

## INTRODUCTION

In the study of 1 Timothy that we just completed, we were taught that it is a matter of first importance that we pray.

We pray for all who are in authority over us, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty, knowing that if God does not work in those government officials for our good, our lives will not be quiet and peaceful!

We pray for all men regarding their salvation, knowing that the one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, gave Himself a ransom for all.

Because these things for which we pray are of concern to people everywhere, the disciples of Jesus Christ are to pray everywhere.

And Christians do pray. We pray privately; we pray as families; we pray in small gatherings at various times; and we pray in the assembly on the Lord's Day.

But we are aware of our weaknesses and failings even in this fundamental and vital activity. As in so many things, we do not know what we need to know; or we know the good we ought to do, but we don't always do it.

There is forgiveness from God in the shed blood of our Lord Jesus Christ for any of our sinful failings regarding prayer. And there is help in the words of Jesus Christ, to teach us to pray.

So, for the next several weeks, consider with me The Lord's Prayer.

## TEXT

Matthew 6:5-8 "And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. (6) But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. (7) And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. (8) "Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.

## BODY

### I. Do Not Be Like the Hypocrites

#### A. Who the hypocrites are

1. actors playing a part
2. they are those who say things they do not really think or believe
3. they are those who do things not because they really want to obey and please God, but because they want people to think that they do
4. they are those who speak out of both sides of their mouth, saying both “yes” and “no” depending on who is listening
5. they are those who say one thing and do another
6. they are those who quote the Bible if it some phrase taken out of context might support their evil agenda, but they ignore the many ways the Bible condemns their ways
7. they are those who preach the Bible to others, but do not follow it themselves

#### B. What the hypocrites love regarding prayer - Mat 6:5 - to pray where people will see them praying

#### C. What reward the hypocrites have

1. people sometimes admire them, thinking they must be very devout or pious
  - a) and sometimes compliment them for it
  - b) and sometimes give them some favorable treatment for it
2. that is all the reward they get, for they have no reward from God

#### D. We, the disciples of Jesus Christ, are not the hypocrites

1. in the inner man, where the Holy Spirit has regenerated us, we delight in the law of God
2. from deep inside, we cry out not to men, but to God our Father

E. How temptation to hypocrisy comes upon us who are not hypocrites

1. when there is someone we think could help us, and we want to please that person so he will do us some good; or when there is someone we think could hurt us, and we want to please that person so he will not do us any harm; we might be tempted to say or do things we don't really believe in, to please such people
2. Peter is the best bad example of this

a) first example

(1) Matthew 26:33-35 Peter answered and said to Him, "Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble."

(34) Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." (35) Peter said to Him, "Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!" And so said all the disciples.

(2) Matthew 26:69-75 Now Peter sat outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl came to him, saying, "You also were with Jesus of Galilee." (70) But he denied it before them all, saying, "I do not know what you are saying." (71) And when he had gone out to the gateway, another girl saw him and said to those who were there, "This fellow also was with Jesus of Nazareth." (72) But again he denied with an oath, "I do not know the Man!" (73) And a little later those who stood by came up and said to Peter, "Surely you also are one of them, for your speech betrays you." (74) Then he began to curse and swear, saying, "I do not know the Man!" Immediately a rooster crowed. (75) And Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." So he went out and wept bitterly.

b) second example

(1) Galatians 2:11-13 Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; (12) for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. (13) And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.

F. How we are tempted to be like the hypocrites regarding prayer

1. if you are really praying, and someone sees you praying, fine; but if you pretend to be praying, or start praying so that someone will see or hear you praying, that is hypocrisy
2. if you are pretending to be praying in the congregation, but really you are just saying things or doing gestures for other people to hear and see, that is hypocrisy

Regarding prayer,

Do not be like the hypocrites; as if you loved what they love; and

## II. Do Not Do Like the Heathen

### A. Who the heathen or the pagans are

1. the word means something like “the nations,” meaning the other nations besides Israel
2. the main idea is those whose concept of God is not from the Bible, but from human imagination
  - a) those who would say there is no god, or that we can't know if there is a god
  - b) and those who say there is a god, or there are many gods, but whose beliefs about gods is not true according to what nature and the Bible tell us about God

### B. How the heathen pray

1. Mt 6:7 with vain repetitions
2. 1 Kings 18
  - a) v. 26 they cried out with the same words all morning
  - b) v. 26 they leaped about the altar
  - c) v. 28 they cried aloud
  - d) v. 28 they cut themselves until they bled

### C. What the heathen think

1. 1 Kings 18:27 that prayers should be made to a being who isn't really divine
  - a) who isn't omnipresent
  - b) who isn't omniscient
  - c) who isn't good (who would be pleased with his worshipers hurting themselves for his sake)
2. that they will be heard for their many words and other commotions

