

S7E34

Prayer 101 - Matthew 6:5-8

Description – Join us today as we discuss the question: How can we live in a way that honors and points people to God, but not become prideful in what we do for Him?

Several Youtube channels to recommend:

Nate Sala - Wise Disciple

<https://www.youtube.com/@WiseDisciple>

Pastor Robby's new channel

<https://www.youtube.com/@PastorRobbyGallaty>

Matthew 6:5-8

⁵ “Whenever you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites, because they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by people. Truly I tell you, they have their reward. ⁶ But when you pray, go into your private room, shut your door, and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. ⁷ When you pray, don’t babble like the Gentiles, since they imagine they’ll be heard for their many words. ⁸ Don’t be like them, because your Father knows the things you need before you ask him.

Remember, Jesus takes the big 3 and says that to do them with the wrong heart is just as bad as not doing them at all. Those three things were prayer, giving, and fasting that we introduced last week.

Today we look at what Jesus says about prayer.

The best way to be a person who prays in public is to be someone who prays to the Lord in private.

The more time you spend in prayer in conversation with the Lord the less formal and formulaic the prayer becomes, and the more you begin to just spend time with God.

Luke 18:10-12

¹⁰ “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee was standing and praying like this about himself: ‘God, I thank you that I’m not like other people—greedy, unrighteous, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of everything I get.’

Not only does the pharisee right away become prideful and puffed up, his prayer is all about himself. He even points out the tax collector and says, “thank God I’m not like him...”

Also, notice the big 3 are all present here in his prayer: He's praying, and also points out that he fasts twice a week and gives a tenth of everything.

Notice the comparison between the Pharisee and now the tax collector:

Luke 18:13-14

¹³ "But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even raise his eyes to heaven but kept striking his chest and saying, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner!' ¹⁴ I tell you, this one went down to his house justified rather than the other, because everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

Both of these men are praying about themselves. But one (the pharisee) has a wrong view of himself. The tax collector knows for a fact that he's a sinner in need of a savior. That is why, according to Jesus, he leaves and goes home justified before God.

This is how you know you're growing in prayer, because when you start, you're praying all for yourself. When you mature, you start praying for others, and then ultimately you're praying for God's will to be carried out in your life and in other's lives.

Jesus gives us the antidote to pride in our lives. It's to pray in private.

Secret prayer shows 2 things:

1. It shows how serious you are about prayer
2. It shows who you are praying to

Praying in secret purifies or reveals your motives for prayer.

The ancient Rabbis believed that the longer you prayed, the better chance that it has legs to get to heaven and be answered.

So they prayed long prayers because they wanted lengthy prayers to be answered. But you have to be careful here to not be prideful when you pray and think you're a great person because you can pray for a long time.

On the other hand, the Gentiles were obsessed with vain repetition or empty phrases when they prayed. They thought that by repeating the same phrases in prayer over and over that they would be heard by their gods and have their prayer answered.

If I'm babbling in prayer, or if I'm praying in vain repetition over and over again, you have to ask, where is the power in that prayer? Is it in saying the same thing over and over again, or is it in who I should be praying to?

Prayer doesn't always mean that God will answer your petition in the way you want, as it is prayer changing your heart to ask according to His will.