

Matthew 6:9-13

Prayer pt. 2

Devoted: Week 5

Introduction

Grab your bibles and turn to Matthew 6...

Things with the building are moving along!

We're in a series called **Devoted** where we're looking at the practical implications of what it looks like to be devoted to Jesus...

And **Acts 2:42-47** has served as our chair text because it highlights the **devotions** of the church at its conception, giving us a tangible model and framework for the things that we need to be devoted to...

And there's 4 things that we've seen the church was devoted to: The Word, Fellowship, Breaking bread and prayer...

Last week we looked at how the earlier church was devoted to prayer, and the implications surrounding it, and I challenged you on embracing the power of prayer...

But week I want to take it a step farther and talk about **how to pray**...

And let's be honest some of you just need this...

Different types of Prayer:

- *The wondering prayer*... One thing leads to another
- *The short and to the point prayer*... typically pre-meal
- *The long-winded prayer* ...

- *The pray for everything but the actual request prayer*... supposed to pray for little Timmy but we pray for everything but Timmy...
- *The preacher prayer*... Highly theological and big words

OK, Ok, I could keep going...

It's hard to be devoted to something without a framework and a foundation to work from...

And if we're honest I bet most of us would say that one of the biggest gaps that we have in our devotion to Jesus is our prayer life...

DA Carson said if you really want to embarrass the average Christian, just ask her to tell you about her private prayer life. You can answer pretty well...**awkward shuffling**.¹

But before I give you a model for how to pray, I want to start by reminding you **why** we pray...

Prayer at its most basic level is a submission of dependance...

Let me ask it like this: **what does your prayer life show that you believe about God?**

Trevin Wax says this: If we were to be honest, many of us believe that the "heavy lifting" of ministering to our city comes in the form of our **Sunday gatherings, community groups, missional events**, etc. While these things are necessary, when it comes to prayer, we're often times "**functional atheists**."

For many of us we say that we believe in God, but our prayer life, or lack thereof, makes it seem as though we don't believe there is a God...

We lack dependance... And we lack dependance when we forget God's redeeming love...

¹ Carson, *Call for Spiritual Reformation*, 16–17

- He saved us when we were dead... Opened our eyes to who He is and what He's capable of and what He's called us to...
- We need to come to Him daily on those grounds and declare our continued dependence as we live in light of who God is and what He saved us to be...

When we look at Jesus's life- if anyone was qualified to go without prayer it was Him, and yet prayer plays a key role in the life and ministry of Jesus... Let me show you what I mean:

- **Luke 3:21** Jesus prays at His baptism...
- **Luke 4:1** Jesus prays through His temptation...
- **Luke 5:16** Says that Jesus often withdrew to pray...
- **Luke 6:12** shows us that Jesus spent the night praying before he appointed the disciples...
- **Luke 9:18** we see Jesus again off praying right before He asks His disciples who people say He is...
- **Luke 9:29** after the disciples made their confession of faith, Jesus took the disciples on a mountain to pray...
- **Luke 10:2** Jesus tells His followers to pray for missional laborers...
- **Luke 11:1-13** where we are today, Jesus is going to teach on prayer...
- The again in **Luke 18:1-8** Jesus will teach on prayer again saying to always pray...
- In **Luke 22:32** Jesus prayed for Peter...
- In **Luke 22:39** Jesus tells His disciples to pray that they will not fall into temptation...
- And then in **Luke 23:46** we see that even Jesus words were a prayer...

Jesus' life was marked by prayer... Prayer was a connection point with the Father, it was a means of power, it was an anchor of dependence...

If Jesus was dependent on prayer as a means of power and connection, what does this mean for us?!?

- Prayer is a gift that enables us direct access with the God who made us, saved us- it is an anchor that keeps us tethered and dependent on God...

Ok, so **how do we do it? What does it look like?** To answer this, we're going to look to the source of the early church- where they would have learned to pray from, **Jesus...**

Who just so happens to give offer a model to work from here is **Matthew 6**, let me read it and then we will walk through it...

Matthew 6:9-13

9 "Therefore, you should pray like this:
Our Father in heaven,
your name be honored as holy,
10 Your kingdom come.
Your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
11 Give us today our daily bread.
12 And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
13 And do not bring us into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.

