many writers and theologians believe that prayer is
composed of five elements in a form called an acrostic
(ACTSS): Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication
(including Petitions and Intercessions), and Submission.
Others allow the form of the Latin *collect*, which consists of the five elements of address, ascription, petition, aspiration, and Christological conclusion, to serve as a paradigm. An example which is often used as a part of the Communion service in liturgical churches appears below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>--Almighty God</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ascription</td>
<td>--Unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petition</td>
<td>--Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspiration</td>
<td>--That we may more perfectly love thee and worthily magnify thy holy name.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christological conclusion</td>
<td>--Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reader will note that in substance these models do not differ significantly from those elements Heiler enumerates.

Perhaps the best prayer to serve as a model of public prayer is what is commonly referred to as "The Lord's Prayer." Jacques Ellul points out in the Preface to his book *Prayer and Modern Man*, "I fail to see what good is done by those model prayers (we already have one model which embraces them all). . . ." This prayer was offered in response to a prayer, i.e., a
request of the apostles to Christ—"Teach us to pray"—and many public prayers do, in fact, follow its pattern.

Fred L. Fisher says of this prayer,

 Known better, perhaps, than any other passage of Scripture, used more widely, perhaps, than any other prayer in Christian worship, it stands in our literature and heritage as an instruction in the basic principles of prayer and as a challenge to scale the heights of the most exalted practice of prayer.  

The prayer was given not only as a set prayer to be recited, but as instruction in how to pray, that is, as a model which all other prayers should follow. The multiplicity of works dealing with The Lord's Prayer makes an extended analysis here superfluous. However, a cursory look at its structure can be helpful.

Our Father, which art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come.  
Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.  
Give us day by day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

A few writers comment on the structure of The Lord's Prayer. Fisher points out that though an examination of the prayers of Jesus and Paul do not seem to indicate that there is a set formula for prayer, there is one
exception—the address of prayer. He suggests that, "invariably in the New Testament, when the address is given, God is addressed as 'Father.'" My examination of public prayers revealed that this is a practice still followed to a large extent. However, whether or not the word "Father" is used, all public prayer begins with an address, in some form, to God, as in The Lord's Prayer and in the preceding collect ("Almighty God. . .").

Most public prayers, including our "model prayer," contain immediately after this address to God a clause describing God, which Reed referred to as an ascription.96 Typical examples from public prayers include:

"... which art in heaven. . . ."97

"... unto whom all hearts are open and to whom no secrets are hid. . . ."98

"(Lord Jesus) who rode into the city of man before the stares of your enemies and the shouts of your friends. . . ."99

"(O Lord) in whose hands are life and death. . . ."100

"(Lord Jesus) who didst come to liberate the captives. . . ."101

"(O God the Father, our Father) who created man in your own image and after your own likeness . . . ."102

"(Lord) of truth. . . ."103
After this description of God in The Lord's Prayer comes a list of six petitions which are arranged in a kind of hierarchy which seems to indicate, according to Fisher, "the order of the concerns that should be characteristic of the Christian." Fisher divides these petitions into two groups of three each.

The first group, in harmony with the Ten Commandments, is concerned with things that affect the rule of God in the world. The petitions center around the pronoun "thy"--"thy name," "thy kingdom," "thy will." The second group of petitions centers around the needs of the Christian life in its everyday concerns--"Give us," "Forgive us," and "Lead us." One of the petitions is in the form of a confession, for an acknowledgement of "sin" is implied in the petition for forgiveness. These petitions for daily concerns and confession appear in most public prayers, although too often the petitionary nature of public prayer is abused.

Moreover, the corporate nature of The Lord's Prayer as evidenced in the use of the plural pronouns "our" and "us" implies a kind of intercession, that is, a concern not only for relating oneself to God, but others as well. Dr. Carl Brown goes so far as to argue that public prayer must contain intercession.

Another element, which for obvious reasons is not
present in The Lord's Prayer, but which cannot be neglected in a description of the structure of public prayer is what Reed calls a Christological conclusion. This is usually a submission to the will of God in the name of Christ. A few typical examples include:

"...we ask in the name of the Author of Love, even Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen." ¹⁰⁸

"... This we ask in Jesus' name. Amen." ¹⁰⁹

"... in the name and the Spirit of Christ our Lord. Amen." ¹¹⁰

Comments made earlier in this study concerning specific purpose are applicable to this discussion of the organization and structure of public prayer. Blackwood stated that a prayer should center around one motif,¹¹¹ which we can characterize as the central thought of a speech. In addition, he observed that a prayer should "keep moving in the same direction,"¹¹² a notion which echoes Monroe, who suggests that a speech should be arranged in a systematic sequence so that one point leads naturally into the next, and that ideas should be closely related to one another and arranged in a unified and orderly manner.¹¹³

Perhaps a summary of comparisons of those elements found in public prayer to divisions of public speeches
is appropriate at this point. First, we observed that most public prayer begins with an address to God, which is followed by a description of God. This part of the prayer may be compared to the introduction of a speech. The body of the prayer consists of several petitions, which may be thought of in terms of "main ideas" expressed as Thanksgivings, Confessions, and Intercessions. The conclusion of the prayer emphasizes the central thought, so to speak, for it is a submitting of the requests made to God's will in the name of Christ. It is important to note here that every public prayer need not contain all of the elements of Thanksgiving, Confession, and Intercession, for sometimes these three elements are dealt with separately throughout the worship service as Prayers of Confession, Prayers of Intercession, and Prayers of Thanksgiving. In this case, each prayer corresponds to what Monroe refers to as a "one-point speech."

Thus far I have discussed the audience of public prayer, the nature of specific purpose in prayer, and the structure of public prayer. The final section of this chapter will explore the nature of the language used in public prayer.
The Language of Public Prayer

Several writers give attention to the subject of language. Gerhard Ebeling cites Martin Luther who said,

The right method is to use few words, but in many and profound meanings and senses. The fewer the words, the better the prayer. The more words, the worse the prayer. Few words and much meaning is Christian. Many words and little meaning is pagan.

Luther's comment indicates that a few well-chosen words are more effective than long ramblings.

Friedrich Heiler says much concerning the language and style of public prayer. He points out that prayer in public worship is conducive to an elevated tone of mind, and this state of feelings expresses itself "as much in the variety of tone and accent of the voice, as in the choice and connection of the words." He insightfully characterizes the language of a number of liturgies as pompous, and further indicates that,

The numerous biblical terms and ornate phrases lend to the prayer diction of public worship a venerable and antique character. Thus we can speak of a sacredotal style in liturgic prayer, which is manifestly removed from the unstudied style of spontaneous individual prayer.

Heiler reiterates that in addition to "a clear progress in thought, and perspicuous construction," the language
of public (or liturgical) prayer "reveals solemn gravity and measured dignity."\textsuperscript{121}

Often the language of public prayer is ambiguous in attempting to relate the assembly to God. Jacques Ellul protests against ambiguity in public prayer.

It is indeed true that the content of prayer should be supplied by the world (in which our action is to be manifested), and that it is vain to pray abstractly. That is to say that normally prayer should be generated by concrete situations, and that in the degree in which it is linked with action, it involves specific concern. It is useless to pray for peace or for justice, unless one is specific about what peace or what justice.\textsuperscript{122}

An examination of books of prayers reveals language which ranges in style from archaic to contemporary, and even to what Reed referred to in an interview as "off-beat."\textsuperscript{123} Typical examples of prayer books are listed in the bibliography. The interviews I conducted with theologians in the Columbus area demonstrated concern for the language of public prayer. For example, Cantrell takes a position of controversy on contemporary language as used in the writings of the unusual Episcopal priest Malcolm Boyd.\textsuperscript{124}

I like to see prayer developed as a kind of poetic moment and I would tend to use poetic language if applicable. . . something that is more poetic, more metaphorical than one would use in a speech. . . . All poetry doesn't have
to be Elizabethan. . . . I think that prayers like [those of Malcolm Boyd] certainly have their place. Out of three billion people in the world, there are a lot of people . . . who are gripped by prayer that uses the latest language and slang. [However, Malcolm Boyd's prayers] don't stack up as something that people will be reading a hundred years from now. 125

One may dispute Cantrell's speculation concerning the unenduring quality of Boyd's prayers. However, his comment indicates the breadth of opinion concerning the use of contemporary language in public prayer.

Reverend Marideen Visscher 126 believes that the language of prayer should be both contemporary and traditional. She offered insights concerning the language of public prayer which resulted from a personal experience. While working with the Cleveland Area Council of Churches, she was involved with a mid-day prayer group. One morning the young man who was to conduct the meeting was hit by another car and died later that morning. Miss Visscher was asked to lead in prayer at the noon prayer service and experienced anxiety in trying to find an appropriate prayer. After searching in contemporary books of prayers and finding nothing appropriate, she found a prayer which expressed her feelings in the traditional Episcopal Book of Common Prayer. She said,
I think that the thing I learned from that was the fact that the wording of prayer needs to be contemporary, but it also needs to remind us that people have been praying to God for a very long time and sometimes the way that our fathers, our grandfathers, our great-great-great grandfathers have said it may very well say things in ways that we, too, tie in with that and have the feeling of belonging to this great company of God's people.¹²⁷

Miss Visscher's comment regarding "belonging to this great company of God's people" suggests a framework within which we may interpret the language of public prayer. Though I have pointed out that an examination of public prayers reveals that the variety of styles in the language used in public prayer is limitless, one important point emerges in all public prayer that cannot be overlooked. That is that the language used attempts to identify with the entire group of participants in public prayer in relating to God. This common factor may be viewed in terms of Kenneth Burke's concept of identification.

