



Title: The Way to Pray

Date: May 15, 2022

Scripture Text: Matthew 6:5-15

Sermon Series: Inside-Out

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

We return to the Sermon on the Mount this week, looking at the topic of prayer. The only recorded request of Jesus' disciples was for Him to teach them how to pray. In today's text we look at two aspects of Jesus' teaching on prayer. He instructs us *how* to pray then gives us an example of *what* to pray commonly known as the Lord's Prayer.

I. How to Pray (Matt. 6:5-8)

Jesus teaches in these verses that the way to pray is in *secret* and to do it *sincerely*. Effective prayer is a matter of the heart. If we pray for the recognition of others, we may get their recognition, but not God's. Similarly, we need to be sincere in our prayers. This means to be intentional and focused on who God is and what His will is. This is not prohibiting public prayer, but encouraging us whenever and wherever we pray, to be seeking God and not to be noticed by others.

- Based on Jesus' instructions in vss. 5-6, what would it look like to pray for the recognition of others today?
 - What would it look like to pray in secret, as Jesus instructed?
- How can we guard our hearts from seeking the approval of others over the approval of God?
 - What are the dangers of seeking others' approval?
- What are examples of someone praying in 'meaningless repetitions'?
 - What would likely be the motive of someone to do that?

II. What to Pray (Matt. 6:9-15)

These verses are commonly known as the Lord's Prayer, but a more accurate description could be the Disciple's Prayer. Jesus teaches His disciples what *they* are to pray for. There are two aspects of this prayer: the vertical Godward aspect and the horizontal manward aspect. The vertical aspect includes perspective (understanding who God is and His worthiness of our worship, [vs. 9](#)) and plans (seeking God's plans and how we can be involved, [vs. 10](#)). The horizontal aspect includes requests related to physical needs ([vs. 11](#)), our relationship with others ([vs. 12](#)) and praying for ourselves (often seeking God's forgiveness, [vs. 13](#)).

Morningside Church

If you have a need or a prayer request, contact the church office.

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- How does your typical prayer compare to the example Jesus gave us?
- When you pray, what proportion tends to be your focus on God (who He is, His worthiness, His work, His will), compared to your focus on yourself and your needs?
- What one thing about Jesus' prayer example stands out to you the most?
- What can you do to better model your prayer after Jesus' example?

Consider following the **ACTS** acronym when you pray:

A – Adoration

C – Confession

T – Thanksgiving

S – Supplication