



## **AGC Guidance on Prayer in the Military at Non-Chapel-Centric Functions**

- 1 – *Prayer is first/always worship, a sincere approach/humble intercession before God.  
The audience of prayer is not a command or crew - the Audience is God alone!  
Access to this Holy Omnipotent God is by grace through the work of Jesus Christ.*
- 2 – *Prayer ought always to please God.  
We do not compose prayers to please an audience, a crew, or a command.  
-Their approval of our prayer is incidental to God's approval, our mission  
-Constant anxiety over another's opinion of your prayer obstructs your prayer*
- 3 – *Prayer should not be used as a weapon to "intentionally" offend other people.  
Prayer is a vital part of the Christian Chaplain's Armor (a warfare metaphor).  
But praying "in Jesus Name" to "brandish" one's Constitutional Liberty is a sin!  
If your intent is to "thumb your nose" at another chaplain, you have breached  
the 3<sup>rd</sup> Commandment, taking the name of the LORD thy God in vain.*
- 4 – *Prayer at Ceremonies and Command Functions should always be contextualized.  
Pray in keeping w/the purpose for the Ceremony, and use Scripture if possible.  
Command events are not Religious Ceremonies, but contain religious elements.  
The Government/Chaplain Corps policy is pluralism – Pluralism is reciprocal.  
Pluralism is NOT ecumenism. Your prayer does not have to be ecumenical.*
- 5 - *Prayer at a Command Function is the prerogative of the Commanding Officer.  
The CO owns the ceremony, his guidance should be earnestly considered.  
Build a good relationship w/your CO and be proactive in learning expectations.  
Chaplains who cannot abide by the guidance of the CO may recuse themselves.*
- 6 – *It is impossible "not to offend" someone when praying. Accept this, but be sensitive.  
Atheists in a command formation are offended when anyone prays.  
There is no such thing as a "non-sectarian prayer."*
- 7 – *Prayer is a freedom of religion, speech, and conscience issue, even for Chaplains.  
No Chaplain has the authority to tell an AGC Chaplain how to pray.  
-The SCOTUS Greece vs Galloway NY case (May 2014) confirms this  
Veteran Chaplains' opinions should be welcomed, but they are not prescriptive.*
- 8 – *Every public prayer, and everyone who offers public prayer will be different.  
This is a witness to the diversity that we say we celebrate in the military.  
- So expect Jews to pray like Jews, expect Muslims to pray like Muslims,  
and expect Christians to pray like Christians, etc.*
- 9 – *Your approach before & departure from the Throne of Grace should honor God!*
- 10 – *Expect feedback, both good and not so good.  
If a supervisory Chaplain chides you for your prayer, notify the AGC home office.  
If you feel coerced into recusing yourself from praying, again, please notify us.*