Burke points out that insofar as one individual's interests are joined with another's, they may be identified with each other.¹²⁸ He further observes that "in acting together, men have common sensations, images, ideas, attitudes that make them consubstantial."¹²⁹ These common experiences are emphasized in public prayer
(or common or liturgical prayer) not only as a means of identifying the pray-ers with God, but also with each other (those present) and with others around the world. Thus the person praying becomes a spokesperson in a rhetorical situation in which he is identifying himself with the universal audience of which he is a part.

Theologians interviewed for this study have indicated that public prayer does contain this element (or function) of identification. Reed emphasized the public or corporate nature of the Christian faith when he said,

Prayer has what you call public and I would call a liturgical dimension, because the Christian faith has that dimension. The sort of ultimate prayer for the Christian is based upon the instruction about prayer that he gets from Jesus—"your kingdom come." That's a very public desire, even though it's made in a private context; so that the public dimension of prayer within the context of something Christians do is given in the character of the Christian faith, which is so . . . radically corporate and communal.

Thus, by its nature as a Christian practice, public prayer contains the element of identification.

Cantrell, in placing public prayer in a contemporary setting, also emphasized identification with our "brothers." He commented that praying for our enemies is a form of forgiveness. However, it also may be thought of as a means
of identification, i.e., reminding the participants in prayer that God is the Father of all.

When you say, "Let us pray for . . . those whom we call our enemies," that shows an attitude of forgiveness and understanding and compassion. . . . It is very hard to go out and talk about "those damned niggers" after you have just prayed for your brothers in the ghetto. The same thing is true of the Viet Cong.132

The philosophies of several writers on prayer indicate that public prayer may be conceptualized as identification, for by its very nature it emphasizes the common experiences of the participants. One such writer is Friedrich Heiler, who says, "Where there is a living consciousness that 'the many are one body,' individual prayer must expand into common prayer."133 Douglas Rhymes reiterates the communal nature of public prayer and thus identification with other participants:

When a Christian worships he is not doing something contrary to his private prayer. He is expressing in a community action the corporate nature of all spirituality. He is expressing the fact that the people of God are not a collection of individuals all finding their own separate ways to communication with God and with men, but that the people of God are also a gathered people who need, as the first apostles needed, to "meet together week by week to share the common life, to break bread and to pray."134

Rhymes' comment is in line with Reed's in expressing the corporate nature of the Christian faith. Rhymes further
stresses the importance of a common language. It would appear that this "common language" is the means through which identification takes place, and is, according to Burke, "a symbolic means of inducing cooperation in beings that by nature respond to symbols." Karl Barth reminds us that public prayer is a means of promulgating the "I was a farm boy, too" means of identification:

We have sisters and brothers in Christ, and from them we also receive guidance and encouragement. . . . Prayer cannot therefore in any way estrange us from men; it can only unite us since it involves a matter than concerns us all. Before praying, then, I first seek the company of other men. I know that all of you are facing the same difficulties as I.

Not only, then, is public prayer a function of the corporate nature of the Christian faith, it is a means of identifying with other members of the audience.

Finally, let us turn again to the "model prayer" and see how Jesus emphasized identification in the prayer He gave to the disciples. The use of the pronouns "our" and "us" as intercession identifies the pray-er with the whole brotherhood of man. Karl Barth supports this premise succinctly in his book Prayer.

The Lord's Prayer is not just any form of prayer to be used by just anybody. It presupposes "us"; "Our Father"! A Father who is a father to us in a most particular
fashion. This "us" is created by the order that Jesus gave to follow him. It implies the communion of man praying with Jesus Christ, his existence in the brotherhood of the sons of God.\textsuperscript{138}

Barth elaborates further upon this factor of identification, and his comments seem to reiterate that the pray-er is a spokesperson in a rhetorical situation.

This "us" signifies also the communion of the man who prays with all those who are in his company and who, like him, are invited to pray; with those who have received the same invitation, the same commandment, the same permission to pray beside Jesus Christ.\textsuperscript{139}

But even while we are in the communion of the saints, in the ecclesia of those who are brought together by Jesus Christ, we are also in communion with those who do not yet pray, perhaps, but for whom Jesus Christ prays, since he prays for mankind as a whole.\textsuperscript{140}

Thus the rhetor in public prayer speaks not only for himself as he relates to God, but also for those "in his company" and for his Christian brothers around the world, and even for all of mankind. Fred L. Fisher also stresses this element of identification in The Lord's Prayer:

The plural pronoun "our" as used in the [\textsuperscript{Lord's}] prayer is not a sign that the prayer was used only by groups; it is a reminder that the individual Christian does not exist in isolation from other Christians. . . . To pray "Our Father" is to have a sense of unity with all Christians and to take up unto ourselves the problems of the Christian community.\textsuperscript{141}
This section has been an examination of the nature of the language used in public prayer, and has suggested that though the style of language used may vary a great deal, all public prayer can be viewed within the framework of Kenneth Burke’s concept of identification.

**Summary**

This chapter has explored the audience and content of public prayer by endeavoring to determine the audience of public prayer, the degree to which public prayer compares to other forms of public address, and finally, the nature of the language used in public prayer. The evidence indicates that the audience of public prayer may be thought of in terms of Chaim Perelman’s conception of the three audiences of the universal audience, the single interlocutor, and the self, in addition to the particular audience. The elements and structure of public prayer, it would appear, conform to contemporary methods of speech preparation and organization. Finally, the language or substance of public prayer was examined. A look at public prayer will reveal that all public prayer contains the element of **identification** as expressed by Kenneth Burke.

The next chapter will explore the theological and rhetorical purposes of public prayer.
Footnotes


14Ibid., p. 19.

15Dr. Roy A. Reed, Professor of Worship and Prayer, Methodist Theological School in Ohio, Delaware, Ohio, course syllabus, p. 3.

16Reed suggests that these writers hold this view: Charles Hartshorne, Schubert Ogden, John Cobb, Norman Pittenger, Gordon S. Wakefield.

17Reed suggests that these writers hold this view: Paul Tillich, J. A. T. Robinson, John Macquarrie, Fritz Buri.

18Reed suggests that these writers hold this view: H. N. Wieman, Fritz Buri, L. Dewart.

19Reed refers readers to these writers concerning this view: Herbert W. Richardson, William Blackstone, Dietrich Ritschl, J. A. T. Robinson, Sam Kern.


21Ibid., p. 25.

23 Reed, course syllabus, p. 2.


26 Reed; also Dr. Allan H. Sager, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Columbus, Ohio.

27 Blackwood, p. 49.

28 Dr. Roy A. Reed, Professor of Worship and Prayer, Methodist Theological School in Ohio, Delaware, Ohio, personal interview, May 9, 1973.

29 Dr. Allan H. Sager, Professor of Communication, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Columbus, Ohio, personal interview, May 23, 1973.


34 Perelman, p. 19.


38 Dr. Burton Cantrell, Director, Wesley Foundation, Columbus, Ohio, personal interview, July 2, 1973.

39 Dr. Cantrell is Director of the Wesley Foundation at the Ohio State University.
40 Perelman, p. 30.
41 Ibid., p. 41.
43 Heller, p. 305.
45 Dr. Harold H. Zietlow is Professor of Contemporary Theology at the Lutheran Theological Seminary, Columbus, Ohio.
46 Dr. Harold H. Zietlow, personal letter to this author dated June 6, 1973.
47 Dr. Carl Brown, Pastor of University Baptist Church, Columbus, personal interview, June 27, 1973.
48 Ibid.
50 Ibid., p. 150.
51 Blackwood, p. 157.
52 Ibid.
53 Ibid., p. 158.
54 Ibid., p. 87.
55 Ibid., pp. 91-92.
56 Ibid., p. 95.
57 Ibid., pp. 32-33.
58 Monroe, pp. 142-143, 150, and 334-335.

59 Miller, p. 22.

60 Father William Dougherty, Director, St. Thomas More Newman Center, personal interview, June 28, 1973; Dr. Burton Cantrell, Director, Wesley Foundation, personal interview, July 2, 1973; see also Heiler, and Ellul.

61 Makay and Tuchardt, p. 70.


63 Ibid., p. 165.


66 Blackwood, p. 151.

67 He cites King Solomon's prayer at the rebuilding of the Temple in I Kings 8:22-53 as an example, in which the leader begins with a few words of adoration, then utters a brief petition for the ruler of the land, with a short paragraph about the new Temple. The rest of the prayer has to do with the vital concerns of the assembled throng.
68 Blackwood, pp. 151-153.
69 Ibid., p. 158.
70 Monroe, pp. 242-244.
74 Heiler, p. 309.
75 Ibid., p. 310.
76 Ibid., p. 318.
77 Ibid., p. 321.
78 Ibid., p. 322.
79 Ibid., p. 324.
80 Ibid.
82 Heiler, p. 327.
83 Ibid., p. 329.
84 Ibid.
85 Ibid., p. 332.
86 The Book of Confession, 7.098, in Article 98, the Westminster Shorter Catechism (1643).

Reed; Cantrell.


Fisher, p. 41.

Jones, p. 158.

Fisher, pp. 44, 179. See also Lewis Maclachlan, *The Teaching of Jesus on Prayer* (London: James Clarke & Co., Ltd., 1952), p. 57; Barth, p. 25. Even writers who believe that Christ wanted to "liberate us from formulas" use The Lord’s Prayer as a model. See Ebeling, p. 46.

