

Cutting It Straight

What stops God from heeding prayers?

God does not heed:

Hypocritical prayer (Psalm 66:18)

- Is what I am praying what I truly want in my heart?

Unbelieving prayer (Hebrews 11:6, Hebrews 4:16)

- Do I really expect what I pray for?

Resentful prayer (Mark 11:25, Luke 17:3)

- Am I bearing resentment or a grudge against another in my heart?

Self-centered prayer (James 4:3)

- Am I seeking God for His sake or to get what I want?

Unbiblical prayer – requesting what God forbids (John 15:7)

- Is what I'm praying about within the range of Scriptural teaching?

Pharisaical prayer (Matthew 6:5-6, Luke 18:9-14)

- Do I pray to be heard by others?

Self addressed prayer (Hebrews 2:10, Romans 11:35)

- Am I praying in Christ's name and for His honor and benefit, or on some merit of my own?

Jesus not only told His disciples how to pray BUT what to pray:

In Christ-God's name is hallowed, His kingdom comes, His will is done. For His sake believers are preserved in body, receive forgiveness of sin, in His strength they are preserved amid temptation, in His power they are delivered, and brought to eternal life, His is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever!

What should be included in prayer?

- Adoration** (1 Chronicles 29:11, Psalm 145:1-6, Matthew 6:9)
- Confession** (1 John 1:9, Psalm 32:5, Matthew 6:12)
- Thanksgiving** (Ephesians 5:20, Psalm 11:4)
- Supplication** (Colossians 1:9-12, 4:2-4, Matthew 9:37-38, Matthew 7:7-8)

Sermon on the Mount
Jesus Teaches How to Pray
Matthew 6:5-13

Faith Fellowship Church
Pastor Bob Froese
Sunday, February 17, 2008

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Jesus and How to Pray

Matthew 6:5-13

Why should we pray? The Christian's threefold enemy:

- The devil
- The world
- The flesh

What defenses do we have?

Ephesians 6:18

What is prayer?

- Prayer is simply communicating with God.

Today's text:

- Jesus teaches His disciples to pray, but we can read these verses in such a way that we miss their entire point.

What does this mean?

- Our tendency is to expose the Pharisees, denounce the obvious hypocrite, yet the Lord devastatingly exposes my SELF and pride.
- Christian prayer presupposes FAITH, an adherence to Jesus Christ.
Hebrews 11:6
Matthew 6:1
- Genuine prayer is NEVER "good works", an exercise, or a pious attitude.

The False Way to Pray

CONCENTRATING ON SELF RATHER THAN THE ONE PRAYER IS OFFERED TO

“And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues, and on the corners of the streets, that they maybe seen by men.” Matthew 6:5

- Anxious to be KNOWN by OTHERS as one who prays.
- Actual desire to be SEEN praying by others.
- Aim to affect other people PRESENT rather than approach God.
- The whole being of the person praying should be singularly focused and centered on GOD, oblivious to other things.

CONCENTRATING ON THE FORM OF OUR PRAYERS

“And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.” Matthew 6:7

- Vain REPETITIONS: We can so easily get into the habit of following a routine and forgetting what we are really doing.
- Keep your eye OFF the clock.

SUMMARY: WHAT DOES OUR LORD SAY ABOUT THIS?

“Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.” Matthew 6:5a

- What was it they wanted? PRAISE from men, and they got it, poor souls.
- The poor heartbroken soul who cannot frame a sentence but who cries out in agony to God, has reached God in a way, and will have a reward, the other will NEVER know.

The Right Way to Pray

THE KEY IS IN YOUR APPROACH

- The one thing that matters, the highest picture you can ever have of man is to look at him on his knees WAITING before God.

“But you, when you pray, go into your rooms, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.” Matthew 6:6 & 8

FIRST THERE IS THE PROCESS OF EXCLUSION

- To make sure I'm approaching God, I have to EXCLUDE certain things, I have to enter into that closet.
- The certain things we need to shut out are:
 - † Shut out and forget other PEOPLE.
 - † Then you shut out and forget YOURSELF.
- In prayer my heart has to be open entirely and only to God!

THE SECOND STEP IS REALIZATION

- We must realize we are in the PRESENCE of Almighty Holy God!
- God is our Father, Holy, Absolute, Eternal, Powerful, Mighty, Majestic, Light in Whom is no darkness.
- As children we are better served when we ask, “What is God's will,” rather than, “What is God's will for MY LIFE?”

THE THIRD STEP: WE MUST HAVE CHILDLIKE FAITH

- The simple CONFIDENCE of a child! God is truly our Father.

“When I pray I know that God is my Father, and that He delights to bless me, and that He is much more ready to give than I am to receive and that He is always concerned about my welfare.”
~D. M. Lloyd Jones