The Secret Place — Delivery Transcript

Matthew 6:5–13 (ESV) · Wes Terry · Sunday, February 14, 2021 · *The Reward*

Watch or listen: Subsplash (video & audio) · YouTube

> ⚠️ ***AUTO-GENERATED TRANSCRIPT — verify against the audio before quoting publicly.*** *Produced from a Descript transcription of the Broadview Church sermon recording and lightly cleaned (filler words removed, obvious mis-hears of names and Scripture references corrected). No timestamps. This is not a publication-ready manuscript and it is not Wes's exact words for print. Check any line against the recording before it goes on a graphic, in an email, or in a book.*

Alright, if you will take your Bibles and open to Matthew chapter 6 as we continue our series entitled The Reward. One of the greatest mistakes that you can make in the Christian life is to assume that prayer is going to come easily or naturally for you. The truth is that it doesn't, at least not for most people, and at least not the kind of prayer that Jesus describes in the passage we're looking at today. There's a handful of people that have the personality type that makes solitude and mysticism kind of easy for them, but that's not the majority.

The majority of us lean a different way, and then take and add to that the fact that we live in America, which has all sorts of distractions and noise vying for our attention and pulling us away from this idea of private prayer or really pressing into prayer as Jesus described. It just makes prayer excruciatingly difficult for most Christians. You may find yourself even as one of those people who, you know, you believe in Christ, you think Jesus died for your sins, you're trusting in him for salvation. You believe God raised him from the dead.

You believe you're going to go to heaven when you die. You maybe even go to church. Maybe you go to church twice a week. But you don't pray. You don't pray. You would say my life is characterized by prayerlessness. I pray at the beginning of my day or mealtimes or with the kids at night, but by and large, that's it. And there's a problem with that kind of life. There are serious consequences to a life characterized by prayerlessness. It's kind of like having a car and always running your car on empty.

I don't know if you do this. I just cannot do this. But some people, they love to run their car on empty. It's kind of like a constant gamble. And they ride on fumes, you know, all the time. And with a heart of prayerlessness, you're essentially riding on fumes spiritually speaking. And that's fine so long as you're only going short distances. From here to there, nothing really big happens in your life, no big suffering, no big conflict, no big doubts or wrestling of unbelief. But as soon as something big happens in your life and there's not some external

force of some relationship or maybe big worship service or some kind of God acting on you externally in some kind of way.

Without that, it won't be long before you're stranded on the side of the proverbial road, struggling in your Christian life wrestling with things like anxiety and bitterness and anger and insecurity and guilt and shame— all marks, all marks of a prayerless heart. And that's not the kind of life that we have to live. That's the kind of life a lot of Christians do live. So if you are to be honest with yourself, what does your prayer life look like? Do you have a praying life or do you have a prayerless life?

And what we're going to see today is Jesus is actually inviting us into a kind of life that enjoys the presence of God on an ongoing basis. The kind of relationship with the Father that Jesus Himself possessed, where he would go to the lonely places and he would pray. He would go and be alone with the Father. And if Jesus, who was God in the flesh, if he had to in his own life get away to be alone with the Father, if he had to master this praying life like we're talking about— if he had to do it, who are we to think that we don't need it?

And more selfishly, if it was possible to experience the presence of God on an ongoing basis, why would you not want that? If it wasn't just, you know, when you went to church or when there was some big cataclysmic event, if you could experience, if you could practice the presence of God on a day-by-day basis, why wouldn't you want to know how to pray in that way? That's exactly the kind of prayer that Jesus is inviting us to pray. But before he tells us his template, he first gives us two warnings about two groups of people who had two counterfeit approaches to prayer.

The first group was called the Pharisees— or the first group was called the hypocrites, which were the Pharisees, the religious leaders. The second group was the Gentiles, and I call that pagan prayer. It's the Greek word ethnē, so it just means someone not Jewish. And both of them have counterfeit approaches to prayer. Let's read first the hypocritical prayer in Matthew chapter 6, starting in verse 5. Jesus says, "And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues"— okay, public prayer in the church house— "and at the street corners"— that would have been not street preachers, but like at the baseball games or the civic events.

They love to be seen by people. That's the motivation of their prayer, "that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward." So the problem with this kind of prayer, the motivation of religious prayer is not to meet with God. It's not to commune with God. The motivation of religious prayer is to use God to be seen by others. This is the kind of prayer that you might be connecting with something when you pray in this way. And we all know what external prayer looks like, right?

