

## Prayer

**Matthew 6:5-13** And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you; They have their reward. **6** But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. **7** But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. **8** Be not ye, therefore, like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him. **9** After this manner, therefore, pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. **10** Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. **11** Give us this day our daily bread. **12** And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. **13** And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen. **Luke 11:1-4** And it came to pass that, as he was praying in a certain place when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. **2** And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. **3** Give us day by day our daily bread. **4** And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Christ's model prayer is Christ teaching us how to pray (**Luke 11:1** And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.)

We see some negative prohibitions in Matthew 6:5-8.

First, the hypocrite's prayer (**Matthew 6:5** And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you; They have their reward.)

Number one, They love to pray in public. "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets," The Jewish people prayed three times a day, and the Pharisees would schedule their days to be in the most public places to pray. (**Luke 18:11** The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.) The audience of their prayer is an audience of one. "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself." The proclamation is personal piety. "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican." The proclamation is filled with pride. "I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I possess."

Number two, they lie about their actual character (**Matthew 23:14** Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.) In Charles Dickens's novel *Little Dorrit* there are two fascinating characters named Pancks and Casby. Pancks is a clerk who reluctantly collects exorbitant rents for the hypocritical landlord Casby. Because he makes Pancks do his dirty work, Casby, by contrast, appears generous, though he is ultimately unmasked.

Number three, the emptiness of their reward (**Matthew 6:5**, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you; They have their reward. **Mark 12:38-40** And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces, **39** And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts: **40** Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation.) The reward is explained (**Luke 14:12-14** Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. **13** But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: **14** And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just. **James 2:1-9** My brethren have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. **2** For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; **3** And ye have respect to

him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: **4** Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? **5** Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? **6** But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you and draw you before the judgment seats? **7** Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called? **8** If ye fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: **9** But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.)

Prayer isn't for people's applause but rather for a personal relationship. (**Matthew 6:6** But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.) Private prayers of the patriarchs (**Genesis 32:24-29** And Jacob was left alone and there wrestled, a man with him until the breaking of the day. **25** And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. **26** And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. **27** And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. **28** And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. **29** And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there.) Private prayer of the prophet (**2 Kings 4:32-34** And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead and laid upon his bed. **33** He went in, therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the Lord. **34** And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child, and the flesh of the child waxed warm.) Private prayer in the person of Christ (**Matthew 14:23** And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone. **Matthew 26:36-39** Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. **37** And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. **38** Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. **39** And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.) Private prayer of an apostle (**Acts 9:39-40** Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made while she was with them. **40** But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up.)

Not only the hypocrite's prayer but also the heathen's prayer (**Matthew 6:7-8** But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. **8** Be not ye, therefore, like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him. **1 Kings 18:26-29** And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made. **27** And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked. **28** And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them. **29** And it came to pass when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded. **Ecclesiastes 5:2-3** Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few. **3** For a dream cometh through the multitude of business, and a fool's voice is known by multitude of words. **7** For in the multitude of dreams and many words there are also divers vanities: but fear thou God. **Acts 19:34** But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.) God knows your needs before you ask (**Matthew 6:8** Be not ye, therefore, like unto them: for your, Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him. **6:24-34** No man can serve two masters: for either he

will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Therefore, ye cannot serve God and mammon. **25** Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat and the body than raiment? **26** Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? **27** Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? **28** And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: **29** And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. **30** Wherefore if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? **31** Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? Or, What shall we drink? Or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? **32** (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. **33** But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. **34** Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.)