

Prayer

MOVING FROM *Duty* TO *Delight*

The Problem of Prayer

Matthew 6:5-15 (ESV)

⁵ “And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ⁶ But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father

Matthew 6:5-15 (ESV)

⁶ who sees in secret will reward you.

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:

Matthew 6:5-15 (ESV)

9 “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,

Matthew 6:5-15 (ESV)

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.”

Matthew 6:5-15 (ESV)

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.

How NOT to Pray

Don't practice hypocritical prayer.

“No matter. The holy rollers are smiling upon the high roller. And they’re proving, yet again, how selective and incoherent the religiosity of many in the party’s God squad is.

Usually the disconnect involves stern moralizing, especially on matters sexual, by showily devout public figures who are then exposed as adulterers or (gasp!) closet homosexuals. I’d list all the names, starting with

Josh Duggar and working backward, but my column doesn't sprawl over an entire page of the newspaper.

Or the disconnect is between evangelists' panegyrics about Christ's penury and their hustle for funds to support less-than-penurious lifestyles." -Frank Bruni

Matthew 6:1 (ESV)

Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

Don't practice pagan prayer.

Matthew 6:7-8 (NLT)

When you pray, don't babble on and on as people of other religions do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. ⁸ Don't be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him!

“How many pray the Lord’s Prayer several thousand times in the course of a year, and if they were to keep on doing so for a thousand years they would not have [really prayed or tasted it at all]. In a word, the Lord’s Prayer is the greatest martyr on earth ... Everybody tortures and abuses it; few take comfort and joy in its proper use.” -Martin Luther

If you would like to talk to Chuck about the sermon, please feel free to call him, email him or friend him on Facebook.



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