

Flint Hills Bible Church
Biblical Soul Care Sunday School
Persevering in Prayer
Part 2 - Jesus' Teaching on Prayer

I. Introduction

When learning to do something, it is often helpful to know what *not* to do. For instance, what would be some things *not* to do:

- When learning to drive?
- In a job interview?
- When meeting your inlaws for the first time?

Objectives:

As believers, we all want to grow in our prayer time with God our Father; however, sometimes we just don't know where to begin. In Matthew chapter 6 Jesus teaches on giving, fasting, anxiety, and prayer. He does this in a way that contrasts what *not* to do with what *to* do. In this lesson we will observe and learn from Jesus' teaching on prayer. Specifically, we will learn what *not* to do, so that we can gain a better understanding of how to pray.

II. The “put offs” and “put ons” of prayer.

A. The First “Put off”

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. - Matthew 6:5

1. In what way were the disciples *not* to emulate the hypocrites?

2. What is a hypocrite?

3. Who were these hypocrites?

4. How were they being hypocritical?

5. What reward did these hypocrites receive?

6. What does Jesus want us to “put off” as He teaches us how to pray?

B. The First “Put on”

But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. - Matthew 6:6.

7. What room is Jesus most likely referring to in verse 6? (Read from various translations)

8. What should you do when you enter this room? What does this imply?

9. What does it mean by “Our Father who is in *secret*?”

10. What is the irony of praying where no one can see us?

11. Is Jesus teaching us never to pray in public? Why or why not?

12. Was Daniel guilty of praying like the hypocrites because he prayed at an open window and not in his inner room? (Daniel 6:10)

13. What is Jesus telling us to “put on” when we pray?

C. The Second “Put off”

“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. Matthew 6:7–8.

14. In verse 7, who were the disciples not to be like when they prayed?

15. What does it mean to “heap up empty phrases?”

16. What examples in the Bible do we have of meaningless repetitive prayers? What examples do we have in our time?

17. Why should we not heap up empty phrases with many words?

18. What is the difference between being repetitive in prayer, and being persistent in prayer? (See Luke 18:1-8)

19. What are we to “put off” in verses 7-8?

D. The Second “Put on”

Pray 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. - Matthew 6:9–13.

20. In what way is this “put on” the antidote to the second “put off” we just looked at?

21. How did Jesus intend for us to use this prayer?

22. From verses 9-13, what are we to “put on”?

III. The Lord's Prayer

A. Our Father in Heaven

23. Why should we begin prayer by addressing God as our Father?

24. What are some implications of addressing God as *our Father*?

25. What are some implications of our Father being *in heaven*?

26. What pattern for prayer is Jesus teaching us in this phrase?

B. Hallowed be Your Name

27. What does *hallowed* mean?

28. How can we hallow the Father's name?

29. What perspective of God and of ourselves do we have when we revere, honor, and glorify the Father's name?

30. What pattern for prayer is Jesus teaching us in this phrase?

C. Your Kingdom Come

31. What is this kingdom and when will this kingdom come to earth?

32. How can you be a part of this kingdom?

33. How does praying for our Father's kingdom to come to earth benefit our spiritual growth?

34. What pattern for prayer is Jesus teaching us in this phrase?

D. Your Will be Done, on Earth as it is in Heaven

35. What is implied when we pray for God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven? Why is this the case?

To help us understand God's will John MacArthur groups God's will into three categories. The first is God's comprehensive will. This refers to God's will of purpose—His vast, all inclusive, tolerating will expressed in the unfolding of His sovereign plan in the entire universe, including heaven, hell, and earth. This aspect of God's will allows sin to run its course and Satan to have his way for a season. But in His appointed time, sin's course and Satan's way will end exactly according to God's plan and foreknowledge. (See Isaiah 14:24,26-27)

36. How do we pray according to God's comprehensive will?

The second is God's compassionate will. This aspect of God's will refers to His heart's desire, which is within the scope of His comprehensive will and completely consistent with it, although it is more specific and focused. This includes His desire that all would turn from their sin and receive salvation. (See Luke 13:34, 1 Timothy 2:4, 2 Peter 3:9)

37. How do we pray according to God's compassionate will?

The third category is God's commanding will. This aspect of His will relates directly to His children, because only they have the capacity to obey. God's ardent desire is that we who are His children obey Him completely and immediately with willing hearts. (See Romans 6:16-18)

38. What is one great obstacle we must overcome as we pray for God's will to be done in our life?

39. How do we pray according to God's commanding will?

E. Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread

40. What did it mean to the disciples and those who were with Jesus to ask the Father to give them their daily bread?

41. Because we live in a prosperous country we do not have to ask for daily bread. So what application does this part of Jesus' prayer have for us today?

42. What does the word *give* imply as we ask God to provide for our needs?

43. What does this *day* imply about how we should ask God for His provision?

44. What pattern for prayer is Jesus teaching us in this phrase?

F. Forgive Us Our Debts, as We Also Have Forgiven Our Debtors.

45. What is the debt that Jesus has in mind here? (See also Luke 11:4)

46. Colossians 2: 13-14 says "And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, 14 by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross." In light of this verse, why do we need to daily ask our Father to forgive us our sins?

47. What are some consequences of not confessing your sin?

48. How does God's forgiveness of our sin motivate us in our relationships with others?

49. What pattern for prayer is Jesus teaching us in this phrase?

G. Lead Us not into Temptation, but Deliver Us From Evil

50. James tells us that God does not tempt anyone (James 1:13), so why ask Him not to do what He would never do anyway?

51. How does praying that God will deliver us from evil, demonstrate our dependence on Him?

52. How does God answer this prayer? What gives us protection from sin?

53. What pattern for prayer is Jesus teaching us in this phrase?