See for example Barth, Ebeling, Fisher, Jones, Puglisi, Rittelmeier.

Luke 11:1-4 (KJV). See also the more familiar version of this prayer found in Matt. 6:9-11. Jones points out that, "The great doxology—"For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever, Amen," which in the Authorised Version you will find at the close of Matthew’s account of the prayer, and which has become so familiar to us by its constant repetition in the public use of the prayer, formed no part of the original prayer at all, but must be regarded as a liturgical addition made by the Church in later years" (p. 157). Also see Barth, p. 77; Fisher, p. 43; Maclachlan, p. 93; and Rittelmeier, p. 175.
Reed, syllabus; Also Cantrell, and Reverend Marideen Visscher, Indianola Presbyterian Church, Columbus, personal interview, July 3, 1973.

The Lord's Prayer.

Latin collect.


Fisher, p. 46.

Ibid.; See also Barth, p. 38.

Dr. Carl Brown, Pastor, University Baptist Church, Columbus, personal interview, June 27, 1973.

Reed, syllabus.

Marshall, p. 104.

Ibid., p. 183.

Reverend John Wilcox, Associate Pastor, Indianola Presbyterian Church, prayer recorded on June 24, 1973.
Blackwood, pp. 91-92.

Ibid., p. 153.

Monroe, pp. 235-239.

I observed this practice at University Baptist Church and at Indianola Presbyterian Church.

Monroe,

Ellul says much concerning the language of prayer from a philosophical standpoint. See also Barth, pp. 160-170.

Ebeling, p. 47.

Heiler, p. 311.

Ibid., p. 312.

Ibid., p. 312.

Ibid., p. 311.

Ellul, p. 171.

Reed, personal interview, May 9, 1973.

A good description of the life and writings of Father Boyd is his autobiography, As I Live and Breathe (New York: Random House, 1969).


Reverend Marideen Visscher, Associate Pastor, Indianola Presbyterian Church, Columbus, Ohio.


129 Ibid., p. 545.
130 See Makay and Sawyer, Chapters 1 and 2.
131 Reed, interview, May 9, 1973.
133 Heiler, p. 297.
135 Ibid.
136 Burke, p. 567.
137 Barth, p. 19.
138 Ibid., p. 33.
139 Ibid., p. 34.
140 Ibid.
141 Fisher, p. 47.
CHAPTER III
THE THEOLOGICAL AND RHETORICAL PURPOSES
OF PUBLIC PRAYER

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the theological and rhetorical purposes of public prayer. Let us first look briefly at possible purposes of private prayer. The literature of prayer suggests a number of purposes for or effects of private prayer. In addition to communion with God, the prayer of the individual may be a form of self-instruction. "Prayer in this view is a means of acting upon ourselves pedagogically, and of making ourselves what God expects us to be." Moreover, private prayer may have the therapeutic effect of giving up anger and aggressiveness, "a recovery of balance through the rearranging of facts on successive levels as seen through a fresh outlook." Private prayer may also serve the purpose of comforting the praying individual, which is why Karl Stolz does not condemn the Roman Catholic practice of prayer for the dead. He points out that the result of these prayers is purely reflexive, i.e., they comfort those who mourn.

Though these purposes of self-edification are certainly viable purposes of private prayer, public prayer,
in contrast to private prayer, must extend beyond the personal needs of individuals to the needs and aspirations of the group. The purposes of public prayer must be, of necessity, larger in scope than those of private prayer, since public prayer deals with an audience beyond the self.

John J. Makay and Paul Tuchardt suggest that,

Often public prayer has become an educational approach used by a religious leader as an instructional device for the general needs of those attending a religious service. The words directed toward the deity are also for teaching the humans joined in prayer. The words of one praying aloud at times also serve a purpose similar to the persuasive sermon—a purpose to arouse or convince listening humans to behave in a certain way.¹⁴⁷

The literature of prayer confirms the fact that the purpose of public prayer may be to instruct the assembly. I am including in instruction all those attempts to reinforce traditional Christian values and beliefs or church dogmas, as well as attempts to direct how an audience should think regarding certain current situations which may be subjects for prayer.

**Public Prayer as Instruction**

The audience-centered nature of public prayer was discussed at length in Chapter I. Karl Stolz reiterates that public prayer is audience-centered, and that it is capable of influencing this audience.¹⁴⁸ He includes
instruction as a form of influence.

Many social prayers seem to have a didactic or inspirational purpose. They are formally addressed to God, but they also instruct and admonish men. Springing from an altruistic motive, they are not designed to secure the substance of others, but to widen the vision, comfort and encourage those who bear them. In the name of religion, they move men for their own good.\textsuperscript{149}

Stolz’ comment supports Makay and Tuchardt’s suggestion that the words directed toward the deity are for teaching the human listeners.

I have referred to the work of Friedrich Heiler often throughout this thesis. Heiler recognizes the educational purpose of public prayer, and points to this as one of the values of liturgical prayer sometimes overlooked during the Reformation.

It was at the Reformation that the most incisive protest against prescribed and meritorious prayer was raised. The attempt to imprison the God-given spirit of prayer within the narrow legalistic limits and the use of prayer in the service of those seeking self-righteousness by works seemed to them a shameful misuse and profanation of the holiest things. This protest puts the dangers of this form of prayer in the most disagreeable light, but hardly does justice to the educational values inherent in it.\textsuperscript{150}

Though extemporaneous prayer may seem to some to be more spontaneous and spiritual, the educational value of liturgical prayer cannot be denied. Heiler further emphasizes that the educational purpose of public prayer is allied
to edification:

The pedagogic purpose of common prayer is allied to that of edification. The prayer of the congregation is meant to lift the individual to a higher stage of devotion. ... This pedagogic aim of common prayer was put by the Reformers in the foreground, and was emphasized ever more clearly in the old Protestant orthodoxy as by modern theology. 151

Thinking of prayer as instructional or pedagogical does not contradict the theological purpose of edifying those joined in prayer by helping them "lift their hearts and minds to God."

Additional comments from the writings of Mario Puglisi concerning edification and education in public prayer would be helpful. Puglisi defines "edification" and carries the purpose of public prayer beyond "an expression of collective experience" to include the educational purpose of reinforcing religious beliefs.

The prayer of the community, institutional prayer, ought not to be merely an expression of a collective experience but also a mutual edification of the individual members. Edification ... is in fact an awakening, a vitalizing of pre-existing and dormant religious feelings. 152

Puglisi adds to this comment regarding "vitalizing religious feelings" the fact that St. Paul advocated this form of edification as an educational purpose of public prayer:
St. Paul understands collective prayer in this way when he assigns to it the task of awakening religious thoughts and feelings in the soul of individuals, thus being the first in Christian theology to recognize the pedagogic value of collective prayer.\textsuperscript{153}

One may dispute Puglisi's claim that St. Paul was the first to recognize the pedagogic value of public prayer by turning to The Lord's Prayer. Not only was The Lord's Prayer given as instruction in how to pray, it also serves the educational purpose of reiterating precepts basic to the Judeo-Christian faith. An example of the preceptive nature of this prayer is the emphasis on forgiving others as God forgives us, a notion at the very foundation of Christian belief.

In addition to emphasizing precepts basic to Christian theology, public prayer may serve an educational purpose by reinforcing the sermon topic.\textsuperscript{154} Stolz points out, in fact, that great as Henry Ward Beecher was as a preacher, his prayers were so profoundly edifying as to make the sermon superfluous.\textsuperscript{155} I mentioned in Chapter I that part of my data included transcriptions of sermons delivered at First Community Church, Columbus, and the prayers which followed these sermons. An examination of these prayers revealed that their purpose was to reinforce the theme of the service or sermon. A dialogue sermon delivered by The Reverend Robert A. Raines and The Reverend John
Lynn Carr's entitled "Do You Love Me?" will serve as an example. (Jesus asked that question of Peter. After Peter's anguished affirmative reply, Jesus replied, "Feed my sheep"). The theme of the sermon dealt with the fact that the love Christians have for Christ ought to motivate them to dependably and responsibly manifest this love in their benevolences to other people. The prayer Reverend Raines delivered following this sermon reiterated our human need to feel needed and depended upon, and enumerated ways in which we can help others. A copy of this prayer can be found in the Appendix.

In addition to the educational purposes of reiterating religious precepts and enforcing sermon topics, public prayer may serve the theological and rhetorical purpose of anamnesis. Anamnesis is "recalling, remembering, speaking again what God has done, recollecting who he is, reciting his facta et gesta." Huub Oosterhuis explains this type of prayer and its meaning for us:

When we pray, with the bible, we appeal to creation and to the covenant. We call God to mind and remind him who he is and what he has done. What God used to mean for men in the past includes a promise for the future, the promise that he will mean something for us, as well, that he will be someone for us.

Thus, the audience's faith is strengthened by reminding
them that God will do for them what He has done for others in the past. The prayer serves not to persuade or educate God, but the people. Particularizing our needs in petitionary prayer, as well as recounting current situations in our environment may also be considered anamnesis, for the audience is reminded that God, through his love and concern for us humans, is faithful to fulfill these petitions. Thus the educational purpose of reinforcing religious beliefs and values is achieved through reminding the people (as well as God) of God's promises.

I have been stressing the fact that one instructional purpose of public prayer is that of reinforcing religious values and beliefs. Stolz points out that this is necessarily so, since public prayer is intended to influence the people in addition to God.

