

Sermon Description

(Matthew 6:7-15) Jesus spent a great deal of time alone in prayer communicating with the Father. Knowing how important true prayer is in the life of those who follow him, Jesus teaches us how to pray. The Lord's Prayer is a model prayer that shows us the attitudes we should have during prayer as well as the topics we should include when we pray. This passage and the sermon based on it are intended to encourage and equip you to have a robust, genuine, and powerful prayer life.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do so many Christ-followers find prayer difficult?
2. What specific barriers get in the way of your own praying?
3. When was a time that prayer was a meaningful or powerful part of your life?
4. What parts of the Lord's Prayer speak deeply to you?
5. Which aspects of the Lord's Prayer are most difficult for you to embrace, believe or practice?
6. How does Relationship with God inform your praying? What does it mean that God is our Father?
7. Why is it difficult to depend on God for our "daily bread" when we live in relative luxury and apparent self-sufficiency?
8. How does it make you feel that God expects you to give grace to others as a result of the grace he gives to you? Is there someone to whom you are unwilling to grant forgiveness?
9. Do you believe and live as if there is a spiritual realm that is real and dangerous?
10. Would God lead us into temptation? How should we understand that part of the Lord's Prayer?

Prayer Points

1. Pray that the Lord will empower Sound City Bible Church to be a praying church.
2. Pray that God will help us each to embrace the simplicity of prayer and step out in faith to open our hearts to God by regularly and consistently praying.
3. Pray that God will move us with joy and conviction to be disciplined to set aside times to pray and to apply ourselves to learning and growing in our prayer lives.
4. Pray for those who are intimidated by prayer that God will free them from the barriers, fears and anxieties that hold them back from praying.
5. Pray for those who do not yet know our Father who is in heaven that they will hear and heed his drawing them to believe in his Son, Jesus.

For Further Study

[*Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*](#) by Donald S. Whitney, Chapter 4: Prayer

[*The Power in Prayer*](#) by Charles Spurgeon

[ACTS Prayer Method](#) Worksheet

Slides

True Prayer: Connecting Our Hearts to God's Heart! Matthew 6:7-15 (ESV)

Why is prayer so difficult?

1. Are you intimidated by prayer?
2. Are you distracted from prayer?
3. Do you doubt that prayer is effective?
4. Do you feel distant from God?
5. Are you self-sufficient and do not need God's help?
6. Have you never been taught to pray?
7. *"Lord, teach us to pray..." (Luke 11:1)*

Pray by Genuinely Communicating with God. vv. 7-8

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.

God Invites us to pray!

Matt. 6:5 "And when you pray..."

Matt. 6:6 "But when you pray..."

Matt. 6:7 "And when you pray..."

Matt. 6:9 "Pray then like this..."

(Building Slide)

God Invites us to pray!

God Hears our prayers!

God Knows our needs!

The Model for Our Prayers!

“Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.

¹⁰ Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread,

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

¹³ And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

(Building Slide - may take multiple slides)

How to Pray:

Remember your Relationship with God. v. 9

Exalt God for his Glorious Attributes. v. 9

Ask God to Intervene According to His Will. v. 10

“Some of God’s greatest gifts are unanswered prayers.” -Garth Brooks

How to Pray:

Rely upon God’s Provision. v. 11

Depend on God’s Grace. v. 12 (Romans slide here, then back to list)

Let God’s Grace Flow to Others. vv. 12, 14-15 (Parable Unfor. Serv. slide here, then back to list)

Recognize the Spiritual Realm. v. 13 (James slide here)

We have All Fall Short (Romans 3:23-24)

²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Parable of the Unforgiving Servant (Matthew 18:21-35)

³² Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴ And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. ³⁵ So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

God does Not Temp Us (James 1:13-15)

¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. ¹⁴ But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵ Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

Next Steps

Just Pray (Andrew Murray Quote Slide Here, then back to list)

Plan to Pray

Stay on the Line with God

Pray Scripture

Pray with Others

Persevere in Prayer

Andrew Murray

"Reading a book about prayer, listening to lectures and talking about it is very good, but it won't teach you to pray. You get nothing without exercise, without practice. I might listen for a year to a professor of music playing the most beautiful music, but that won't teach me to play an instrument."

End of Slides

Sermon Notes

Jason Smith

August 15, 2021

True Prayer: Connecting Our Hearts to God's Heart! Matthew 6:7-15 (ESV)

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. ⁹ Pray then like this:

“Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.

¹⁰ Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread,

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

¹³ And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

¹⁴ For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, ¹⁵
but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your
trespasses.

Introduction: Prayer is Difficult!

Why is prayer so difficult?

8. Are you intimidated by prayer?
9. Are you distracted from prayer?
10. Do you doubt that prayer is effective?
11. Do you feel distant from God?
12. Are you self-sufficient and do not need God's help?
13. Have you never been taught to pray?

14. “*Lord, teach us to pray...*” (Luke 11:1)

Pray by Genuinely Communicating with God. vv. 7-8

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.

1. God Invites us to pray!

Matt. 6:5 “And when you pray...”

Matt. 6:6 “But when you pray...”

Matt. 6:7 “And when you pray...”

Matt. 6:9 “Pray then like this...”

- a. You will not bother God.
- b. No prayer is too small.
- c. Also, God is not pining away wishing you would talk to him.

