

Different On Purpose: Praying God's Priorities Matthew 6:5-15

Passage

Matthew 6:5-15 And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But 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. "And 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. Pray then 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. For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Prayer Is Not About Being Seen, It's About Being With the Father

Assertion

- Jesus says prayer is not a performance for people, but a relationship with the Father.

Possible Objection

- But isn't public prayer important? Aren't we supposed to pray in church or with others?

- Psalm 27:8 You have said, "Seek my face." My heart says to you, "Your face, Lord, do I seek."

Application

- Set aside a consistent time and place this week where we pray completely alone, with no audience and no distractions (Matthew 6:6).

- Why It Matters: Private prayer trains our heart to seek God's presence, not people's approval.

Prayer Is Not About Saying More, It's About Trusting More

Assertion

- Jesus says prayer is not about empty repetition or many words.

Possible Objection

- But didn't Jesus Himself repeat prayers? And doesn't persistence matter in prayer?

- Philippians 4:6-7 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Application

- For one week, intentionally pray short, honest prayers instead of long, wordy ones (Matthew 6:7-8).

- Why It Matters: This breaks the habit of trying to impress God and builds a habit of depending on Him.

Prayer Begins With God's Priorities, Not Yours

Assertion

- Jesus teaches us to start prayer with God's name, kingdom, and will.
 - "Hallowed be Your name"
 - "Your kingdom come"
 - "Your will be done"

Possible Objection

- But isn't prayer supposed to be personal? Don't my needs matter to God?
- 1 John 5:14-15 And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.

Application

- Before we bring our requests, ask: God, what do You care about in this situation? How can Your name be honored here?
- Why It Matters: It reorients our heart from self-centered praying to God-centered living.

Prayer Invites Daily Dependence, Not Occasional Crisis Management

Assertion

- Give us this day our daily bread" teaches ongoing reliance on God.

Possible Objection

- But I provide for myself. I work hard. Why should I pray for things I already have?
- Proverbs 30:8-9 Remove far from me falsehood and lying; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is needful for me, lest I be full and deny you and say, "Who is the Lord?" or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God.

Application

- Pray about ordinary needs, not just emergencies.
- Why It Matters: This develops a rhythm of constant reliance, not just emergency prayer.

Prayer Requires a Forgiving Heart

Assertion

- Jesus ties our forgiveness to our willingness to forgive others.

Possible Objection

- That sounds harsh. Is God saying He won't forgive me unless I forgive others?
- Colossians 3:13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

Application

- Ask God to reveal someone we need to forgive, and verbally release that person in prayer
- Why It Matters: Forgiveness restores relational and spiritual flow in our life.

Prayer Seeks Spiritual Strength, Not Just Circumstantial Change***Assertion***

- Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil" (v. 13)

Possible Objection

- Why would God lead me into temptation in the first place?
- 1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

Application

- Pray before temptation hits, not just after we fall. Ask God for awareness, strength, and escape routes.
- Why It Matters: It shifts prayer from reactive to proactive spiritual defense.

Conclusion

"If God already knows everything, and His will is going to happen anyway, why pray at all?"
Because prayer is not primarily about changing God's mind. It's about changing our heart.