If it were intended to influence God only, and not also man, the minister might be content to pray for the congregation in the privacy of his study. As it is—and it is as it should be—the pulpit prayer as a warm appreciation of religious values moves through the pulses of people, quickening every spiritual perception and deepening every holy resolve.¹⁵⁹

These remarks not only reiterate the audience-centered nature of public prayer, but stress the educational value inherent in it in terms of reinforcing religious precepts and values.
Often particular rhetorical situations outside of the church call for public prayers, and the purpose of these prayers also may be instructional in nature. Whereas, prayers in the church stress religious values and beliefs, public prayers in the secular environment appeal to ethical values common to the majority of the listeners. Stolz points out,

The sectarian element is reduced to a minimum and the ethical aspect of religion magnified in the prayers of the chaplains of fraternal, military, governmental, and other non-ecclesiastical organizations. The fundamental religious conceptions common to the great body of spiritually minded people are introduced as the ground and motive of right social relationships. 160

Several examples of public prayers taken from the context of government will serve to illustrate that these prayers function as an instructional device to focus the minds of the people on the human concerns of the moment, in addition to appealing to the ethical aspects of "right social relationships." One such prayer is that of the Reverend Dr. Billy Graham, delivered on the occasion of the Inauguration of Richard M. Nixon as President of the United States, January 20, 1969. A copy of the entire prayer can be found in the Appendix. A few excerpts here will suffice to demonstrate the prayer's instructional purpose.
Reverend Graham began his prayer on "this historic occasion" by reminding the people that they are "a nation under God." Then he recounted warnings from representatives of our national religious and political heritage (such as the Scriptures, George Washington) which serve as legitimizers for his next statements concerning "the wages of sin" which we are reaping as a nation. Though theologically speaking this is a confession, its rhetorical purpose is to recall to the listeners the "materialism and permissiveness" that are representative of our society. Dr. Graham then reassuringly turned the audience's attention to a reminder of God's promise of forgiveness, upon which he based his petition for "moral restoration." The reader will note that the instructional element of ånamnēsis in the form of recounting history as well as reminding God (and the human audience) of God's promises is prevalent throughout this prayer of consecration for Richard M. Nixon. The petitions which followed served to remind the people of the responsibilities of the Presidency, and lead to a refocusing upon the concerns foremost in the minds of most listeners—"peace, justice, and prosperity." In short, the prayer seemed to direct the people as to how they should think concerning the gravity of the office of the Presidency.

Excerpts selected from the prayers of Peter
Marshall, who served as Chaplain of the United States Senate from January 1947 until his death in 1948, will further highlight the instructional element found in many public prayers. Catherine Marshall recreated the rhetorical situation which gave rise to the prayer delivered on January 27, 1947.

The Congress was faced with decisions that would affect world peace for generations to come—what to do about China after our effort to back Chiang-Kai-shek appeared to be failing; what to do about atomic control, the Marshall Plan for aid to Europe, grave labor trouble, etc.

Yet, at such a time, much discussion and effort were expended on issuing 3-cent airmail postcards on "good, stiff paper"; a bill to recondition the vessel Prowler and return it to the Pomperang Council of the Boy Scouts of Bridgeport, Connecticut; a bill to authorize Federal funds for fighting cattle grubs, etc., etc., etc.161

Within this context, Peter Marshall attempted to direct the Senators' attention to their "duty" to consider weightier matters by saying,

"... Ever sensitive to the hurting of our own feelings, may we be sensitive also to our grieving of Thy Holy Spirit when we give ourselves to the lesser loyalties and spend our time and our energies in that which is less than the highest and the best..."162

As in the prayer of Dr. Graham previously cited, placing this "lesson" within the framework of prayer and relating it to God tends to elevate it in the minds of the listeners as a legitimate matter for their concern. We
may even refer to this as a "need" step in an educational or persuasive process prior to the audience's visualizing their ability to fulfill this need.\textsuperscript{163}

Often Dr. Marshall's prayers served to teach an ethical or moral lesson, as in the following prayer—which appears to be an exhortation—delivered before the Senate on June 19, 1947. Catherine Marshall commented that the Senate pageboys liked its "straight-shooting" style.\textsuperscript{164}

\begin{quote}
O God, our Father, while we pride ourselves that we learn something every day, we seem to make little progress in spiritual things.

Nowhere is our ignorance more tragic. So long have we been riding on the balloon tires of conceit, for our own good we may have to be deflated, that on the rims of humility we may discover the spiritual laws that govern our growth in grace.

If our pride has to be punctured, Lord, make it soon, before we gain too much speed. For the salvation of our souls and the good of our country. In Jesus' name. Amen.\textsuperscript{165}
\end{quote}

The theme of this prayer reminds the listeners (and readers) of a common human fault which needs to be corrected in order to better ourselves as individuals and to improve human relationships. Moreover, Dr. Marshall envisions the rhetorical situation as extending to the nation and, as a spokesperson, expresses his concern that we rid ourselves of pride "for the good of our country."\textsuperscript{166}
Thus the educational purpose of reinforcing values is fulfilled.

Government is not the only secular realm in which instructive prayers are delivered. Often a prayer may serve the enlightening purpose of focusing attention on civil or mundane concerns, as in the prayers of Malcolm Boyd or Michel Quoist. Malcolm Boyd collects a number of prayers under the heading "Prayers for Racial Freedom," and the rhetorical and educational purpose of these prayers clearly is to focus the reader's attention upon the current concerns of civil rights and the necessity, in the name of all that is Christian, for people of different races to learn to live together as brothers. These prayers often prod the conscience of the reader to a realization of the similarity between the perceived injustices suffered by Blacks and those inflicted upon Jesus. This analogy not only legitimizes racial injustice as a matter for consideration and prayer, but it serves as a means of vilifying and humiliating those guilty of inflicting such injustices. Thus, these prayers serve a secondary purpose of social protest. The prayer entitled "He's a black boy, Jesus. Will he learn to be a man?" illustrates this point.
He's not yet ten years old, Jesus. He's a Negro child in Alabama.
Today he saw a white man strike his father in the face. His father could not defend himself without being attacked by a group of white men, so he just stood there silently and took it. The young child was silent, too, Lord, for a moment. Then he started to cry. He screamed in a terrible shame and fear, not just because his father had suffered pain, but because his father's manhood had been attacked and his life diminished.
I remember how you were taken out and lynched, Jesus, so you know the agony of rejection, separation between persons, and murder. What is the relation between your own lynching and crucifixion, Lord, and this boy who cries out as you did from the cross? 167

The lesson Father Boyd is trying to teach in this particular prayer is intensified by the obvious element of pathos. Most readers would be able to empathize with the feeling of being humiliated and robbed of one's dignity. His use of an illustration is far more effective than any directive concerning racial unity he may have expressed in educating the audience concerning racial injustice and the attitude they should assume toward it.

Though the nature of public prayer is altruistic in the sense that it extends beyond the concerns of the isolated individual to include those of others around the world community, the mundane concerns foremost in the minds of most individuals as they act out the drama of their daily lives provide subjects for public prayer. In these prayers the rhetor may instruct the people by
calling attention to aspects of a common item or occurrence ordinarily not considered. Such is the case in Michel Quoist’s "Prayer Before a Twenty-Dollar Bill" (included in the Appendix). Quoist reminds the audience that money is the source of sorrow as well as joy, and provides a graphic list of examples of both. A further educational purpose is evident in that Quoist’s closing metaphor (in which he compares money to the labors of men, "indestructible money") directs the attention of the reader to the higher aspiration of eternal life. Quoist has used an everyday object of concern as a means of teaching a spiritual lesson in a kind of parable. As in the prayer of Malcolm Boyd previously cited, Quoist’s metaphor is far more impressive than any directive he may have given to "lay up treasures in heaven."

Throughout this discussion of the instructional purposes of public prayer, one element emerges that is common to every example. That is the appeal to values, religious or ethical. It is this observation which brings us to a consideration of Chaim Perelman’s discussion of values, and his conception of the *epidictic* genre of public oratory.
Public Prayer: Epidictic Oratory

Perelman reminds us that the goal of epidictic oratory, according to Aristotle, is praise or blame, i.e., concern with the beautiful or the ugly; hence it involves a question of recognizing values.\textsuperscript{169} He explains that epidictic oratory "strengthens the disposition toward action by increasing adherence to the values it lauds."\textsuperscript{170} In view of the evidence presented, we may characterize public prayer as epidictic oratory, for it serves to reinforce (or strengthen adherence to) religious or ethical values common to the majority of the listeners. As Perelman says, epidictic oratory "defends the traditional and accepted values,"\textsuperscript{171} and this is, in fact, one of the educational purposes of public prayer.

I pointed out in Chapter I that the language of public prayer relies heavily upon the element of identification. Perelman does not overlook this phenomenon, but explains it further by characterizing it as "a communion of values."\textsuperscript{172} Perelman's statement concerning this communion of values is descriptive of the rhetor's purpose in public prayer:
The argumentation in epidictic discourse sets out to increase the intensity of adherence to certain values, which might not be contested when considered on their own but may nevertheless not prevail against other values that might come into conflict with them. The speaker tries to establish a sense of communion centered around particular values recognized by the audience, and to this end he uses the whole range of means available to the rhetorician for purposes of amplification and enhancement. 173

Public prayer does serve to hierarchically order conflicting values and is a means of amplifying the values recognized by the audience in order to achieve a sense of communion or identification.

