

“Prayer: The Lifeline of our Relationship to God”

SUNDAY, JULY 6, 2025 - MICHAEL BOWERS



Summary: “Prayer: The Lifeline of Our Relationship to God”

This week we want to focus on a key lifeline in our relationship with the LORD, prayer. The moment that prayer is mentioned, there is for many people, a sinking feeling, because we know we don't pray enough, and/or, we have never been taught to pray Biblically. Some of us perhaps lack the discipline or focus that is often needed in prayer. For some of us, we have quit praying at times in our lives because we have begun to manage life okay, and we just don't feel the need. We think we have figured out how to live life without God's leading in our lives, but then find that when life begins to go off track, we then hit the floor. A very real, and very serious, reason why some of us have stopped praying is because we have prayed about something, but God did not answer the prayer the way we wanted or had hoped. Perhaps someone passed, or a sickness returned, or the job fell through, or financially things are not working out. We prayed about it, but nothing happened. The answer we thought should come did not come, so we gave up, or simply said, "Prayer does not work for me." This week we want to take a look at the Biblical model of prayer that is given by Jesus Christ Himself in Matthew 6:5-15 when His disciples come to Him and ask Him specifically how to pray. Jesus answers them, and us today, and shows that prayer is ultimately about our relationship with God and that it is so much more about Him than it is about us and what we need or want. It is rather about us, as created beings, understanding our need for our Creator. Worshipping and adoring Him. Recognizing and seeking His will, His power, and His kingdom above our own. Trusting Him with our daily provisions, teaching us to forgive others and also walk in forgiveness, leading us out of temptations, and keeping us from the evil that so often prevails in this world and in our own hearts.

Scripture - Matthew 6:5-15

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 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: "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. 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.

Key Apps, Websites, and Online Tools for Further Study

- <https://www.blueletterbible.org/>
- <https://www.biblegateway.com/>
- <https://biblehub.com/>
- <https://www.youversion.com/>
- <https://www.bibleref.com/>
- <https://bible.org/>
- <https://netbible.org/>
- <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/>
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/>
- <https://www.gty.org/>
- <https://www.gotquestions.org/>
- <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/>
- <https://carm.org/>
- <https://dwellapp.io/>

Further Scripture Study

Matthew 6:5-15; Luke 11:2-4; Acts 2:42-47; Ephesians 1:16-20; Philippians 4:6-7

As you study the scripture verses provided for this week, study for right context and right questions...

Right Context:

- The verse itself and key word(s) that stand out in the verse (meanings)
- The verses around the verse, the section of scripture, the chapter, the book, old/new testament, and relation to the rest of scripture
- Author and Date (Who wrote the book and when?)
- Audience (Who is the book written to? Main characters in the story and/or text?)
- Main points and overall purpose of the book
- Historical background, cultural significance, setting, people, rulers, etc.
- Scripture references; let scripture interpret scripture as much as possible

Right Questions:

- What does this passage say?
- What does this passage mean to its original audience?
- What is this passage teaching me about God?
- What does this passage tell us about man?
- What does this passage demand of me? (Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a sin to avoid? How is this applicable to me?)
- How does this passage change the way I relate to people? (What actions must I take in response to this passage?)
- What does this passage prompt me to pray? (For God, for others, for my community, for family, etc.)

Key Thoughts

"I think Christians fail so often to get answers to their prayers because they do not wait long enough on God. They just drop down and say a few words, and then jump up and forget it and expect God to answer them. Such praying always reminds me of the small boy ringing his neighbor's doorbell, and then running away as fast as he can go." E.M. Bounds

Prayer is more about God than it is about us. (Matthew 6:5-6)

"A rich, vibrant, consoling, hard-won prayer life is the one good that makes it possible to receive all other kinds of goods rightly and beneficially. [Paul] does not see prayer as merely a way to get things from God but as a way to get more of God himself."

Tim Keller, *Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God*

Take time to F.A.S.T. - Focus. Adore. Seek. Trust. (Waiting Isn't a Waste, Mark Vroegop)

"The criteria for coming to Jesus is weariness. Come overwhelmed with life. Come with your wandering mind. Come messy." — Paul E. Miller, [A Praying Life: Connecting with God in a Distracting World](#)

God knows the condition of our hearts. (Matthew 6:7-8)

Jesus calls us to adore God. (Matthew 6:9)

Prayer is personal. Prayer connects us to the Holy God.

Psalm 27:1 - The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

Jesus is calling us to seek God's will and trust His provision. (Matthew 6:11-12)

"Prayer is asking God to incarnate, to get dirty in your life. For sure, we know he washes feet. So take Jesus at his word. Ask him. Tell him what you want. Get dirty. Write out your prayer requests; don't mindlessly drift through life on the American narcotic of busyness. If you try to seize the day, the day will eventually break you. Seize the corner of his garment and don't let go until he blesses you. He will reshape the day."

— Paul E. Miller, [A Praying Life: Connecting With God In A Distracting World](#)

Jesus is teaching us to trust in God's grace and forgiveness. (Matthew 6:13-15)

Prayer is more about God than it is about us, yet it impacts us, changes us, and realigns our hearts, our desires, and our actions with God.



Reflect & Respond

Do you view prayer as an essential focus and/or lifeline in your relationship with the Lord? Why or why not?

Do you find that prayer is easy for you or challenging?

If you already have a well developed and committed prayer life, how did you get there? How did this get established in your life?

If you struggle with prayer, why? What do you believe is missing? What is taking the place of prayer in your life?

Read through Matthew 6:5-15. What part of the model prayer by Jesus is the most challenging to you? What from your current prayer life resembles what Jesus teaches His disciples (and us as believers) here in this passage?

How can your small group emphasize prayer more?

How can you and your spouse/family make prayer a priority?

Will you take time this week to F.A.S.T.? (Focus, Adore, Seek, Trust)

Resources on Prayer:

- Psalm 8, 13, 19, 23, 24, 25, 32, 40, 51, 63, 86, 90, 103, 119, 130, 139, to name a few.
- A Praying Church: Becoming a People of Hope in a Discouraging World, by Paul E. Miller
- Power Through Prayer, E.M. Bounds
- Prayer: Experiencing Awe & Intimacy with God, by Tim Keller
- Waiting Isn't a Waste: The Surprising Comfort of Trusting God in the Uncertainties of Life, by Mark Vroegop