



SERMON ON THE MOUNT

“How Should We Pray?”
Matthew 6:5-10

5“And when you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. 6But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.

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7“And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. 8Therefore, do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him. 9“Pray, then, in this way: ‘Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. 10‘Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.

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Introduction

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B. This is a great time to be studying the Sermon on the Mount. As we roll into 2026, many of us are setting new goals and trying to improve in some areas of our lives.

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D. Many of the Jews had gotten really good at practicing these righteous deeds outwardly while their hearts were not righteous at all.

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E. This is Jesus' Big Idea for this section of the Sermon on the Mount. "Beware of doing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 6:1).

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F. We tend to separate the outward from the inward. "The truly righteous man shows his righteousness in righteous deeds. Furthermore, true righteousness is expressed, says Jesus, in the disciplines of the believer" (Sinclair Ferguson).

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H. Big Idea: We should pray to our heavenly Father for the right reasons.

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B. “And when you pray.” For Jesus, a prayerless disciple was inconceivable. True disciples prayed.

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C. “You are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners.” There isn’t any outward problem praying in synagogues and on street corners.

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D. The Jewish people had developed a tradition of praying all throughout the day. They would recite the Shema in the morning and evening and recite prayers. They prayed at the beginning and end of each meal. They were expected to pray the “Eighteen Benedictions” three times a day.

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F. I'm sure there were many reasons that led them to pray, but Jesus identifies a serious issue in our text.

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G. “So that they may be seen by men.” For show. They are hypocrites (play actors, pretenders). They prayed to impress people with their spirituality. This is pride on display.

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G. “So that they may be seen by men.” For show. They are hypocrites (play actors, pretenders). They prayed to impress people with their spirituality. This is pride on display.

H. “Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.” God knows why you do what you do. These religious play actors were only concerned about the reward men could give, and that’s all the reward they received.

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- B. Don’t use meaningless magical gibberish when you’re praying. Pray to God in your own everyday language.**

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D. We don't have to pray long prayers to get God's attention. "The prayers often piled up one flattering title of deity on top of another in hopes of manipulating the god to act. The prayers sometimes sought to coerce the gods by reminding them of favors owed to the one praying or with threats to deny the god's power if he failed to act" (Chuck Quarles).

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F. Jesus teaches us that we don't need to impress God with our lengthy prayers. He is also not against times of lengthy prayer. Jesus often prayed throughout the night.

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I. If you have been born again by the Holy Spirit, adopted into God's family by His grace, you now know God as your Father.

II. Pray Trusting in God's Knowledge, Not Doubting His Goodness (6:7-8)

J. He is a good Father who knows everything (omniscience). He loves you!

⁹Or what man is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf, will give him a stone? ¹⁰Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? ¹¹If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!

Matthew 7:9-11

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A. “Pray, then, in this way: Our Father who is in heaven.” Jesus addresses God as “Father” ten times in 6:1-18.

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- A. “Pray, then, in this way: Our Father who is in heaven.” Jesus addresses God as “Father” ten times in 6:1-18.**
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- B. Our Father is transcendent. He is in heaven. He is greater than us. He is not the “Big Man” upstairs. He is God.**
- C. “Hallowed be Your name.” To hallow means to sanctify, to make holy, or to consider holy.**

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D. “Christ’s followers are asking their heavenly Father to act in such a way that they and an increasing number of others will reverence God, glorify him, consider him holy, and acknowledge him” (D. A. Carson).

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E. May God receive the glory that He deserves from His people here and now. May God enable us to live as true disciples who honor the Lord’s name through holy living.

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G. “The eschatology of the Lord’s Prayer expects the kingdom of God to conquer and annex the territory at present inhabited by the rebellious human race” (H. D. Betz).

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H. “Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” We are to pray that God’s desires will be fulfilled on earth with the same immediacy and completeness as they are now fulfilled in heaven.

I. If you pray for God’s will to be done on earth as it is in heaven, you need to learn all you can about God’s will by consistently and humbly studying the Scriptures.

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J. You also need to pledge that, by the grace of God, you will do His will.

Conclusion

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- B. What have you learned today that can help your prayer life?**
- C. How should you pray?**
- D. Has God saved you?**

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- E. Are you maturing as a believer?**

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F. The Gospel Definition

The gospel is the good news that the just and gracious God of the universe looked upon hopelessly sinful people and sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, God in human flesh, to bear His wrath against sin on the cross and to show His power over sin in the resurrection so that everyone who turns from their sin (repentance) and believes in Him (faith) will be reconciled to God forever.