



Sunday, March 27, 2011: Simple and Sincere Prayer

Scripture: Matthew 6:5-8, Revelation 8:1-8

Speaker: David Robinson

Sermon Notes:

1. In this passage Jesus teaches how not to pray.
2. Jesus is one whose own life was steeped in prayer.
3. Our prayers may be designed to reflect our piety, our theology, or our rebuke to a brother or sister.
4. However, we must not use prayer as an elevated way of speaking to one another.
5. Jesus says we should pray in secret – private prayer is the key to sincerity before God.
6. Going into your room is to take the necessary steps to avoid outside distraction from other people.
7. Go into this place of solitude, and God will reward you, supplying your needs.
8. We must not hide our sin and shame from God.
9. We hide ourselves from distractions to enter God's presence in humility and repentance, knowing that we have no spiritual benefits to commend us to God.
10. Private prayer prepares us for public prayer.
11. Both Jesus and Paul prepared themselves for public ministry in private service to God (see Matt. 4, Gal. 2).
12. Private prayer is not just for our own edification, but it is for the blessing of the body as we draw close to God.
13. Pagans prayed to many gods and emphasized special techniques to be heard and to hopefully get results.
14. Often our own attitude is that we may be more effective by using special prayer techniques.
15. Luke 11 and 18 reinforce Jesus' teaching in Matt 6.7-8 that we don't have to pester our heavenly Father with prayer. He already knows what we need and won't delay long in responding to our requests.

16. We don't need to pray complex, long prayers; God already knows what we need.
17. Do not let your heart be hasty to utter a word before God (Eccl. 5:1-2).
18. The Lord's prayer, as our model, is simple and direct.
19. Luther said prayer should be brief, frequent and intense.
20. Your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.
21. God has already spoken, and prayer is our response before God.
22. God says before they call, I will answer (Isaiah 66:24).
23. Prayer is always grounded in Scripture, as God speaks to us and we respond to God in prayers in the Psalms.
24. Learn to pray the Psalms in response to the word of God.
25. Jesus prays the Psalms, e.g., Psalm 22 on the cross.
26. Prayer is the privilege that belongs us as children of our heavenly Father (cf. Romans 8; Galatians 4).
27. The prayers of the saints are a pleasant offering before God's throne in Revelation 8.

Application Questions

1. What are the principles of prayer that Jesus commands?
2. Do I direct my prayer to a human audience to receive praise?
3. Do I pray as if God is already present and aware of my needs?
4. How can the Psalms help us to pray according to God's will?
5. Why does God command us to pray if He fully knows our needs?