It's being asked to pray at your small group, or it's prayer in front of people. And some of you that's your greatest fear, but we all know what this kind of prayer looks like. This kind of prayer doesn't mean that you don't connect with something when you're praying in that way. But for the hypocrites, what happens is they don't really connect with God. They connect with the idea of being accepted by other people. And for a lot of people, it's not just prayer that functions this way. It's their whole approach to religion.

It's a cultural kind of religion. It's a cultural Christianity. Or it's not just Christians. It's, I'm Muslim because I'm Arabic. It's my social context. I'm Hindu because I'm from India. It's how I get accepted by my social context. I'm Catholic because I'm Irish or I'm Italian. It's a cultural approach to Christianity. And Jesus says that kind of prayer is a counterfeit approach to prayer. You're not really connecting with God in that prayer. God instead is a means to an end. It's really having a business kind of relationship with God. In a business relationship, you don't value someone because they're valuable or because they're beautiful or good like you do in a love relationship.

In a business relationship, you value someone because they're useful. And that's what this prayer does— it uses God. It prays to God not because it finds God valuable or worthy of worship; it prays to God because it finds him useful. And what's crazy is according to Jesus, if your prayer life only consists of external prayer, then you're a hypocrite, which is mind-blowing because when we think of hypocrisy, we think big sins. We think going to church and cheating on your wife on Monday. Go to church on Sunday, cheat on your wife on Monday.

Or, you know, you sing in the choir and you're this big important person in church, but then you have a secret double life throughout the week. We think that's hypocrisy. But Jesus says that's not hypocrisy. Hypocrisy is a life that is full of public prayer but void of private prayer. And here's why he says that. He says that because everything else in the Christian life that you do is seen by people. So you pray, seen by people. You give, can be seen by people. You go to church, you're seen by people.

You go on mission trips, you serve, seen by people. The one thing in the Christian life that is not seen by people is private prayer. And Jesus is saying, get this, if the only kind of prayer that you avoid is private prayer, then the reward of private prayer is the thing you love the least. And the reward of private prayer is God Himself. Look at what he says in verse 6. "When you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you."

So he's saying everything else you do is seen by people. This is the whole context of Matthew 6. But when you give, give in secret. When you fast, fast in secret. And when you pray, don't pray externally to be seen by people. Pray in your closet alone, where the only people who see your prayer is you and your Heavenly Father. Because there's a reward in that kind of

prayer that is different from the reward of public prayer. Because the reward of public prayer is you get that reward. You're seen by people.

They say, look at how holy you are, look what a good person you are. Oh, that was such a beautiful prayer. You're such a godly person, but Jesus says when you are in the prayer closet and no one can see what's going on in that closet except you and the Lord, there is a special reward of the presence of God that He gives you in that moment. And here's the hypocrisy, Jesus is saying, if you always avoid that kind of prayer, if you're always avoiding private prayer, it exposes what you really believe about God.

In your notes, it says the presence or the absence of a private prayer life exposes what you really believe or don't believe about the Lord, which means, if private prayer is the thing you love the least, it's the thing you do the least, that means that the reward of private prayer is the thing you value the least. I'm sorry— if you avoid private prayer the most, here we go. Then the reward of private prayer is the thing you love the least. In other words, you don't really believe that God is valuable in and of himself.

If you did, then you would pray privately, because the only reward of private prayer is God Himself, whereas the reward of public prayer is these external motivations. And so for a lot of us, it exposes spiritual hypocrisy in our life. Because if you were honest, you would say, I really don't pray much privately. Almost a hundred percent of my prayers are public. And maybe there is a sense in which I don't really value the reward of private prayer. And so what do your prayers reveal about you? What do they expose about you?

So that's the first counterfeit prayer. Prayer to use God to be seen by people. The second counterfeit approach to prayer is a prayer that seeks to impress God. We call this pagan prayer. And the problem with pagan prayer is that it seeks to impress God, or you might say it seeks to inform God instead of resting in the fatherly love of God. Let's read the passage, Matthew chapter 6, verse 7. "When you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words.

Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him." The word Gentiles is just a reference to— it's a Greek word, ethnē; it's where we get our word nations. It just means a person who's not Jewish but they're still religious. And so these are people who pray, but Jesus is saying, these people, when they pray, they babble. It's the Greek word battalogeō. It kind of sounds like babbling. Or battalogia, that's what it is. Battalogia, even better. It just kind of rolls off the tongue. The reason that they're babbling is because they think that God is naturally inclined with a spirit of hostility towards them.