One additional comment concerning the epidictic genre of oratory will serve to clarify further its educational nature, and thus justify considering public prayer as belonging to this genre. Perelman says of the rhetor in epidictic address,

Being in no fear of contradiction, the speaker readily converts into universal values, if not eternal truths, that which has acquired a certain standing through social unanimity. Epidictic speeches are most prone to appeal to a universal order, to a nature, or a god that would vouch for the unquestioned, and supposedly unquestionable, values. In epidictic oratory, the speaker turns educator. 174

The person praying in public worship often sees himself as a spokesperson for God, or at least for some "higher truths" in the form of religious beliefs or ethical standards, which serves to legitimize his attempts to
win adherence to particular values. (That is, by placing particular values in the context of public prayer, sanctioned by God, the rhetor "universalizes" these values in order to win the adherence of the audience). Public prayer, as epidictic oratory, educates the audience by reinforcing their belief in or adherence to these universally accepted values or "truths."

Thus far I have been discussing values as they relate to the educational purposes of public prayer. It is important to point out here, however, the relationship of values to persuasion. It is impossible to separate, in actual situations, instruction from persuasion where adherence to values is concerned. The next section of this chapter will explore the possibility of public prayer as a means of persuasion.

**Public Prayer as Persuasion**

For purposes of this discussion, it is helpful to note that education is one form of persuasion. Thus the educational purposes of public prayer previously discussed are simultaneously persuasive in nature. Let us turn again to Kenneth Burke's concept of identification to examine its relationship to persuasion. Burke says,
As for the relation between "identification" and "persuasion": we might well keep in mind that a speaker persuades an audience by the use of stylistic identifications; his act of persuasion may be for the purpose of causing the audience to identify itself with the speaker's interests; and the speaker draws on identification of interests to establish rapport between himself and his audience. ¹⁷⁶

Let me reiterate that this process of identifying the audience with the speaker's interests may be achieved by stressing those values that the speaker and the audience have in common. This communion of values (the essence of epidictic oratory), linked inseparably with identification, is, according to Perelman, "a central part of the art of persuasion." ¹⁷⁷ Perelman elaborates upon this point:

The effectiveness of an exposition designed to secure a proper degree of adherence of an audience to the arguments presented to it can be assessed only in terms of the actual aim the speaker has set himself. The intensity of the adherence sought is not limited to obtaining purely intellectual results, to a declaration that a certain thesis seems more probable than another, but will very often be reinforced until the desired action is actually performed. ¹⁷⁸

Perelman's comment may be regarded as coincident with what Burke refers to as the function of rhetoric, i.e., inducing action or cooperation. ¹⁷⁹ Public prayer attempts, through winning adherence to common values, not only to
educate the audience that a particular belief is "right," but also to persuade the audience to act in accordance with that belief.

It is instructive to note here that Perelman makes a distinction between persuasion and conviction. He says,

We are going to apply the term persuasive to argumentation that only claims validity for a particular audience, and the term convincing to argumentation that presumes to gain the adherence of every rational being.180

However, since Perelman acknowledges that "the difference between the terms convincing and persuading is always unprecise and in practice must remain so," I shall use persuasion to refer to both particular audiences and the universal audience. This is particularly helpful since the rhetor in public prayer generally regards the listeners (or readers) as a particular incarnation of the universal audience in attempting to win adherence to values.181

One further comment may help to clarify the relationship of values to persuasion as a rhetorical purpose in public prayer. Perelman succinctly states,

One appeals to values in order to induce the hearer to make certain choices rather than others and, most of all, to justify those choices so that they may be accepted and
Thus, public prayer may be viewed as an attempt to reinforce traditional values and to induce action relative to those values. The rhetor may, in public prayer, justify an action for the hearer (and thus persuade him to act) by presenting the action as the "right" thing to do.

An application of this discussion of values and persuasion to a few examples of public prayer is in order at this point. Robert Raines' prayer entitled "Blood on Our Hands" will serve to illustrate the persuasive capacity of public prayer.

O God, whose compassion is upon the powerless and whose anger is upon the heartless. . .

We sit here in this country with blood on our hands and all we can think to do is wring these bloody hands. Forgive our complacency with killing. Rebuke our shrugs at poverty and war as though we could do nothing about them. Confront us who can feed and protect our own children that we rest not till all parents can feed and protect their children. Save us from the fever of lusting after victory and the destruction of the enemy. Grant us to care more about saving lives than saving face.
Let us love our country not less
but mankind more
in the knowledge that
a nation is great in your eyes
when it feeds the hungry,
welcomes strangers,
rehabilitates those in prison,
heals those who are sick,
and treats the least of these
as though they were the most. 183

The rhetorical situation which gave impetus to this
prayer is one of our country's involvement in the war
in Southeast Asia, a war which (in Raines' opinion)
has caused the leaders of our nation to confuse priorities
in an effort to achieve peace with honor. Raines attempts
in this prayer to reorder these priorities for the
reader (or listener) by placing benevolence and altruism
above national honor and victory. He strengthens his
point by defining national honor in terms of benevolence,
so that these two values are not conflicting, but if
placed in proper perspective, are companions. Thus, in
addition to directing the people as to how they should
regard a certain situation, Raines' prayer serves the
educational purpose of defining and reinforcing values,
and the persuasive purpose of attempting to induce action
aligned with these values. (Raines, like other theologians,
believes that we are responsible for helping to fulfill
that which we pray for, as this prayer and others 184
indicates). Moreover, Raines is well aware of the power
of pathos in persuasion, and effectively appeals to the emotions of his constituents in making the hierarchy of values he advocates clear to them. Part of the effectiveness of this persuasive effort, in fact, rests in the element of identification implicit in this communion of values as the reader or listener of this prayer identifies his values with the rhetor's.

Another prayer selected from the prayers of Peter Marshall will further clarify the persuasive purpose of public prayer. Peter Marshall did not hesitate to voice concern for national and international affairs in his Senate prayers. Catherine Marshall explains the background which triggered Dr. Marshall's remarks on March 5, 1948.

Vandenberg's European Recovery Program was unanimously passed in the Foreign Relations Committee and sent to the floor. During the days that followed, Vandenberg bravely and effectively defended the plan on the floor of the Senate against those Senators who were not quite ready to give up their isolationism. 185

A copy of Dr. Marshall's prayer can be found in the Appendix. Dr. Marshall attempted both to educate and to persuade by stressing the universal sacredness of freedom and liberty. Beginning with these values as a premise, he attempts to persuade the Senators of the rightness of the Marshall Plan in his fervent petition, "May no cowardice or callous selfishness make us
reluctant to assume the responsibilities of leadership in a world hungry for hope." \(^{186}\) Whether or not one is willing to view Peter Marshall's prayer as one step in a persuasive campaign, it is interesting to note that the European Recovery Program finally passed the Senate 69-17. \(^{187}\)

**Summary**

This chapter has been an exploration of the theological and rhetorical purposes of public prayer. The evidence seems to indicate that public prayer may be instructive, in particular by stressing religious precepts, emphasizing the sermon topic, or recalling religious history, and in general by reinforcing ethical or religious values. Winning adherence to values not only provides the rhetor with a basis for educating the audience, but also for persuading them. Thus public prayer may also be persuasive. A rhetorical situation which has such potential for influencing others places an ethical responsibility upon the rhetor. The next chapter will explore the ethical implications of considering public prayer as public address.
Footnotes

142 We may conceptualize the general theological purpose of public prayer as aiding the people in "lifting their hearts and minds toward God." This is accomplished by means of the specific purposes discussed in Chapter II of expressing Thanksgivings, Confessions, and Intercessions. However, the specific purpose of a speech need not always be identical to the rhetorical purpose. A rhetorical purpose exists when a communicator aims to achieve a goal mediated by others who cooperate with him uncoercedly and respond to him primarily on the basis of shared symbols. We act as spokespersons when genuinely identifying with an idea, issue, or group to achieve a specific rhetorical purpose. Thus, a rhetorical purpose may be broader in scope than a specific purpose, for the rhetor may see himself as a spokesperson for ideas relevant to a larger audience than just those gathered before him for a specific occasion. See Makay and Brown, The Rhetorical Dialogue: Contemporary Concepts and Cases (Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Company Publishers, 1972), p. 67; and Makay and Sawyer, Speech Communication Now! (Columbus, Ohio: Chas. E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1973), p. 25.

143 Heiler, p. 358.
145 Ibid., p. 42
147 Makay and Tuchardt, p. 69.
148 Stolz, p. 54.
149 Ibid., p. 129.
150 Heiler, p. 352.
151 Ibid., p. 306.
153 Ibid., p. 127.
154 Blackwood. pp. 69, 73-75.
155 Stolz, pp. 130-131.
156 Delivered on October 8, 1972.
158 Ibid., p. 8.
159 Stolz, pp. 129-130.
160 Ibid., p. 131.
162 Marshall, p. 135.
163 Monroe, p. 294.
164 Marshall, p. 182.
165 Ibid.
166 Ibid.
169 Perelman, p. 48.
170 Ibid., p. 50.
171 Ibid., p. 51.
172 Ibid.
173 Ibid.
174 Ibid.
175 Burke, pp. 573-577. 601.
176 Ibid., p. 570.
177 Perelman, p. 49.
178 Ibid.
179 Burke, p. 567.
180 Perelman, p. 28.
181 Ibid., p. 35.
182 Ibid., p. 75.
184 See for example "What's Wrong With You, Lord?", p. 83.
186 Ibid., p. 207.
187 Ibid., p. 207.
CHAPTER IV
AN ETHICAL EVALUATION OF PRAYER AS PUBLIC ADDRESS

The preceding chapter of this thesis acknowledged the persuasive capacity of public prayer, and demonstrated that appeals to values form the basis for persuasion in public prayer, as in all epideictic oratory. This chapter will address itself to the ethical implications of this form of persuasion and will suggest a framework which can guide the rhetorical critic in making ethical evaluations of public prayer. First let us briefly survey a variety of criteria suggested by authors concerned with the ethical imperative of rhetoric.