Ok, let's dive in and walk through this and understand it and apply it...

Let me start here with the word Father...

Tim Lucas: *Any understanding of prayer begins with the recognition of who is on each end of the line.*

Andrew Murray would say it like this: *It is in prayer and its answer that the interchange of love between the father and his child takes place, it is to prayer that God has given the right to take hold of him, and his strength.*

For many of us we miss God as Dad...

- **Example:** my kids want to be with me because they know I love them...
- God wants the same for us!

I want to acknowledge this: for some of you the word *father is painful*...

Jon Tyson, *Unless you break the stronghold of false images of God in your mind, you'll never be drawn to prayer.*

- I know some of you can get stuck here...

I need you to understand the nature of the Father Jesus is talking about...

- You need to see how much your heavenly Father loves you... He let His Son die for you... God went to great lengths to make you par to his family...

We have to understand we are talking to the perfect Dad that loves us, who has redeemed us and doesn't hold anything against us...

- This should be freedom and safety...

Jesus then goes on to say this about the **Father** in verse 9: **your name be honored as holy.**

So, here's the first part of the framework Jesus holds up when it comes to prayer: **Adoration**

What I want you to notice here though is that this is a request, not just a declaration...

- This whole prayer is a request!

Would God be holy to me- would it be set apart above everything else... I want you to be first before everything else...

Oh how our eyes shift... We need God to help us keep our eyes on Him...

- I wonder how many of you are trying to do this on your own apart from asking the Lord to help us here??
- Trying to manufacture this as opposed for asking for this!

Verse 10 **Your kingdom come.**

Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Advancement

Advance your mission- Would you come Lord Jesus- please return and make all things new!

- Come complete what you started!

Advance in my heart- would I believe the reality of your kingdom and live it out in my life...

- *Live with an eternal perspective, would I be about the things you're about... Would I be centered on your Kingdom and not mine...*

Verse 11 **Give us today our daily bread.**

Provision

God give us what we **need** on a daily basis...

We need to assume the posture of asking God to **provide** what we need...

- This is asking God to meet our physical needs...

I also think there's a spiritual element to this, that our greatest daily need would be met, that God would be the sustain substance in our life, that more than needing bread, what we need is Him and when we're feasting on Him we can trust that He will meet our needs...

- Jesus would say that He is the bread of life... He is what we need for life more than food...

I actually think there's **a key here to why we aren't more serious about our prayer life**...

- Because we think that we can make it on our own... That we can provide for ourselves...
- We look to other things to sustain us other than Jesus...

Verse 12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

Here Jesus points us to **confession**:

- Acknowledging you sin before a perfect and Holy God...
- Acknowledging how you see the sin of others in light of the forgiveness you have received...

I love the **asking for forgiveness** here...

- It shows us that repentance is more than feeling bad, it is a grabbing hold of the forgiveness extended through Christ...
- Repentance is an action not feeling...

Verse 13 And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Protection

The Bible is clear in **James 1:13-14** that God doesn't cause us to sin, so what is Jesus pointing to here...

He's saying that we should pray for God to not let us **succumb to temptation**...²

- Temptation from who? The evil one...

Ephesians 6:11-13

11 Put on the full armor of God so that you can stand against the schemes of the devil. **12** For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this darkness, against evil, spiritual forces in the heavens. **13** For this reason take up the full armor of God, so that you may be able to resist...

We need protection... Prayer is a powerful weapon...

So let me summarize the model like this...

- **Adoration** - would we adore you
- **Advancement** – would your Kingdome advance- would you return and make all things new... Would your Kingdom advance in me and through me!
- **Provision** – Would you meet my physical needs and my deepest spiritual needs...
- **Confession** – would you forgive me, and help me anchor myself in the gospel, and would you help me forgive others...
- **Protection** – would you protect me from falling into temptation believing that other things are better than you!

Now, here's what I want you to understand, this is a template not a recital, it's a way to pray, it's not the only way to pray, we see lots of other prayers in the NT after this...

It gets at the heart of prayer, **that prayer is not a discipline, it is a posture of dependance based out of desperation**...

It's not just praying more for the sake of praying, but realizing how much you're in need of God...

- Each point that Jesus holds up are places where we have to be desperately dependent on God...
- **Until we see it as that we will fail to be a people of prayer...**

Example:

One of the most famous football plays is rooted in prayer... It's called a Hail Mary...