No matter how desperately you need something, he's not naturally inclined to help. And so without these outlandish displays of verbosity and flowery language and repetition, he's not really going to care. And Jesus is saying that's nonsense. When you pray, you need to

approach the throne of grace with confidence that God knows what you need and desires to give it to you. Your father knows what you need and he desires to give it to you. This is what Paul talks about in Romans 8, that we have not received the spirit of a slave to fall back into a spirit of fear; you've received a spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba!

Father!" So the word Abba just means dad. In a good relationship with your father, you have confidence that he not only knows what you need, but he delights in giving it to you. He says the same thing in Galatians chapter 4: because you're a son of God, God has sent the Spirit of His Son, Jesus Christ, into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God. So again, what do your prayers reveal about you? Do you only pray publicly?

Is the reward of private prayer something that you're not really interested in? Do you, when you pray, are you obsessed with technique and what you say, or repetition and little pet phrases? And do you wrestle with insecurity of, well, I didn't say it the right way, and so God's not really going to answer me? Or are you resting in the love of God, in the fatherly care and compassion? I think if we're honest, many of us struggle much more with those two counterfeit approaches to prayer than we'd like to admit.

But Jesus is inviting us into a different model, a different approach to prayer. And in Jesus' approach to prayer, the reward is not God doing things for you. The reward is not God doing things in you, some kind of interpersonal peace. The reward is God Himself. Now let me show you this in the Lord's Prayer, starting in verse 9 of Matthew 6. He says, when you pray, I want you to pray like this. "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Now I've seen this prayer broken down a lot of different ways, but it's got two basic sections, right? You've got this section. You might call this the heavenly section, the majestic section. But then you have this section, which is much more earthy. It deals with the mundane realities of life like daily bread and forgiveness and holiness. And Jesus combines them together, right?

God is not just interested in you recognizing him as the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords and having his kingdom come on earth. He's also interested in the number of hairs on your head and the daily food in your pantry and you wrestling with things like guilt and insecurity where you're forgiven and anger and bitterness where you forgive others and you're resisting temptation and living a holy life. God cares about both of those things. And Jesus' model is different from the counterfeit models in that he gives us a different where, a different why, and a different what.

The where is not to be seen by people. According to Jesus, he says, when you pray, go into your closet and pray to your father who is in secret. The why is not the same thing as pagan prayer. The why is not to impress God so that He'll give you what you want. The why is not to be recognized by your cultural context and accepted. The why is God Himself. And then the what is different, and really the what of Jesus' model for prayer, I think it's all summed up in that first line, hallowed be your name.

To have God's name hallowed means that we see it as holy, that it is set apart. Really what Jesus is praying, he's praying, I want when you pray, I want you to pray, God, give me a fresh vision of who you are. Help me to see you for who you really are. I've been influenced by the noise and the distractions in my culture. I've been trained and shaped by the circumstances and suffering of my life. I have a tendency to shrink you and fashion a God into my own image who will do what I like and agree with what I say.

But God, I don't want that. I don't want a false God; I want the true God. Help me to hallow your name. Help me to see you as holy. Help me to see you for who you really, really are. Everything in the Lord's Prayer points to that or works towards that or culminates in the name of God being hallowed. Think about it. Your kingdom come. Why does the kingdom of God come? So that his name might be hallowed on the earth. Your will be done in my life and in the life of my family.

Why? So that the name of God would be set apart and holy. God, give us our daily bread. Provide for us. Why? So that your name would be set apart and holy. So that when people see your provision in my life, they say that there is a God in heaven who is good, who does all things well. God lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Help my life to display the wisdom of Christ and the beauty of Christ. Why? So that your name would be hallowed, so that your glory would be seen in my life and through my life.

Everything in the Lord's prayer works towards or culminates in the name of God being hallowed. It all works toward and culminates in this vision of God. Help me see you. Show me your glory. Let me understand you as you really are. And the way that happens, according to Jesus, I think is really summed up in the first four words. What does it mean to get a fresh vision of God? How are we to understand God for who he really is and how do we relate to him through Jesus Christ? It's all in those first four words of the prayer.

"Our Father in heaven." For Jesus, everything— rejecting the counterfeits and embracing Jesus' model for prayer requires us to relate to God as a father. He's been saying it over and over again. He says it in verse one about giving. He says, don't give to be seen, because your father in heaven won't reward you. Let your giving be done in secret. Verse 4, so your father will reward you in secret. He says the same thing about prayer in verse 6. He says it again in verse 8. The fatherhood of God is what makes Christian prayer Christian.