Ethics and Persuasion

Since rhetoric is concerned with probabilities and grounded in "choice," the communicator may select from his experience those elements which he feels will be most persuasive and effect the greatest change in his audience. In making these selections or "choices," the communicator operates within a frame of reference or value system which assists him in making judgments. An
individual's ethics affect his construction of messages, as well as his perceptions of incoming communications. Rhetoric, then, as a process grounded in "choice," is inextricably bound to ethics, for it is dependent on the values of those engaged in the process of social influence.

Often rhetorical critics have avoided the issue of ethics by concentrating on message "effects." But a preoccupation with the "success" of a message not only overlooks ethics, it is "contrary to desirable educational goals." To ignore the ethical implications of rhetorical criticism is to engage in "pseudo-criticism." A number of writers address themselves to the ethical imperative of rhetoric. Karl Wallace defines the substance of rhetoric as "good reasons," which are "a number of statements, consistent with each other, in support of an ought proposition or of a value judgment." Richard Weaver considers the implications of assuming that language is sermonic, a notion which seems particularly pertinent to this study of public prayer. Weaver says, "As rhetoric confronts us with choices involving values, the rhetorician is a preacher to us, noble if he tries to direct our passion toward noble ends and base if he
uses our passion to confuse and degrade us."\textsuperscript{191} It is
evident that both Wallace and Weaver emphasize the
consequences of a rhetor's choices as the domain of
ethics. Murphy believes, as I do, that an evaluation
of a speaker's ethics must extend beyond the criterion
of "sincerity," and says, "Although personal integrity
and honest belief are important parts of a man's character,
it is not the sincerity of the man, but the honesty of
his expression which has to be measured in rhetoric. . . .
There is a moral obligation to be informed and intelligent
in rhetoric as in all else."\textsuperscript{192} Other writers approach
the subject of ethics by concentrating upon the "intent"
of the speaker, and the ramifications of the "ends-means"
controversy.\textsuperscript{193} Neither of these approaches to ethics
seems adequate, for how does one measure the sincerity
or intent of a speaker? Still others offer a variety of
prescriptive guidelines for evaluating the ethics of
rhetorical discourse, ranging from an emphasis on the
values of a democracy, to ethics in relation to
"appreciative understanding," to an ethic of social
utility.\textsuperscript{194}

Though all of these writers have contributed
much to our awareness and understanding of the ethical
obligations inherent in rhetoric, none of these views
seems adequate to evaluate the ethical implications of public prayer as a rhetorical form. The views expressed by Keller and Brown, and by Wieman and Walter more closely approximate the stand taken by this author in approaching the subject of ethics in public prayer, for their emphasis is on a humanistic approach which stresses mutual regard and self-determination. Keller and Brown suggest that rhetorical discourse may be subjected to this ethical test:

How does the speaker react to the listener's reactions? (And how does the listener react to the speaker?) If he reacts in such a way as to enhance the self-determination forces within the other, his communication can be considered more ethical. If he reacts in such a way as to inhibit the self-determination forces within the other, his communication can be considered less ethical, regardless of the purity of the devices used in the communication effort.195

Added to these views on self-determination as an ethical criterion are those of Wieman and Walter:

We would define ethical rhetoric . . . as the discovery of the means of symbolism which lead to the greatest mutual understanding and mutual control. . . .Ethical rhetoric has the promise of creating those kinds of communication which can help save the human being from disintegration, nourish him in his growth toward uniquely human goals, and eventually transform him into the best that he can become.196
Wieman and Walter's concern with "mutual understanding" suggests a criterion of particular interest to contemporary theologians and humanistic psychologists, for mutual understanding is one component of the emerging concept of dialogue. The concept of dialogue provides a somewhat idealistic, but nevertheless more adequate, framework within which to evaluate ethical communication in public prayer than the previously mentioned guidelines. Let us examine the components of dialogue.

The Components of Dialogue

A concise explanation of the components of dialogue can be found in Richard L. Johannesen's article, "The Emerging Concept of Communication as Dialogue." He draws primarily upon the writings of Reuel L. Howe, *The Miracle of Dialogue,* and Martin Buber, *I and Thou,* to offer insights into dialogue as an ethical form of communication. The proponents of dialogue discuss dialogue in contrast to monologue, which will be discussed later in this chapter. It is important to point out here that we must set aside, for purposes of this discussion, the traditional ways of conceptualizing the terms "dialogue" and "monologue" as referring to two-way communication or play scripts, and one-to-many
communication respectively. Dialogue, as we are using the term here, can occur in intrapersonal, interpersonal, or one-to-many communication situations, and represents "more of a communication attitude, principle, or orientation than a specific method, technique, or format. One may speak of a spirit of dialogue in the human communication process." In dialogue, "a speaker does not attempt to impose his own truth or view on another and he is not interested in bolstering his own ego or self-image. Each person in a dialogic relation is accepted for what he is as a unique individual." A basic element of dialogue is "experiencing the other side." "One also does not forego his own convictions or views, but he strives to understand those of the other and avoids imposing his own on the other." Dialogue may be defined in terms of essential components attributed to it by scholars writing on dialogue. These components include genuineness, accurate empathic understanding, unconditional positive regard, presentness, a spirit of mutual equality, and a supportive psychological climate. Let us see what Johannesen says about each of these components.
Genuineness. "One is direct, honest, and straightforward. One imparts himself as he really is and avoids facade. ... Openness to all relevant information and feeling is encouraged." \(^{204}\)

Accurate Empathic Understanding. "Things are seen from the other's viewpoint. ... Feelings should be accurately reflected and clarified." \(^{205}\)

Unconditional Positive Regard. "... The other is valued for his worth and integrity as a human. A partner in dialogue is affirmed, not merely tolerated, even though one opposes him. The other is confirmed in his right to his individuality. And confirmation, or unconditional positive regard, implies a desire to assist the other to maximize his potential, to help him become what he can become. The spirit of mutual trust is promoted. One affirms the other as a unique individual without necessarily approving of his behavior." \(^{206}\)

Presentness. "Participants in a dialogue must give full concentration to bringing their total and authentic beings to the encounter. They must demonstrate willingness to become fully involved with each other by taking time, avoiding distraction, becoming communicatively accessible, and risking attachment. ... The dialogic person listens receptively and attentively and responds
readily and totally. One is willing to reveal himself to others and to receive their revelation."

Spirit of Mutual Equality. "... The participants... view each other as persons, not as objects to be manipulated or exploited. The exercise of power or superiority is avoided. Participants do not impose their opinion, cause, or will. In dialogic communication, agreement of the listener with the speaker's aim is secondary to independent, self-deciding participation."  

Supportive Psychological Climate. "... One allows free expression, seeks understanding, and avoids value judgments that stifle. One shows desire and capacity to listen without anticipating, interfering, competing, refuting, or warping meanings into preconceived interpretations. Assumptions and prejudgments are minimized."  

One can readily see that these components can be a personally demanding and idealistic set of conditions for judging the ethics of communication. Before relating public prayer to these criteria, however, let us further clarify the concept of dialogue by contrasting it with monologue.
Monologue

Johannesen points out that "monologue frequently is equated with persuasion or with propaganda." However, persuasion may take place dialogically, which will be explained later in this chapter. Much of the writing on monologue stems from Buber's conception of the I-It relation which is characterized by self-centeredness, deception, pretense, display, seduction, domination, exploitation, and manipulation. The user of monologue manipulates others for his own selfish ends. According to Johannesen, Buber believes that I-It relations are often unavoidable in human life and only become evil when they master one's life and shut out dialogue. However, Hows contends that any monologue, or nondialogue, relation is inherently evil because it exploits and seeks to "appropriate." Johannesen explains monologue further by saying,

Other are viewed as things to be exploited for the speaker's self-serving purpose; they are not taken seriously as persons. Choices are narrowed and consequences are obscured. Focus is on the speaker's message, not on the audience's real needs. The core values, goals, and policies espoused by the speaker are impervious to
influence exerted by listeners. ... The purpose of monologue is to get audience consensus with the speaker's view, to get others to do what he wants, and to impose his truth on someone else. The speaker has the superior attitude that he must tell people what they ought to know. ... Monologue lacks mutual trust and it displays a defensive spirit of self-justification.213

Monologue, then, is an attempt to gain power over another and to deny or stifle the other's individuality and attempts at self-determination. Certainly such attempts to "narrow choices" for the audience so that they are not viewed as unique, self-deciding individuals cannot be considered ethical, for they do not admit the worth of the other human beings involved.214 Rather than having the other's interests at heart, the monologic person is self-centered and manipulative. Such an attitude of superiority and selfish concern is contrary to the expressed theological purposes of public prayer, which is altruistic in nature. Let us examine public prayer within the ethical framework of dialogue as opposed to monologue.

