

How to Pray: Honesty | Matthew 6:5-8  
September 23, 2018

### Icebreaker

My prayer life right now can be compared to...

- Breathing – it's natural and happens all day
- Showering – it's needed once a day
- Mowing – once a week should do
- What prayer life???
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

### Matthew 6:5–8 (ESV)

*[5] "And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. [6] But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.*

*[7] "And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. [8] Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.*

### The Wrong Way to Pray

Question: How does Jesus tell us not to pray in these verses?

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When we pray, we tend to have two tendencies: 1) We talk to the people around us instead of God OR 2) We are trying to control God with our words or many words.

Question: What do these two tendencies have in common?

- Its what hypocrites do
- Its what the Pharisees do
- I've done both of these things
- Both of these are based on performance
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Tips and Tricks:

The sermon notes are designed to be used as a guide for discussion. Don't feel like you have to use every question. Some questions will take a while to work through and others will be over in a few seconds.

1. Don't teach the lesson. The sermon was just preached. Just ask the questions and let everyone else talk.
2. Let other people ask questions. It's OK to go "off topic" for a while. Sometimes those conversations are more interesting anyway!
3. Have fun. Don't forget to laugh and crack up. Relationships, not curriculum, are the heartbeat of our ministry. Remember: We have to build a relational bridge strong enough to hold the truth!

### Agenda for Group Time

1. Ice Breaker - Lighthearted ice breaker question (10 minutes)
2. Discussion - Bible study, sharing and application. (25 Minutes)
3. Prayer - Pray together (5 minutes)
4. Planning - Remember to talk about what's coming up.

Question: Which of these tendencies do you tend to struggle with?

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Question: Why do you think we struggle with prayer in these ways?

- We see people and we can't see God.
- We forget who God is.
- We forget who we are.
- We think people are more important than God.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

*We have forgotten that we are peasants in the presence of the King.* -RC Sproul

### The Right Way to Pray

Jesus gives us two solutions for prayer.

Question: What solutions does Jesus give us?

- To stop watching TV and to put away our phones.
- To go into a private place to pray
- To quit Facebook
- To stop being like the gentiles
- To say better prayers that sound better
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Question: What are the key ingredients in both of the solutions that Jesus gives?

- A door. You definitely need a door.
- Honesty about God and yourself
- Humility and Faith
- Neither have
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

For Discussion: What is the point of prayer if God already knows what you need before you ask him? Do our prayers change the mind of God?

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*Our Prayers are always good enough because Christ is always good enough. The achievement in prayer is all Christ's. So what makes our prayers effective is Jesus.*

-Tim Chester

Question: How does this encourage you? How does Jesus allow us to be honest with ourselves and with God in our prayer life?

### Four Common Types of Prayer in the Bible

**Adoration** – Praising and worshipping God for who He is. **Psalm 145:1-6**

**Confession** – Agreeing with God about ourselves, our sins, our fears, our thoughts. **1 John 1:9**

**Thanksgiving** – Thanking God for what He has given you or has done in your life. **Eph. 5:20**

**Supplication** – Praying for our needs and the needs of others. **Matthew 7:7-8**

Question: Where do you spend most of your prayer time – adoration, confession, thanksgiving, or supplication?

### Work It Out!

Question: How would you like to see your prayer life improve this fall?

- I'd like to start praying
- I'd like to stop pretending and start being honest in prayer.
- I want to spend more time praying
- I want to use scripture in my prayer life
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Pray together as a group!

Use the Lords Prayer as a guide or the ACTS acronym above to guide your time of prayer.

### The Lord's Prayer

Matthew 6:9-13

[9] *Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.*

*[10] Your kingdom come, your will be done,*

*on earth as it is in heaven.*

*[11] Give us this day our daily bread,*

*[12] and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.*

*[13] And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. (ESV)*