The fatherhood of God is what makes Christian prayer distinctively Christian. It's what separates Christian prayer from pagan prayer or religious prayer. And it came on the scene with Jesus Christ. You go back in the Old Testament, this idea of referring to God as Father is scant. Fifteen times is God ever referred to as a father. And never is it encouraged that you refer to God as a father. But when Jesus comes on the scene, in the Gospels alone, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, Jesus refers to God as Father 165 times.

And 164 of those 165 times, Jesus is talking about relating to God as Father with his disciples. So notice he says, our Father. So when you are in me, you can relate to God as Father. The religious prayer could not relate to God as Father, which is why they prayed the way that they prayed. They prayed to be seen by people. Pagan prayer did not relate to God as Father. They were seeing God as this kind of angry God in the sky, but through Jesus, those things are resolved and we're able to see God for who He really is.

We're able to rest in the love of our Father. And notice also, Jesus doesn't just say it's our Father. He says it's our Father in heaven. He puts those two things together and really if you think about those four words, the two words sitting next to each other really feel like they contradict. It's a paradox. That God would simultaneously be a father. He would be close and merciful and compassionate, but he's also in heaven, which means he's transcendent and majestic and glorious and God is both of those things. Like Psalm 23, the Lord is my shepherd.

He's the Lord, he's the creator, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, but he's also my shepherd, which means he is close and he's compassionate and gives me what I need. Jesus says the way you need to understand God if you're going to get a fresh vision of God is to not only see him as Father, but to see him as our Father in heaven. To see the majesty of God and the mercy of God, to see the transcendence of God and the immanence of God, that He is big and beyond and holy, and in a class of His own, and that He is also merciful and full of love and grace.

Our Father in heaven. And if you think about the counterfeit approaches to prayer, the thing that they got wrong is they erred on one side of the pendulum or the other. Religious prayer did not see God as in heaven. It didn't see the majesty of God or the holiness of God or the holiness of God. They used God. They did not pray, God, your kingdom come, your will be done. They said, God, I'm using you to make my kingdom come and my will be done. I'm using you to be accepted by my culture.

I'm using you for my agenda. So they only saw God as Father, but not as in heaven. Whereas the pagan prayer only saw God as in heaven, they didn't see God as Father. They had insecurity and guilt and shame because God is up in heaven, He's angry, He's mad, and I've got to earn, improve, and show myself to be worthy of him answering my prayers and Jesus

says, no, you've missed it. He's not just in heaven. He's a father. He's full of mercy and he's full of grace. So in your life, do you feel the tension?

Are you able to relate to God as Father, but also in heaven, that you see His Majesty, but you also see His mercy, that you are submitted to His rule and authority and kingship, but you are also resting in His love and His grace. That can only be done through the Lord Jesus Christ. Only through Jesus will we be able to relate to God as our Father in heaven. Otherwise, you're going to find yourself on one of the other two sides of the pendulum. You're going to be trying to become self-righteous and seen as righteous because you're better than others.

Or you're going to always struggle with sin and shame and unforgiveness. But through Jesus Christ, you can have your sins forgiven. Jesus has done for you what you'll never be able to do for yourself. Only because Jesus was cast out can we be adopted and brought in. He cried out, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me so that we could cry out Father, have mercy on me, a sinner. We can say like Isaiah, I'm undone, but also experience healing and forgiveness through the tongs of the altar that's placed on our lips and says your sins are forgiven.

Some of you, the reason you're not able to pray is because you don't have a relationship with Jesus Christ. You're not a Christian. Some of you are Christians, but your prayer life is not shaped by that gospel reality. Your prayer life is more shaped by insecurity and fear than it is confidence and rest in the love of God. Or your prayer life is shaped by a sense of self-righteousness and coercing God to do what you want because aren't I worthy of it instead of humility because of his grace in your life that you did not deserve, but he gave to you anyway.

It's what John Wesley mentioned in his own ministry: he actually wasn't truly converted until later on in his Christian life. And this may be the case for you. This may be why you never pray. You never pray privately because you don't really possess a true saving relationship with Jesus Christ. You've got the spirit of a servant, but you don't have the spirit of a son or a daughter. John Wesley said, it was I who went to America to convert others, but I was never myself converted to God. I had the faith of a servant, but not that of a son.