- *Explain what it is...* And that it's a point where you have nothing left... Your desperate and your depending on this one play to make it happen...

I think this should be the attitude of the Christian life... That we are **desperate** and we're **dependent** on God to come through...

² Mark Driscoll, *Pray like Jesus*.

I told you this at the very beginning, but what I hope that you see in this is that **Prayer is a posture of dependance**... Every one of those points of application are places where you put your dependance...

Here's why this is so important... When you understand that pray is so much about dependence then you begin to understand how much you need it...

Our hearts are so prone to wonder...

- **Gospel...**

Prayer is a tool that God has given us that is like a tap, that taps into the power of God as you depend on Him instead of depending on yourself...

And I want to challenge you with this rethinking what prayer is about...

- Rethinking about it in the sense that you **don't pray because God tells you to pray, or God needs you to pray, but you pray because you need to pray...**

Your heart needs it... I want you to think about it like this: *What if prayer wasn't to fill God in, but for him to fill us up? What if prayer wasn't about transactions and requests, but about renewing a relationship every day?*³

For us to be **devoted** to prayer we have to see our how great our need for **dependance is...**

- We can't but God can... We are in desperate need...

Paul Miller: *If you are not praying, then you are quietly confident that time, money, and talent are all you need in life. You'll always be a little too tired, a little too busy to pray. But if, like Jesus, you realize you can't do life on your own, then no matter how busy, no matter how tired you are, you will find the time.*

³ Tim Lucas, *Honest To God*.

Man, this is so true... How many of you parents feel this way?? If I can just read a book...

Elyse Fitzpatrick⁴ *Give them Grace*: She says what Christian books on parenting are trying to do... give you a formula, and tell you that if you follow it, it will guarantee success in parenting...

- But she points out that God was a perfect father and 1/3 of angels and the two humans he created rebelled...
- She's like, "So, you think you'll be able to out-technique God?"
- She says the really dangerous problem with thinking there is a foolproof way of parenting is it keeps us from the one thing we most need; that is, to cast ourselves down at the feet of Jesus, looking to him for his mercy in our kids' lives. To do what we can't do...

The same is true in all other areas of our life⁵

My hope for my, parenting, my marriage isn't in good Christian techniques in relationships (as important as those are). At the end of the day my hope is in God's grace and the power of God wot work in those areas in spite of me...

My hope for success in our mission here as a church doesn't lie in a superior strategy, or special talent, great preaching or good people, it's based on the impact of God's grace and His power to work through us...

Listen, no skill, not even biblical skill, is sufficient to change you or get you to where you want to be...

We often think that if we can learn all the biblical principles and think that those by themselves guarantee spiritual life.

- Jesus didn't save us by teaching us principles but by giving us resurrection power that we access through prayer!

On pastor says it like this: It is a tragedy to master the principles and then forget the dependency in relationship that gives them life...⁶

⁴ Credit goes to JD Greear, *How to deal with unanswered prayer*.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

The thing that motivates me to pray when I don't want to is that when I pray I am forcing myself, I am disciplining myself to trust and depend on God...

Family listen: ***A lack of prayer means that you have a lack of dependance...***

For many of you, the reason why the Christian life is stagnant for you is because you don't pray...

- View it as a conversation- talk normal to God...
- Pray all throughout the day...
 - One long conversation all day.
- Husbands you should be leading your family in prayer regularly...

Last thing, pray with other believers:

- All pronouns are plural... point to cooperate prayer...
- There is power when the people of God pray...
- Community Groups, do not punt here, start here...

Conclusion [VAMP]

Appeal to Christian/non-Christian

Prayer time...

OK last thing before we close, very practically as it relates to prayer, let's talk about implementing it in your life:

Use Jesus model as a framework- but walk in freedom...

- Break the rituals and lean into dependance...
 - ***Mealtime prayer:***
 - *If this becomes a ritual stop doing it...*
 - *Don't ask to bless the food, use the food as a reminder...*
 - ***Bedtime prayer...***

NOTE: Anytime prayer becomes ritualistic, stop that rhythm...

- ***Example: Adalyn* bedtime prayer***

Set aside time to pray

- In the morning
- In the car on the way to or from work- at night