Dialogue and Persuasion in Public Prayer

Chapter III established the fact that public prayer may be persuasive. Our discussion of ethics and rhetoric in this chapter began by pointing out to the reader that
in attempting to be persuasive, a rhetor makes "choices" consistent with his value system. Persuasion, however, is not inherently wrong and cannot always be equated with monologue. On the contrary, a rhetor may be dialogic in making choices in his effort to persuade. Nilsen points out that,

I can choose whether I will consider the other's self-determining choice more important than his acceptance of mine; I can choose whether I will turn to the other and seek to meet him; to perceive him in his wholeness and uniqueness; I can choose whether I will value him as a person above all else. I can choose to try to relate to him as honestly as I can rather than put on a front so that he cannot relate to me.  

The possibility for making dialogic choices is a case against equating monologue with persuasion as undesirable. Moreover, assuming that persuasion is undesirable fails to recognize the advisory function of rhetoric, which may be dialogic rather than monologic. Johannesen says,

Rhetoric viewed in its advisory function illustrates another species of persuasion. Advisory rhetoric offers good reasons, logical and psychological, for a specific audience choice among probable alternatives, It advises rather than coerces or commands.

Thus, a rhetor in public prayer in an effort to persuade may remain dialogic by offering good reasons for a
particular choice, rather than denying the listeners the opportunity to be self-deciding.

Other writers address themselves to the question of ethical persuasion. Richard Weaver, in maintaining that language is sermonic, says that, "We all need to have things pointed out to us, things stressed in our interest."\(^{218}\) As long as a rhetor in public prayer (as in other forms of public address) has the other's interests at heart and desires to help him become all that he is capable of becoming and does not try to persuade another for his own selfish purposes, he cannot be considered unethical. Buber points out that even in dialogue, one may attempt to show another the error of his ways (as one might attempt to do in public prayer), but that this must always be done in a noncoercive, nonmanipulative manner that respects the free choice and individuality of the listener.\(^{219}\) Consistent with this view is that of Keller and Brown who believe that in attempting to persuade another person that person's ultimate and genuine freedom of choice must be preserved.\(^{220}\) Thus, it seems that persuasion which occurs in the spirit of dialogue in public prayer may be considered ethical; persuasive efforts that are self-seeking and
monologic must be considered unethical.

At this point, examples of monologic and dialogic prayer will serve to further clarify our discussion of ethical persuasion in public prayer. Early in this thesis, I quoted Reed on the audience-centered nature of public prayer. His comment that the petitions in public prayer tell the people what they ought to know or do suggests that persuasion in public prayer can be monologic, for Johannesen says that in monologue, "The speaker has the superior attitude that he must tell the people what they ought to know..."221 Such a practice lacks a spirit of mutual trust between the speaker and his audience and denies the audience's right to be self-deciding. Thus, by the criteria we have established, it is unethical. This is particularly true when a minister uses the medium of prayer to sanction his own political points of view. On July 1, 1973 I attended a service in which all of the hymns, the minister's remarks, and the prayers dealt with the theme of patriotism and the relationship of God to country (in view of Independence Day a few days away). However, the minister apparently viewed the theme of patriotism as an appropriate opportunity to expound his personal views on the so-called
"Watergate Affair." He attempted, through the pastoral prayer, to impose his views on the audience, denying, in effect, the possibility that their views may have been different from his but just as valid. This attitude of superiority certainly must be labeled monologue.

Not only do the pastoral prayers have the potential to be monologic, but the prayers of confession may contain elements of monologue as well. I observed discontent among members of a particular congregation, because the prayers of confession written by the pastor and printed in the church bulletin voiced "things we don’t feel sorry for." Contemporary theologians are beginning to turn away from the concept of "sin" to a belief in each person’s uniqueness and individuality, and the importance self-determination or "doing your own thing." However, when people are denied their individuality and the fact that they are capable of deciding for themselves between "right" and "wrong," a prayer of confession can become monologic.

In contrast to monologic prayer, however, public prayer may be dialogic, and hence more uplifting. The prayers of Peter Marshall serve as an example of dialogic public prayer. Dr. Marshall's prayers never voiced an imposing attitude of superiority, but served as a "gentle nudge" in his effort to persuade the Senators to action.
The prayer previously referred to in this thesis (a copy of which can be found in the Appendix) serves to illustrate this point. Another prayer—the shortest prayer ever prayed in the Senate—is "full of weight" in that it directs attention to the seriousness of the Senatorial business at hand, yet it remains dialogic and affirms the ability of the audience to make its own decisions:

Our Father, who art Lord of heaven and of all the earth, Thou knowest the difficulties these men have to face and the grave decisions they must make. Have mercy upon them, for Jesus' sake. Amen. 222

This prayer did have a sobering affect upon its audience, for Senator Vandenberg commented, "Now I know just how a condemned man feels." 223

Thus, persuasion may be dialogic or monologic in public prayer—ethical or unethical.

Summary

This chapter has presented a brief overview of possible criteria with which to evaluate the ethics of public prayer as a form of public address. None of these seems entirely adequate, and the concept of dialogue as opposed to monologue seems a more viable approach to the study of ethics in public prayer. The components
of dialogue are genuineness, accurate empathic understanding, unconditional positive regard, presentness, a spirit of mutual equality, and a supportive psychological climate. In contrast, monologue is self-seeking, exploitive and manipulative. Persuasion cannot always be equated with monologue, for persuasion may occur in the spirit of dialogue. Thus we have an ethic with which to evaluate public prayer: the rhetor in public prayer who seeks to aid the listener in becoming the most that he can become in a dialogic manner may be considered ethical; the rhetor who denies the audience its individuality and seeks to manipulate the audience for his own selfish ends is monologic and cannot be considered ethical.

The final chapter of this thesis will draw together the conclusions which seem to be warranted from this study, and will suggest further research questions into the area of public prayer as a rhetorical form.
Footnotes


191 Richard Weaver, "Language is Sermonic," in Johannesen, p. 179.


201. Ibid.

202. Ibid.

203. Ibid., p. 376.

204. Ibid.

205. Ibid.

206. Ibid.

207. Ibid.

208. Ibid.

209. Ibid.
Ibid.

Johannesen refers the reader to Buber, I and Thou, pp. 34, 38, 43, 60, 105, and 107.

Johannesen refers the reader to Buber, I and Thou, pp. 34, 46, and 48; and Howe, pp. 38-39.


See Makay and Brown, Chapter II, on the range of choices in a rhetorical problem.

Nilsen in Johannesen, p. 378.


Johannesen, p. 379.


Johannesen, p. 378.

Marshall, p. 196.

Ibid.
CHAPTER V
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study of public prayer as a rhetorical form began with an exploration of the nature, structure, and substance of public prayer by endeavoring to determine the audience of public prayer, the degree to which public prayer compares to other forms of public address, and finally, the nature of the language used in public prayer. The evidence indicates that the audience of public prayer may be thought of in terms of the three audiences of Chaim Perelman's conception of the three audiences of the universal audience, the single interlocutor, and the self, in addition to the particular audience. The elements and structure of public prayer, it would appear, conform to contemporary methods of speech preparation and organization. Finally, the language or substance of public prayer was examined. A look at public prayer reveals that all public prayer contains the element of identification as expressed by Kenneth Burke.
Next, the theological and rhetorical purposes of public prayer were examined. The evidence seems to indicate that public prayer may be instructive, in particular by stressing religious precepts, emphasizing the sermon topic, or recalling religious history, and in general by reinforcing ethical or religious values. Winning adherence to values not only provides the rhetor with a basis for educating the audience, but also for persuading them. Thus public prayer may also be persuasive.

Finally, possible approaches to evaluating the ethics of public prayer were examined, and none seemed entirely adequate. The concept of dialogue as opposed to monologue seems a more viable approach to the study of ethics in public prayer. The components of dialogue are genuineness, unconditional positive regard, presentness, a spirit of mutual equality, and a supportive psychological climate. In contrast, monologue is self-seeking, exploitive and manipulative. Persuasion cannot always be equated with monologue, for persuasion may occur in the spirit of dialogue. Thus we have an ethic with which to evaluate public prayer: the rhetor in public prayer who seeks to aid the listener in becoming
the most that he can become in a dialogic manner may be considered ethical; the rhetor who denies the audience its individuality and seeks to manipulate the audience for his own selfish ends is monologic and cannot be considered ethical.

Early in this study I pointed out that rhetors and rhetoricians ought to be aware of and sensitive to "available means of persuasion." This study has indicated that public prayer is, in fact, capable of being a powerful means of influence. Here I would add that its persuasive power is enhanced by the fact that people, generally, are not sensitive to it, as they might be to persuasive techniques in other forms of public address. While gathering data for this study, I was initially surprised to learn that the prayers of prominent ministers such as Dr. Martin Luther King or the Reverend Dr. Billy Graham were not transcribed, even though their sermons and speeches were. This seems to indicate that rhetors, or those interested in studying religious communication or in adding to the proliferation of religious literature, generally have been unaware of, or have ignored the influential nature of public prayer. Often what is said in public prayer may be, in fact, more persuasive, more instructive, more edifying or uplifting,
than what is said in the sermon. The mental and spiritual attitude of those gathered for common or pastoral prayer lends itself to being receptive to ideas presented, since these ideas (by virtue of the fact that they are presented in a context of prayer) seem to be sanctioned by God. Senders and receivers of public prayer must become more sensitive to its capacity to influence.