So what about you? What do your prayers reveal about you? Do you have the faith of a son and a daughter? And do you have a prayer life that is completely submitted to the rule and the kingship of God? Because when you have that kind of vision, then the name of God is being hallowed in your heart. When you see Him as both our Father and in heaven, His name is being hallowed in your heart. And then you'll discover the true purpose of prayer. And the true purpose of prayer is not to use God, it's not to be seen by people, it's not to inform God, it's not to impress God.

The point of prayer is to adore God. And when you see him as Father in heaven, you will adore him for who he really is. You'll treasure him for the treasure that he really is. Adoration is the point and the purpose of prayer. Your heart was made. My heart was made to be still and know who God is. Our heart was made to be satisfied in God. That's why Augustine said it's restless until it rests in the Lord Jesus Christ. It reminds me of the story of Mary and Martha, which was told right before the Lord's Prayer in Luke's gospel.

He tells a story about Martha who invited Jesus over to her house and as you might imagine because the Lord was coming over, she was adamant about having everything in order. The house was immaculate. Spick and span. There was a lot of things to be done. And so she was busy in the kitchen and doing things that needed to be done, whereas her sister was just sitting at the feet of Jesus, being lazy, listening to his teaching. And eventually Martha got so worked up and angry that she comes over to the Lord and says, Lord, do you not care that my sister is leaving me alone to do all the work to prepare for your visit?

Jesus' response is instructive. You might have imagined he would say, Yeah, Mary, why don't you get up and help your sister, but he doesn't. The Lord said to her, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. There's only one thing that you really need in life. And Mary has chosen the good portion, and it will not be taken away from her. And most commentators believe Jesus is quoting Psalm 27:4, which says, one thing I've asked of the Lord, one thing I'll seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.

To gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple. The thing we need more than anything else is communion with our Heavenly Father. The thing your heart craves more than anything else is not financial success. It's not being accepted by your peers. No job, no achievement, no success will ever compare to the joy and satisfaction of the presence of God and the fullness of God in your life. And God has given us prayer as a vehicle for pressing into that. And if you have not been using prayer in that way, then you have not really understood the point of prayer.

If you've only used prayer to use God or get God to do X, Y, or Z, or if in your prayer you are totally insecure and wondering, does God really even want to answer my prayers? If your prayer has been more shaped by those counterfeit approaches than this sincere, genuine approach of Jesus, then you're missing the point of prayer. God is inviting you. He's inviting me. He's inviting our congregation to experience his fullness and to experience his presence on an ongoing basis. That we could practice the presence of God. What does your prayer life reveal about you?

Do you only pray publicly? Do you never pray privately? Have you ever really experienced the reward of God's presence through private prayer? And if that's the case, does that expose the fact that maybe the reward of private prayer is the thing you love the least? Does it

expose spiritual hypocrisy in your life? I know it did in mine this week. I mean, I pray privately, but the degree to which I pray privately versus publicly, how does that weigh out in your life? Does it expose hypocrisy in your heart? Maybe this morning the Lord has exposed the absence of genuine saving faith in your heart.

You thought you were a Christian, but you're really not a Christian. You were a cultural Christian. You were a Christian because your mom was a Christian or your uncle was a Christian or your friends were becoming Christians, and I didn't want to be left out, and so I just did what everybody else did. And you've never really experienced the genuine presence of God because you've never had a sincere faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. You'll never know him as Father in heaven unless he's our Father, unless you're in Christ. And the only way to be in Christ is to repent of sin and to surrender your heart to the Lord.

To say, I know I can't save myself, Jesus, I believe only you can save me. And so I plead for your mercy. I call on the name of the Lord. And anybody who will do that will be saved. Some of you are Christians, quote unquote Christians in name only, and you need to give your life to Christ this morning. Some of you are not Christians. You know you're not a Christian. You would be marked by that pagan approach to prayer where you know you shoot up prayers here and there, but you always feel like you've got to prove something.

You've never really heard this idea that God would accept me for who I am, not because I'm valuable, but because Jesus was valuable for me. You've never heard this beautiful, wonderful, good news that you are far worse off than you could have ever imagined, but in Christ, you are far more loved than you could have ever dared hope, and that Jesus Christ has already accomplished on the cross everything that's needed for you to be forgiven and granted eternal life. All that's left for you to do is receive it. To admit the fact that you cannot save yourself, and to trust in the sufficiency of Jesus' death and resurrection for you.

And if you've never done that, then I want you to make that decision this morning. If the Lord's calling you, then respond in faith. Whether you've been a Christian for 20 years in the church and you've got a reputation, maybe a Sunday school teacher or a deacon, if he's calling you, would you repent and trust in Christ? or if you would never darken the doors of a church because you feel like you don't fit in. And he's calling you. He's not calling you to fit in at a church. He's calling you to be part of his family.

