

Learning to Pray

Matthew 6:5 And **when thou prayest**, thou shalt not be as the **hypocrites** *are*: for they love to pray **standing** in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, **that they may be seen of men**. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. 6

But thou, **when thou prayest**, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. 7 But **when ye pray**, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen *do*: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. 8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

- There is a tension in the Scriptures about prayer. Both truths are taught.

- Prayer is really just tuning in to God's will and what He wants done
 - God is waiting on us to act. He wants us to pray before He will move
 - God will do His will but at the same time He is calling on us to beg Him in prayer to do many things
 - We are to beg Him for guidance, provision, mercy, forgiveness, and protection
 - We do not and cannot understand this but we can believe and obey
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- Don't forget that in this passage of Scripture Jesus is contrasting true and false righteousness.
 - He showed it the the right way and the wrong way to give
 - He talks about the right way to fast and the wrong way
 - In these verses He is talking about our prayers

Matthew 6:9 After this manner therefore pray ye:

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. 10

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in

heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

1. When you pray 6:5 And **when thou prayest**, thou shalt not be as the **hypocrites** *are*: for they love to pray **standing** in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, **that they may be seen of men**. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

- a. We are expected to pray because He said when not if
- b. He says when but doesn't tell us when
- c. God's people prayed at many different times.
 - i. They had scheduled times in the morning, noon, and evening
 - ii. They prayed when they were in great need
 - iii. Jesus prayed as He gave out food
 - iv. Jesus prayed all night

- v. The church met and prayed till Peter was released from prison
 - d. God's people want to be in communication with Him
 - e. So the material will here will deal with how we pray since it is expected that we will pray
 - f. The first decision you will make today is that you will develop the habit of praying
 - i. Pray from your heart
 - ii. Pray believing and trusting God
 - iii. Pray seeking His will
2. Do not pray to be seen of men **6:5** And **when thou prayest,** thou shalt not be as the **hypocrites are:** for they love to pray **standing** in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, **that they may be seen of men.** Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

- a. Remember that hypocrites are actors putting on a show so never do that. They are playing to an audience. We pray to an audience of One
- b. It was common in the New Testament for those that prayed to stand
- c. There was nothing wrong with standing to pray but with praying to be seen
- d. When the hour of prayer came they prayed but they were doing it to be seen
- e. Their audience was people, not God
- f. By praying with the wrong motive they lost all hope that God would hear and bless. They lost their reward. They had been rewarded by men
- g. This in no way means that you shouldn't pray in public only that you are not to pray to be seen of men
- h. Also be careful not to brag about your prayer life
- i. Decision number 2. Decide now that you will not pray to impress people but to talk to God!

3. Do pray so that God will hear you **Matthew 6 But thou, when thou prayest,** enter into thy closet, and

when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

- a. Never pray to make a show of it
- b. Know when you pray that you are talking to the Lord Jesus
- c. Pray knowing that God will reward and answer your prayers **Hebrews 11:6** But without faith *it is impossible to please him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.
- d. So you are going to pray. The time isn't important. The attitude is important
- e. You know that you are talking to God. You know that He is able to meet your needs **Philippians 4:4** Rejoice in the Lord alway: *and* again I say, Rejoice. **5** Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord *is* at hand. **6** Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. **7** And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your

hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

4. What not to say when you pray **7** But **when ye pray**, use not **vain repetitions**, as the **heathen do**: for they think that they shall be heard for their **much speaking**.
- a. Don't repeat a prayer just for saying a prayer
 - b. The Hindus, the Muslims, Catholics and many of you have learned to repeat prayers and think that God hears them
 - i. Praying a certain number of times a day
 - ii. Saying the same number of things
 - iii. Believing that by saying those things that God will hear

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee.

Blessed art thou amongst women,

and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God,

pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

- c. The Lord's prayer as you think of it was never meant for repeating
- d. Do not think that you have to say a lot to get God to do what you are asking Him to do
- e. Do not try to say lots of pretty things to get God to hear

- f. Realize that you do not have to yell for God to hear you
 - g. Decide now that you will learn to pray from your heart.
 - i. You will not use repeated prayers but express what is in your heart
 - ii. You will not try to use a lot of words to get Him to listen to you
 - iii. You will not believe that He is a God that needs to be convinced
 - iv. You will pray believing and expecting Him to answer
5. Know that God already knows what you are praying about **8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.**
- a. You do not need to convince God. He just wants you to ask **James 4:2 Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.**
 - b. You really can't twist His arm or pull a fast one on Him

- c. He answers prayers because they are according to His will **James 4:3** *Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.*
- d. He knows what you need **Matthew 6:32** (For after **all these things** do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of **all these things.** ³³ But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and **all these things** shall be added unto you.
- e. Realize that when you pray that you are talking to your Father **8** *Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.*
- i. Do you have that relationship with Him
 - ii. Do you know that He is your Father and you are His child
- f. Pray knowing that He wants what is best for you. If you ask Him for bread He will not give you a rock
- g. Know that He really doesn't need to be convinced. He already loves you