

PRAYER DO'S & DON'TS

MATTHEW 6:5-6

2/4/24

I. JESUS ASSUMES PRAYER

- A. "When you pray" not "If" or "Should you pray"
- B. Their prayer had been corrupted by Rabbinic tradition

II. DON'T: PRAY LIKE A HYPOCRITE

Matthew 6:5 - "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."

- A. They craved the approval of man
- B. The Synagogue was a stage for their religious theater
- C. Being a Hypocrite means living a lie

"It is wrong to pray in public if we are not in the habit of praying in private." – Warren Wiersbe

III. DO: PRAY IN SECRET

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

- A. Jesus shows us that our Theology informs our technique

"Our theology is never more clearly displayed before our own eyes and before the world as in our prayers."
– Al Mohler

- B. What we believe about God determines when we pray, how we pray, and even what we pray
- C. "Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi" – As we pray, so we believe

COMMUNITY GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did you think about the message this week? What stood out to you or challenged your thinking?
2. How can our prayer lives be ritualized today like they were for the original Jewish audience? How can we combat ritualized prayer?
3. What role does scripture play in your prayer life?
4. Why is it easy for our hearts to be like the Pharisees' heart in prayer: Focused on what others think?
5. How can we cultivate a habit of praying in private? Why is this important to cultivate?
6. Jesus doesn't give us new techniques to pray but deeper theology...how does theology inform the way that we pray?
7. Think about Pastor Brandon's challenge to write out your prayers. Would your prayers reflect a right understanding of God to anyone reading them? If not, then how do we go about changing that?

PRAYER SPOTLIGHT

- This week we are going to pray for our Deaf Ministry here at MCC and in Erie
- Pray for Pastor Mason Fenner as he plants a deaf church here in Erie
 - Right now, MCC hosts Pastor Mason's deaf Bible study every Thursday on our campus
 - Pray for him as he works with the North American Mission Board to find a place to start this church in Erie
- We have started a Deaf game night that meets on our campus once a month to connect more with the deaf community
- Pray that God would reach into and minister to this community of people!