He wants to be your father in heaven. And you can reach out to us. You can let us know about this decision in your life by commenting below or texting our church phone number at 325-692-2360. You can go to the website broadview.life/next and indicate that you want to take your next step of baptism if that's something that the Lord is calling you to do. A lot of you, maybe the majority of you watching this, are Christians, and there's some private prayer, there's some sense in which you know the reward of private prayer.

But you need to grow in this area of your life. And this is something I think the Lord's calling all of us to do as a congregation. It was really easy with COVID-19 and 2020 to get more fixated on our circumstances and our problems than we were the Lord. And the Lord has stripped us of our confidence in all of those things, and He's inviting us to a season of renewed faith and dependency on Him. He's inviting you right now to a renewed season where you press into private prayer, secret prayer, where your heart would be revived and renewed because you are reminded of the purpose of prayer.

It's not to use God or to be seen by people. It's to experience his presence. And in experiencing his presence, having your heart shaped and molded so that you are oriented towards His kingdom coming and His will being done. Your desires are in alignment with His desires, and so that you begin to ask for things and God answers your prayer. Because you're asking for God to produce the fruit in you so that his kingdom might advance in the world. He's calling you to a realignment, a reorienting of your heart through prayer.

You'll only experience that reorientation if you commit today to meeting him in the closet. Committing yourself to private prayer. So I want to challenge you as your pastor to do that, to make that decision. It may feel weird at first. It may be like only five or six minutes at first, but do the discipline so that you begin to experience the presence of God in your life again. And then if you're a part of our church, especially if you're a leader of our church or you are serious about us as a congregation experiencing God and walking with God into this next chapter of our church life together.

I want you to commit to these prayer meetings on Mondays starting February 22nd. I know it's not closet prayer, but it's close enough. Where all of us will come into a place like this, and we will pray to the Lord and we will orient our hearts. We will get a fresh vision of God. We will see him as Father in heaven. We will talk to God about what he wants to talk about. We will let him show us what it means for his kingdom to come and his will to be done in our life.

We will repent of pursuing the miracles of God instead of the miracle maker, the miracle giver; repent of pursuing the gifts of God instead of the gift giver. We will, as Psalm 27[1] says, be reminded that the one thing we need more than anything else isn't success or material prosperity or God to do X, Y, or Z. The one thing we need is to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in His temple. That His house would be called a house of prayer. That this place would be a place in which God dwells because the people of God are looking to the Lord and praying, God, would you show me your glory?

Would you hallow your name? And so I want to challenge you, if you're part of our church, to commit to that process through these prayer meetings. And so as Taylor comes up and leads us with the band, however the Lord's leading you to respond, will you use that time while they're singing to reach out to us, to text our church phone number, to help you take your

next step and resolve in your heart of hearts to press in to secret prayer because the secret of prayer is secret prayer. Let's pray together.

Father, we thank you for this time and your word and for the helpful reminder that you desire to be with us. That every single person has as much or as little of God as they want to have, that you are available, that you are a Father who delights in giving the Holy Spirit to those who will ask. So, Father, forgive us for being fat and happy with other things, for being confident, overly confident in worldly saviors and earthly pleasures, for letting our hearts drift, for embracing counterfeit approaches to prayer, of using God to be better liked or better accepted, or allowing ourselves to drift away from the joy of our salvation so that we begin to live in the flesh with anxiety and insecurity and anger and secret sin.

Lord, we repent of being a prayerless people. Would you revive in us a spirit of prayer individually and corporately? Would you make your house at Broadview Baptist Church a house of prayer? First and foremost, by renewing our mind into what prayer is and by renewing our heart's desire to press into it more than anything else. Help us to be more like Mary than we are like Martha. As important as it is to serve and to go and to preach the truth and to be active, it is more important to have our cup full from communion with the Lord.

And so we repent and we remember that place from which we've fallen, and we want to go back and do the things that we were doing at first, which is just being still and knowing that you are God and communing with you as our Heavenly Father, the source of our life, the source of our wisdom. The chief shepherd of the church, the Lord of the church, the Lord of our life. Would you teach us to pray in Jesus' name? Amen.

---

1. Transcript note: spoken as "Psalm 24"; the verse he quotes ("One thing have I asked of the LORD … to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple"), which he cited correctly earlier in the sermon, is Psalm 27:4. Source: Psalm 27:4 (ESV). ↩