### D. We the disciples of Jesus Christ are not the heathen

1. we do not really think there are many gods
2. we do not really think that God can't hear us unless we cry aloud, and won't hear us unless we say long prayers with many repetitions of the same words and unless we make a big, disorderly commotion
3. we certainly do not think that God won't hear our prayers unless we cut ourselves

### E. But our Lord Jesus knows us, that we are tempted to pray like the heathen, as if we did think those things

F. How temptation to do like the heathen comes upon us

1. if we have not paid careful attention to the word of God, to do as He has commanded, we will be tempted just to do whatever we have seen the heathen do
2. e.g. David's men
  - a) Exodus 25:14 You shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, that the ark may be carried by them.
  - b) Numbers 1:50 but you shall appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of the Testimony, over all its furnishings, and over all things that belong to it; they shall carry the tabernacle and all its furnishings; they shall attend to it and camp around the tabernacle.
  - c) 1 Samuel 6:7-8 Now therefore, make a new cart, take two milk cows which have never been yoked, and hitch the cows to the cart; and take their calves home, away from them. (8) Then take the ark of the LORD and set it on the cart; and put the articles of gold which you are returning to Him as a trespass offering in a chest by its side. Then send it away, and let it go.
  - d) 2 Samuel 6:1-7 Again David gathered all the choice men of Israel, thirty thousand. (2) And David arose and went with all the people who were with him from Baale Judah to bring up from there the ark of God, whose name is called by the Name, the LORD of Hosts, who dwells between the cherubim. (3) So they set the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill; and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drove the new cart. (4) And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill, accompanying the ark of God; and Ahio went before the ark. (5) Then David and all the house of Israel played music before the LORD on all kinds of instruments of fir wood, on harps, on stringed instruments, on tambourines, on sistrums, and on cymbals. (6) And when they came to Nachon's threshing floor, Uzzah put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled. (7) Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against Uzzah, and God struck him there for his error; and he died there by the ark of God.
  - e) 1 Chronicles 15:11-15 And David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites: for Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab. (12) He said to them, "You are the heads of the fathers' houses of the Levites; sanctify yourselves, you and your brethren, that you may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel to the place I have prepared for it. (13) For because you did not do it the first time, the LORD our God broke out against us, because we did not consult Him about the proper order." (14) So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel. (15) And the children of the Levites bore the ark of God on their shoulders, by its poles, as Moses had commanded according to the word of the LORD.

G. How we are tempted to be like the heathen regarding prayer

1. we are tempted to ignore the Lord's Prayer and other things in the Bible that teach us to pray
2. there are many people on the radio or the TV, or who pray in public on various occasions, whom we hear praying as if they were heathen
3. then, when we hear other people pray as the heathens do, we adopt that as our model, whether we mean to or not

So, our deare Lord Jesus tells us, regarding prayer,  
Do not be like the hypocrites; as if you love what they love  
Do not do like the heathen; as if you think what they think

And from the scriptures, I say to you, instead of being like the hypocrites or the heathen,

III. Be Like One of the First Disciples - Luke 11:1

- A. Notice that our Lord Jesus Himself prayed
- B. Ask the Lord to teach us to pray
- C. Note that when His disciple asked Him, “Lord, teach us to pray,” our Lord Jesus responded by telling them to say The Lord’s Prayer.
  - 1. our Lord Jesus apparently took that to be a good request; He granted it immediately; I think it is a very good request for us to make of Him now
  - 2. if that is the answer to such a request, we should take it as the answer now: if you want to learn to pray from Jesus Christ, then meditate on the prayer that He gave us to say

CONCLUSION

Examine yourself for any temptations to be like the hypocrites, as if you loved what they love.

If you have been sinning in that way, repent and be forgiven in the blood of Jesus Christ.

Examine yourself for any temptations to be like the heathen, as if you thought what they think.

If you have been sinning in that way, repent and be forgiven in the blood of Jesus Christ.

Each one of us, and all of us as a congregation, let us humble ourselves before our Master, and ask Him together, “Teach us to pray.”

Then listen to His answer.

Pray for me as I prepare these sermons, that I will speak the truth boldly as I ought to.

Pray for yourselves and for each other, that you will hear and keep His word.

Attend closely upon these sermons on The Lord’s Prayer.

make them part of your conversation with each other

meditate on the Lord’s Prayer in your private devotions

Thad - Call to Worship and Opening Prayer - Psalm 55:16-17

Roel - Scripture Reading - 1 Kings 18:17-39

Dillon - Congregational Prayer

Benediction - Psalm 66:19-20

Allison - Prelude

Allison - sheet “All Creatures of Our God and King” (Psalm 148)

Audrey - Trinity 286 “We Gather Together”

Angie - Trinity 192 “Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted”