

Prayer 101 – Lesson 1

Matthew 6:5-13

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 (Hidden/Concealed); and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions (Jesus Jesus Jesus), 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.

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.

Why Prayer 101?

- Prayer is communication with God.
- Prayer is the direct line to the throne of God.
- Without Prayer, our walk with God becomes weak as no communication with God takes place.
- How can you have a relationship with someone that you don't speak to?
- How long would a marriage last if two people never spoke to one another?
- Or in some cases, only when one person wants something from the other person.

“Communication that builds relationships is dialogue.”

- The more two people share with one another, the closer the relationship becomes.

- Genuine prayer has all of the qualities and characteristics of a deeply meaningful conversation between two people.
- God said to the prophet Isaiah, “Come now, and let us reason (Put our heads together) (Strategize) together” (Isa. 1:18).
- Picture if you will this image of God and Isaiah sitting down together for a good talk.”
- How often do we stop in our prayers and be quiet long enough for God to speak to us?

So we understand from the scriptures that God desires for us to speak to Him.

- He wants us to communicate with Him,
- And this communication is called prayer.

But there are a few strategic things to understand about prayer before you enter into it.

- If you don’t understand these, it is entirely probable that you will be wasting your time and praying prayers that God will never hear.

“Pray to thy Father which is in secret” vs 6

- I’ve heard literally hundreds of sermons through the years that tell us that we need to pray,
- But I have heard very few of these explain to us how to speak and communicate to a God who dwells in secret.

If someone you wanted to speak to dwelt in secret, you would have to know a few secrets if you wanted to go to their house or speak to them.

- These “secrets” if you will can mean the difference between having your prayers answered and not having them answered.
- This is important to understand, when you need a miracle in your life.
- This is significant to grasp if your situation is such that you need something that only God can give.

Let’s talk about these secrets...

Vs 5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites (Actor/Pretender) 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.

- Vs 5 teaches us that a pretender or hypocrite's prayers are never heard by God or answered by Him.
- Just because you're talking doesn't mean God is listening.
- He's not interested in causing you to appear spiritual if indeed you are not.
- Some people are more interested in having other people hear them pray than they are God actually hearing their prayers.

Here's another secret...

Vs 7 also teaches us that when a person uses vain repetitions, they will not be heard no matter how many times they say the same thing over and over)

So two things

1. Don't pretend.
2. Don't have a memorized prayer that you say over and over.

But what does vs 8 tell us?

"... for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him."

Here's the first thing to understand about prayer.

- Before you can understand how to pray, you have to understand who He is...
- He is our heavenly father.

Isaiah 9:6

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Luke 11:13

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

- He is not some careless bystander in your spiritual walk.
- He is your Heavenly father.

Let's talk about the role of a father for a few minutes.

What does a father do in a family?

- He protects.
- He provides – food, shelter, health, emotional stability, financially -.
- He teaches
- He gives guidance
- He disciplines

God is all of these things and much more!

- He is the best father anyone could ever have.
- He's more than the dad who comes to every game.
- He's more than the dad who never forgets birthdays or Christmas's or any other opportunity to bless His kids.
- He's more than the dad who brings home the paycheck every week without fail.
- He's the dad who is bigger and stronger and smarter than any other dad on the block.
- He is Alpha Omega
- He Is the King of Kings
- He is the Lord of Lords

- At the mention of His name every Knee would bow and every tonged confess.
- He is the Almighty God!

And He is our Heavenly Father.

- No one can love us like He can
- No one watches over us like He does.
- No one can provide for us like He can.

He spoke the Earth and the Sun and the Moon and all the stars into existence.

- He created everything that walks, swims, flies, or creeps upon the Earth.
- He blew the breath of life into Adams nostrils and gave life to the Human race.
- He's the one who called down fire and brimstone onto Sodom and Gamora
- He's the one who fed the Children of Israel with Manna and quail.
- He's the one who raises the dead and opened blind eyes.
- Read your bible, He's an amazing God,
- And to think that He is your Heavenly Father!

Then Isaiah called Him the Everlasting Father.

- He's not moving away any time soon.
- He's not going to abandon you.
- He's not going to only show up on certain days of the week.
- He's not going to be there today but not tomorrow.
- He's the Everlasting Father.

“Which art in Heaven”

- Hey folks, He still sits on the throne.
- No matter how bad your situation is, no matter how bleak your situation is, He is still in control.
- Your weakness is not His weakness.
- Your inability is not His inability.

- Just because you're having a bad day does not mean that He has lost control.
 - We need only get into alignment with His will for our lives
- The sooner we realize that He is the One in charge, the sooner we will receive our miracle.
- If your thinking puts Him in some demeaned state of second to the thing that is trying to destroy you, then you are never going to receive the miracle that you need.
 - Your thinking
 - Your understanding of whom He is and His will for your life can decide for you whether or not your prayer is answered.

Our reading let's us know that there is a mental state that we need to be in when we pray.

- Our motives need to be right.
- Our attitude needs to be right.
- Our understanding of who He is needs to be right.

- Before we start to pray.
- Before the words fall off of our lips.

Not to be seen of men, but to be heard of God.

- No vain repetitions.
- Sincerity
- Honesty
- Genuine reverence

Knowing that it is His will to bless us.

- Sometimes we come to God with the thinking that maybe He would want to bless us and maybe He wouldn't want to bless us.

- Like He's fickle or something.
- Like He can't make up His mind.
- Maybe He's confused about how He feels about us.

- Here me, we may be confused about how we feel about Him, but He is resolute in how he feels about you.
 - He went to the Cross of Calvary for you.
 - He paid the ultimate price for you.
 - He bankrupts Heaven for you.
 - It's His perfect will to bless you today!
 - You are His child and He wants to bless His children every moment of every day.

And here is the rest of vs 8.

- He knows what you need before you even ask for it.
- He's already been thinking about your problem.
- He's already had your situation on His mind.

He not only knows what your problem is, but vs 8 also tells us that He knows what you have need of.

- Not only has He already been thinking about your problem, but also He has already figured out the solution.
- Before you even started to pray!

Right now some of you are sitting here with problems too big for you to handle.

- Some of us have situations we have no idea how to fix.
- Things in our lives that we can't control
- Situations that are beyond our power to change.
 - But isn't it something to understand today that not only does God already know about these things, but He also has the solution to our problem.

He's just waiting for us to take the situation to Him in prayer.

- Sincere prayer that will touch the heart of God.
- If you would like to come and talk to Him, Why don't you come right now and let's talk to our Heavenly Father for a little while.
- Let's trust Him with our situation and our needs right now.