

The Secret Life: Prayer

Matthew 6:5-8

“When pride lives in our hearts, we’re far more concerned with others’ perceptions of us than the reality of our hearts.”

The Treasure of Prayer

Matthew 6:5-8

Big Idea: Pray to your father in secret so that he can reward you.

⁵ “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. ⁶ 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.

⁷ “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. ⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

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The Treasure of Prayer

1. Nobody likes a showoff (v. 5).
2. Pray like nobody is watching (v. 6).
3. Trust God to give you good things (vv. 7-8).

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Not a condemnation of *public* prayer.

- i. Solomon prayed publicly (1Kngs 8:22-23).
- ii. Ezra prayed and wept corporately (Ezra 10:1).
- iii. Daniel prayed where people could see him (Dan 6).
- iv. Paul instructs Timothy on praying in church (1Ti 2:8).
- v. Jesus prayed in front of people .(Jn 11:41-42)

The hypocrite uses prayer as an opportunity to get attention or push an agenda.

2. Pray like nobody is watching (v. 6).

⁶ 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.

Go to your inner room and pray.

- i. It's a place to keep treasure.
- ii. It's a place where we silence the world.
- iii. It's a place to speak to your Father in secret.

When I pray, “I am now entering into the audience chamber of that God, the almighty, the absolute, the eternal and great God with all His power and His might and majesty, that God who is a consuming fire, that God who is “light and in whom is no darkness at all”, that utter, absolute Holy God. That is what I am doing”.

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Praying in real life.

- i. Repetition matters, but meaningless repetition does not (cf. Luke 18).
- ii. Your Father knows, but the godless cannot understand a personal relationship with God (cf. 1 Cor 2:14).
- iii. Effectiveness in prayer is not related to *my* words or *my* vocabulary, it is based on God alone.

God values prayer that is:

- i. Simple.
- ii. Direct.
- iii. Sincere.
- iv. Confident.

Pray authentically before God and enjoy the treasure of standing in his presence.