



SERMON

A Pure and Praying Heart (Matt 6:5-8)

DATE

Mar 11th, 2018

1. Do you struggle to have consistent prayer in your life? Do you find prayer intimidating? Do you have a strong desire for prayer or do you find praying a struggle?

A PURE AND PRAYING HEART IS A MATTER OF:

2. **NECESSITY:**

Read Matt 6:5. Jesus says, “**When** you pray...” not “**If** you pray.” In Jesus’ culture, people understood that prayer is a crucial part in the life of God’s people. However, prayer is no longer ingrained in our society today. Do you believe that prayer is a matter of necessity? Does your prayer life reflect a true belief in the necessity of prayer?

J.I. Packer said, “Prayer alone obtains help from God.” And Daniel Henderson said, “The only enduring motivation for prayer is that God is worthy to be sought.” Do you believe you need help from God today? Do you believe that God is worthy to be sought? If we are needy and God is worthy to be sought, what prevents us from seeking God in prayer?

Read Hebrews 11:6, Matt 7:7-11, Matt 21:22, John 15:7, Psalm 10:17, Jer. 33:3.

What do these passages tell us about God and prayer? Pastor Jason stated that the number one reason for prayerlessness is unbelief. How do these passages show that a lack of prayer is rooted in unbelief? Do you struggle with unbelief? How can we increase our faith to combat unbelief?

3. **AUTHENTICITY**

Read Matt 6:5 again. Jesus warns against hypocrisy in prayer. Hypocrisy in prayer focuses on the one who is praying, rather than God. It wants to be seen and praised by other people. When you pray, do you struggle with the fear of man and the idol of seeking approval from others?

Jesus desires authentic prayer that seeks the attention of God rather than the attention of people. Do you find it hard to be authentic in prayer? Why or why not? The reward of authentic prayer is the attention, affirmation and love from God, the creator of the universe. How does this fact help us to be authentic in prayer?

4. **INTIMACY**

Read Matt 6:6. The phrase "go into your room and shut the door" implies a sense of privacy and intimacy. God desires that we know him intimately and personally. God invites us to be in his presence so that we may experience his peace and have intimacy with him. Do you seek to know God and to be intimate with him in prayer? Or is prayer more of a ritual or a checklist? How can we grow in intimacy with God?

5. **SIMPLICITY**

Read Matt 6:7-8. Jesus instructs us to "not heap up empty phrases." This refers to meaningless repetition for the sake of lengthening prayers. God however does not care the amount of words that we use, rather he wants our hearts. Do you feel that you need to use certain phrases or speak in a certain way in your prayer? Do you feel that you need to pray long prayers for God to listen?

Jesus says, "your Father knows what you need before you ask him." God knows what we need, but he still wants us to ask him. He wants to hear us and commune with us. How does the fact that God knows what we need help us to pray with simplicity?

6. Spend some time in prayer:

- a. Pray for a deeper conviction for the need for prayer in our lives
- b. Pray against hypocrisy and for more authenticity in our prayers
- c. Pray that we may grow in our intimacy with God through prayer
- d. Pray that we may pray with simplicity