

Message Notes | Prayer

Part 1: The Heart of Prayer

Matthew 6:5-8

→ something so common can seem quite confusing

#1 Prayer is _____.

→ Jesus taught *stop doing this...*

→ they loved to be seen - **vs. 5-6**

#2 Pray with _____ for God.

→ they thought they'd be heard - **vs. 7-8**

#3 Pray with _____ toward God.

→ the unheard, unanswered prayer - **Matthew 27:46**

#4 Practice _____.

→ *Father, I...*

→ *But you...*

Group Questions | Prayer

Part 1: The Heart of Prayer

Matthew 6:5-8

1. Why do you think nearly every culture and religion practices some form of prayer? What does that tell you about God's design for the human heart?
2. What was your impression of prayer growing up? Was it something that was modeled for you? Was it part of your life?
3. **Read Matthew 6:5-6.** Jesus warned against people who "love to be seen" when they pray. What are some subtle ways that misplaced affections can show up in our own prayer lives today?

What might it look like to pray with wholehearted affection for God instead?

4. **Read Matthew 6:7-8.** Jesus also warned against people who "think they will be heard because of their many words." How might that warning apply to modern ideas about prayer—like seeing it as meditation, mindfulness, or a mental technique?
5. Jesus taught an approach toward prayer that takes you out of the center, realizing that God is at the center. How do you know if a prayer is becoming self-centered instead of God-centered?

In what situations do you most easily slip into self-centered praying?

6. The message ended with a call to practice talking to God. What might that look like for you this week, whether it's setting aside silent time, praying through a song, or using that simple "*Father, I... but you...*" pattern?

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#1 Prayer is talking to God.

→ Jesus taught *stop doing this...*

→ they loved to be seen - **vs. 5-6**

#2 Pray with wholehearted affection for God.

→ they thought they'd be heard - **vs. 7-8**

#3 Pray with mindful orientation toward God.

→ the unheard, unanswered prayer - **Matthew 27:46**

#4 Practice talking to God.

→ *Father, I...*

→ *But you...*

Bible Reading for Today

Matthew 6:5-8

And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ⁶ But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. ⁷ And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