2. God Hears our prayers!

- a. There is no magic in prayer!
 - i. No magic formulas
 - ii. No incantations or mantras
(like Elijah and the prophets of baal 1 Kings 18)
 - iii. No specific prayers we must pray
(like a distracted parent whose attention a child gets by repeating themselves incessantly)
- b. How does prayer work?
 - i. Not a recipe, but a relationship!
 - ii. Prayer Connects Our Hearts to the Heart of God

3. God Knows our needs!

- a. Before we ask!
- b. Why do we still ask? Faith, Trust, Dependence
- c. Needs from God’s perspective

4. Pray Like This: The Model for Our Prayers!
 - a. Not a prayer that Jesus prayed. (John 17)
 - b. Yes, special because they're the words of Jesus.
 - c. A model that all our prayers can follow.
 - d. What was missing from this prayer?
 - i. "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever."
 - ii. "In Jesus' Name"
 - iii. "Amen"

How to Pray:

Remember your Relationship with God. v. 9

"Our Father in heaven,"

1. This is the most important part of prayer!
2. This was revolutionary for individual prayer in the NT! (7 times OT / 275 NT)
3. How does one become a child of God? **The Gospel!**
4. Prayer is Faith in Action!
 - a. Faith in God expressed through prayer, not in prayer by itself.
5. Story, Pennies in Father's Hand

Exalt God for his Glorious Attributes. v. 9

"...hallowed be your name."

1. Hallowed be your Name
 - a. The Divine Attributes of God
 - b. The Name of God:
 - i. Names mean a good deal less than they did in times past.
 - ii. Representing the person of God and all that he is.
 - iii. To say that God's name is "hallowed" or "greatly revered" or "holy" is to say that God is worthy of highest worship and reverence.
2. If "Father" communicates Nearness, "Hallowed" speaks of Greatness.
3. "Be God to Me"
 - a. Demonstrating Who is the servant and who is the Lord.

Ask God to Intervene According to His Will. v. 10

“Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.”

1. Seeking the Advancement of God’s kingdom
 - a. Aligning our hearts and wills with God’s will
 - b. Putting our plans in submission to God’s plans
 - i. “Nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.” -Jesus (Matt. 26:39)
2. How should we expect God to respond to our prayers?
 - a. Yes, No, Wait
 - b. Sometimes we don’t know for what we ask and God always knows best.
 - i. “Some of God’s greatest gifts are unanswered prayers.” -Garth Brooks
 - c. Sometimes God has a bigger work happening in our lives that requires us to persevere in faith and trust.
 - i. The Spiritual Reality is often more important to God than the Physical Reality.

Rely upon God’s Provision. v. 11

“Give us this day our daily bread,”

1. How much do you need God?
 - a. Any self-sufficiency you have is an illusion.
 - i. We depend on God for everything: our existence, our every breath, the food that gives us energy, the home that shelters us, the clothes that keep us warm, and the list goes on!
 - b. We can have nothing without God, but we also have a responsibility to work for what we have.
 - i. Even the ability to work is a gift from God.
2. What if we have two loaves today?
 - a. Not meant for self-indulgence, but for sharing.
 - b. Live a lifestyle where we are generous and sacrificial toward others.
3. This also reminds us how often we should pray: Daily.
 - a. A daily reminder of our reliance on the Lord.

- b. A daily expression of that reliance.
- c. Manna (Exodus 16)
- 4. Expression of other needs also.
 - a. We bring all our needs to the Lord.
 - b. Intercession for others in need.

Depend on God's Grace. v. 12

“and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.”

1. Much more than help in this physical realm, we need the grace of God to cover our sins!
 - a. As long as we are bound to these fleshly bodies and live in this fallen world, we will fall short of fully glorifying God.
 - b. ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. **(Romans 3:23-24)**
 - c. If we cry out for physical needs but neglect to confess our sin and ask forgiveness, we leave out the most important part!
2. Having received God's grace we must be vessels of that Grace to others:

Let God's Grace Flow to Others. vv. 12, 14-15

“and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.”

¹⁴ For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, ¹⁵ but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

1. Jesus ties our forgiveness with our forgiving others.
 - a. We might not like this fact, but the sign of a heart transformed by grace is that we also give grace.
 - b. Parable of the unforgiving servant **(Matthew 18:21-35)**

³² Then his master summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ And should not you have had mercy on your

fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴ And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. ³⁵ So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

- c. What holds you back from forgiving someone who has wronged you?
 - i. Forgiving doesn't excuse the actions.
-don't say "It's alright"
- d. Nothing brings our heart into more alignment with the heart of God than giving grace to those who don't deserve it!

Recognize the Spiritual Realm. v. 13

"And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil."

1. God does not create or cause us to be tempted. (**James 1:13-15**)

¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. ¹⁴ But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵ Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

2. Stating a positive with a negative.
 - a. Litotes is the figure of speech we employ that involves stating a negative to affirm a positive.
 - i. "Not bad!" "He's not the sharpest tool in the shed."
3. What we really mean is, "Lead us in the way we should go."
4. We also recognize that there is danger around us in the spiritual realm.
 - a. The powers and principalities on the side of evil in the spiritual realm represent a threat.
 - b. We serve a God who is more powerful!
 - i. He is able to protect us.
 - ii. He is able to deliver us.
 - iii. Are you caught in the clutches of evil? God can deliver you!
 - iv. Are you aware of the threat around you? God can protect you.

Next Steps

Just Pray (Simplicity)

Plan to Pray

Stay on the Line with God (pray without ceasing)

Pray Scripture

Pray with Others (Prayer Group, Community Groups, Family)

Persevere in Prayer

Andrew Murray

“Reading a book about prayer, listening to lectures and talking about it is very good, but it won’t teach you to pray. You get nothing without exercise, without practice. I might listen for a year to a professor of music playing the most beautiful music, but that won’t teach me to play an instrument.”