This lack of sensitivity (particularly on the part of the audience) to the influential nature of public prayer suggests another implication of considering public prayer a form of public address. Chapter IV presented an ethical framework—dialogue—within which to evaluate public prayer. Unfortunately, in public prayer as in other forms of public address, the rhetor is not always "a good man speaking well." Public prayer, since it is addressed to a human audience as well as the Divine, has the capacity to be manipulative. That is, the minister may use public prayer as an opportunity to expound his own point of view on a spiritual or secular matter. This use of public prayer denies the audience its individuality and its right to self-determination. It is monologic in that it attempts to impose a particular point of view upon the listeners.
The reader is reminded that often the petitions in public prayer are a means of telling the people "what they ought to know" or "what they ought to do." Such a practice is precariously close to the dividing line between monologue and dialogue, for it may foster an attitude of superiority on the part of the person praying. Let me reiterate that there is nothing inherently wrong about persuasion. However, when a rhetor uses the pulpit to expound his own personal religious, moral, or political attitudes under the guise of public prayer, rather than affirming the audience's ability to be self-deciding in his attempts to relate them to God (which, ideally, is the theological goal of public prayer), his ethics must be questioned.

Such a rhetor, who denies the equal worth of his audience as unique human beings, loses sight of the audience altogether—the universal audience as well as the particular audience. His self-centered attitude of superiority may cause him, instead, to see himself as possessing "supernatural revelation" and appealing to an "elite audience" which includes only those who agree with him, for all others are rejected as "stupid or abnormal." According to Perelman, this elite audience may even be confused with the perfect Being.224
To see oneself as a spokesperson for a perfect Being, at the expense of relating to humans, is to lose sight of the need for dialogue in our society, and for improved human relationships.

In addition to considering certain ethical ramifications of public prayer, one may question whether public prayer (as the evidence indicates that it is practiced today), indeed, conforms to the teachings of Christ, who taught that one ought to pray privately, and not be heard for one's "much speaking." This author realizes that this is a matter for personal interpretation; but the reader no doubt will admit that a rhetor must be careful to achieve a balance between God-centered and human-centered appeals in public prayer.

This investigation has concentrated primarily upon those public prayers offered in a religious or governmental setting. However, one might ask what other channels of communication are used in an attempt to make public prayer effective. Contemporary evangelists have made extensive use of the broadcast media in their evangelistic campaigns, and such a use of the media provides fertile territory for an investigation of public prayer as well as other forms of religious communication.
In view of the growing interest in social movements, an investigation into the role of prayer in social movements, and in social protest particularly, would be timely. The use and effectiveness of public prayer as an event-message in such incidents as the Birmingham Crisis of 1963 may broaden our knowledge of this particular form of influence. More recently, demonstrators were arrested for praying on the White House lawn in protest of the bombing of Cambodia. Such unique efforts to make social statements deserve the attention of rhetorical critics.

It is my hope that this investigation of public prayer as a means of social influence has enlightened the reader concerning its importance, and that others will take up the challenge to further study the nature of public prayer as a rhetorical form.
Footnote

224 Perelman, p. 33.
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APPENDIX
Interview: Prayer as Public Address

1. What is prayer?

2. Who is the audience of public prayer?

3. What is the purpose of public prayer? (That is, might the purposes of public prayer differ somewhat from private prayer?)

Note: These questions were asked of each of those people interviewed. Other pertinent questions grew out of each interview as it progressed.
Prayer by Reverend Robert A. Raines, delivered October 8, 1972, following the sermon, "Do You Love Me?"

Lord, are you really inviting us
to set the table of our lives again?
    after all the broken hearts
    and the bad luck
    and everything gone to pieces?

Lord, are you really giving us
    another chance to begin again
    with fresh hope
    and new strength to love
    and courage to hang in there?

Lord, you must be crazy
    to count on us,
    to keep counting on us,
    knowing us as you do.

Do you see something great in us,
    beautiful and glorious
    that we miss?

Are we worth all your trouble?
Lord, there can't be any other explanation...
    it must be
    that you love us...

And, when we feel your love, sometimes
like maybe now, here in this beloved place,
in the faces of your people,
in their warm eyes,
in their warm arms,
we want to shout for joy,
and sing and dance
and crack jokes and laugh out loud
and shake our heads in wonder...
And when we feel your love, together,
we want to feed your sheep,
and care for the children, and the aged,
and the sick and the lonely and the wounded,
and all who keep their needs inside, untouched,
and we feel our own yearning to know
and be known, to love and be loved
and we know that
   love is all that matters
   all that lasts. . .

Fill us now with Your love
and let our restless hearts
fest for a moment in You,
give us quietness and confidence,
and peace deep in the soul,
and encourage us always and ever,
to kiss the joy as it flies.
Prayer by Dr. Billy Graham at The Inauguration of Richard M. Nixon as President of the United States, Monday, January 20, 1969.

Our Father and our God, Thou hast said, "Blessed is that nation whose God is the Lord." We recognize on this historic occasion that we are "A nation under God." We thank Thee for this torch of faith handed to us by our forefathers. May we never let it be extinguished. Thou alone has given us our prosperity, our freedom and our power. This faith in God is our heritage and our foundation!

Thou hast warned us in the Scriptures, "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" As George Washington reminded us in his farewell address, "Morality and faith are the pillars of our society." We confess these pillars are being eroded in an increasingly materialistic and permissive society. "The whole world is watching" to see if the faith of our fathers will stand the trials and tests of the hour. Too long we have neglected Thy Word and ignored Thy laws. Too long we have tried to solve our problems without reference to Thee. Too long we have tried to live by bread alone. We have sown to the wind and are now reaping a whirlwind of crime, division and rebellion.

And now with the wages of our sins staring us in the face, we remember Thy words, "If my people which are called by my Name shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and will heal their land."

Help us this day to turn from our sins and to turn by simple faith to the One who said, "Ye must be born again."
So we pray, O God, as we enter a new era, that we as a nation may experience a moral and spiritual restoration.

Thou hast said, "Promotion comes not from the east nor from the west, but from Thee." We acknowledge Thy divine help in the selection of our leadership each four years. We recognize, O Lord, that in Thy sovereignty Thou hast permitted Richard Nixon to lead us at this momentous hour of our history.

We beseech Thee that he will have Thy divine guidance and power daily. Help him as Thou didst help Thy servants of old. Our Father, we know his burdens and responsibilities will be overwhelming. He will hold in his hands the destiny of more people than any man in history. O God, our new President needs Thee as no man has ever needed Thee in leading a people! There will be times when he will be overwhelmed by the problems at home and abroad that have been building up to the breaking point for many years. Give him supernatural wisdom, courage and strength for these four years. Protect him from physical danger. And in the lonely moments of decision grant him an uncompromising courage to do what is morally right. Give him a cool head and a warm heart. Give him a compassion for those in physical, moral and spiritual need. We pray that Thou wilt so guide Richard Nixon in handling the affairs of state that the whole world will marvel and glorify Thee.

O God, we consecrate Richard Milhous Nixon to the Presidency of these United States with the assurance that from this hour on, as he and his family move into the White House, they will have the presence and the power of Thy Son who said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

What we pray for President Nixon we pray for Vice President Agnew and members of the Cabinet. May they be given a wisdom and a courage that is beyond their own. Bless them as a team to lead America to the dawning of a new day with renewed trust in God that will lead to peace, justice and prosperity.

We pray this humbly in the Name of the Prince of Peace who shed His blood on the Cross that men might have eternal life. Amen.
Michel Quoist, "Prayer Before a Twenty-Dollar Bill."

Lord, see this bill! It frightens me.
You know its secrets, you know its history.
How heavy it is!
It scares me, for it cannot speak.
It will never tell all it hides in its creases.
It will never reveal all the struggles and efforts it represents, all the disillusionment and slighted dignity.
It is stained with sweat and blood,
It is laden with all the weight of the human toil which makes its worth.

It is heavy, heavy, Lord.
It fills me with awe, it frightens me.
For it has death on its conscience...
All the poor fellows who killed themselves for it,
To possess it for a few hours,
To have through it a little pleasure, a little joy, a little life.

Through how many hands has it passed, Lord?
And what has it done in the course of its long, silent journeys?

It has offered white roses to the radiant fiancee.
It has paid for the baptismal party, and fed the rosy-cheeked baby.
It has provided bread for the family table.
Because of it there was laughing among the young and joy among the elders.
It has paid for the saving visit of the doctor,
It has bought the book that taught the youngster,
It has clothed the young girl.
But it has sent the letter breaking the engagement,
It has paid for the death of the baby in its mother's womb,
It has bought the liquor that made the drunkard,
It has produced the movie unfit for children,
And has recorded the indecent song.
It has broken the morals of the adolescent and made of the adult a thief.
It has bought for a few hours the body of a woman.
It has paid for the weapons of the crime and for the wood of the coffin.

O Lord, I offer you this bill with its joyous mysteries,
its sorrowful mysteries.
I thank you for all the life and joy it has given.
I ask your forgiveness for the hard it has done.
But above all, Lord, I offer it to you as a symbol of all the labors of men, indestructible money,
which tomorrow will be changed into your eternal life.
Prayer delivered by Peter Marshall before the United States Senate, March 5, 1948.

Grant, O Lord, that this assembly of freemen, chosen to lead a nation that loves and lives its freedom, may give hope and help to all those who, loving liberty, long to live in it.

May no cowardice or callous selfishness make us reluctant to assume the responsibilities of leadership in a world hungry for hope. This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, who is the hope of our salvation. Amen.