

LEARNING HOW TO PRAY
MATTHEW 6:5-8 / 10-6-19 / A.M.

I. FIRST, DON'T PRAY TO IMPRESS OTHER PEOPLE.

A. This is how Jesus said Jewish hypocrites prayed—Matt. 6:5.

1. Devout Jews prayed several times a day.
 - a. Twice a day they recited three long passages from the O.T. they called “The Shema”.
 - b. Jews also recited a collection of 18 prayers they called in Hebrew “Shemoneh Esreh” which means 18.
2. But how were they hypocrites as Jesus suggested?
 - a. Since Jews had other things to do during the day, they were often caught out in public when they were required to pray and would do so wherever they might be.
 - b. However, to be seen by others they often timed their prayers in public places like the synagogue and on busy street corners.

B. Jesus told his disciples, and us, to pray in secluded places—Matt. 6:6.

1. Jesus isn't against praying in public but he is against praying only to be seen by other people.
2. Jesus' point is we aren't praying to other people, we are praying to God.
3. If we are praying to be seen by others that is our only reward—Matt. 6:1.

II. SECOND, DON'T PRAY MEANINGLESS PRAYERS.

A. This is how Jesus said pagans prayed—Matt. 6:7.

1. “Babbling” is translated as “vain repetitions” in the KJV.
2. Babbling means to use certain words or phrases designed to catch God's attention.
3. The emphasis is on “vain” not “repetitions”.
4. Jesus isn't forbidding repetition when praying because he too prayed the same prayer three times.

- B. Jesus told his disciples, and us, to approach God confidently in prayer rather than using mindless words to gain God's favor—Matt. 6:8.
1. The Apostle John says this too—I John 5:14.
 2. Jesus says we should approach God as our "Father" who already knows what we need and also what we don't need.