

# Pray as a Child, Not an Atheist

## 2024.03.03 Morning Sermon in Matthew 6:5–15

<sup>1</sup>“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. <sup>6</sup>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. <sup>7</sup>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. <sup>8</sup>“Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.

<sup>9</sup>In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. <sup>10</sup>Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. <sup>11</sup>Give us this day our daily bread. <sup>12</sup>And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. <sup>13</sup>And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. <sup>14</sup>“For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. <sup>15</sup>But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

**Main idea:** We must pray as children coming to an all-good, all-wise, all-powerful Father. Prayer as worship is a fellowship of communing with Him and a means of grace for bringing us into submission to Him.

**Introduction:** God Himself as the reward in good works done toward men. God Himself as the Reward in prayer done toward God. Prayer is worship. Prayer as worship is fellowship and a means of grace.

### 1. Functional Atheists (Hypocrites) Have No Fellowship

1. A functional atheist loves to pray! (to be seen and heard by men)
2. Functional atheists have the reward of men’s esteem (maybe) and maybe even men’s fellowship. But there is not God’s fellowship with him, God’s pleasure in his coming through Christ, and particularly God’s pleasure in the Christ through whom he comes.
3. God’s children have Him in the worship of prayer
  1. They love to have Him alone
  2. And when in public, it is He Whom they love to have
  3. One day this fellowship with Him and pleasure in Him will be perfected. Growth in this throughout life is one reason prayer gets sweeter and more sustainable: it is becoming more like what it shall be when we have prayer’s true Reward.

### 2. Actual Atheists (Heathen) Have No Grace

1. An actual atheist is trying to get (manipulate) his god to do what he wants

2. An actual atheist treats prayer as mechanical or magical. Say it enough. Say it the right (effective/forcing) way. Be pathetic enough or ascetic enough. etc.
3. The “Lord’s Prayer” is an illustration/example of theistic prayer
  1. It is, foremost, praying to a Father Who knows what you need before you ask.
  2. Praying to a Father: laying hold of His willingness, not overcoming unwillingness. Be careful of the heart with which you pray! “With thanksgiving”!
  3. Who knows what you need: a means of grace for learning submission
    1. Your, Your, Your... Yours! Thy, Thy, Thy... Thine!
    2. Embracing His will by hallowing His Name, as Jesus did (cf. Jn 17:11).
    3. Embracing His will with reference to the world
    4. Embracing His will with reference to the church’s (corporate!) needs both physical and spiritual. Forgiveness necessary to both. Greatest need is deliverance from sin. If we are not praying for forgiveness as those who have begun in the grace of 5:3–9, we do not pray as children or with the church.
    5. His is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever, and He works all things according to the counsel of that will in which He glorifies Himself by perfecting that which concerns His church!

**Conclusion:** Is your praying a fellowship with God? Is your praying a means of grace for growing in embracing His will?

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Matthew 6 verses 5-15. These are God's words. 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.

But 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. 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.

Therefore, do not be like them. For your father knows. The things you have need of. Before you ask him. In this manner. Therefore pray. Our Father in heaven Hallowed, Be Your Name. Your kingdom, come. Will be done. On Earth as it is in, he Give us this day, our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts. As we forgive our debtors and do not lead us into temptation. But Deliver Us from the evil one. For yours is the kingdom. On the par. And the glory forever. Amen. For, if you forgive men, their trespasses. Your heavenly father will also forgive you.

But if you do not forgive men, their trespasses Neither will your father. Forgive. Trespasses. Amen, thus ends this reading of gods inspired and inerrant toward it. Rejoice, he is pleased to be glorified in his worship. By blessing to us the preaching. Of that word, please be seated.

Well, one of the great differences between a hypocrite, Scribes and the Pharisees in particular, you remember, when he uses this word Hypocrites, In this portion of Matthew chapter 6, we are Still hearing about how our righteousness must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees. As he said back in chapter 5 and verse 20, and later in the book, when he comes to pronounce, woes upon the scribes, and the Pharisees, that will be the primary.

Cause for their woe for The Doom, the condemnation that is coming upon them, woe to you scribes and Pharisees. Hypocrites. And so we are hearing about Not to be a hypocrite or rather. Uh, we're hearing about How to be those who Rejoice and are exceedingly, glad Not only. Uh, because we are persecuted for the Lord, Jesus, his sake.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven? Blessed? Are you, when they revile and persecute you and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for my sake Rejoice and be exceedingly? Glad for great is your reward in heaven. They persecuted the prophets who were before you And so if we're going to be those who can rejoice and be exceedingly, glad not just in the midst of persecution, but because of persecution, we need to be those who seek the same reward for ourselves that the Lord Jesus seeks for all those whom he came to save and for whom he has lived and died and risen again.

And we saw that last week, Jesus's Priority upon how important it was to him, that those who are his, those who follow him those for whom he dies whom he's redeeming. And taking as subjects into his kingdom. And as children for his heavenly father together with him Jesus's desire, that they would be rewarded.

That we would be rewarded that you who believe in the Lord, Jesus Christ would be rewarded with. The right reward. Because as we heard last week and as you have just heard again in this week's passage Those who are Hypocrites. They have their reward. But the reward is not God himself.

As the heavenliness of him Heaven, the reward is not the king himself, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the glory of the Kingdom. And so if they have their reward, if you have your reward. In men than you have had all of your reward, but if God himself is your reward, you may have him now and you will have him fully and perfectly forever.

And so there's some overlap. Between the Beatitudes with which chapter 5 began and where we are now in chapter six because Jesus began by announcing blessedness to those whom he had gathered to himself not just Uh, in a physical way up there on the mountain, as he sat down, and they recognized sitting down as the posture that is taken.

When you Uh, when the preacher comes to preach the sermon and the synagogue, you would sit down and you remember there was that multitude at the bottom of the mountain and they

saw. Jesus setting to preach and instead of continuing in the The great. Enthusiasm. That was taking place at the bottom of the mountain.

That multitude was there, weren't they? Because of the Miracles that Jesus was doing and it was enthusiasm about Jesus. But they had not. They had not yet. Come to the same place. They had not yet been brought by God. The Holy To the same place where what they want, most of all is the Lord Jesus himself.

And particularly the Lord Jesus. By the means through which he gives us himself, his word, his preaching. But this group to, which he is preaching. Now to whom he began chapter 5 announcing blessed. Are those blessed are those blessed are those and you're hearing about that. And praise God.

It was the sort of thing that someone who knows that he has no good from himself and that if he is going to have any good, it could only come from Jesus. It was, it was the kind of blessings, which you could say. That's me. Those who are impoverished and those who mourn over those sin.

And those who aren't, uh, full of themselves and in themselves with those who are hungry and those who are thirsty and those not who are great, but those who are lowly The blessedness then. Of being such a needy one. Because you have God in Christ. Who fulfills all especially our need for forgiveness as we will hear by the time.

We are done with the sermon this morning, the Lord, helping us. So God himself as reward and and so he had gotten to the point in verse 20, where he was about to expound upon the law. Describing the blessedness of those who have been saved to bring glory to their father, where they are and he used You remember the image of salt, the image of light and how if you are redeemed by God, assault, then be what you are.

And be what you are where God has put you, he is the one who has put you on whatever particular stand in whatever particular place. He has desired to glorify himself through your life and that glorifying him then comes by reading and understanding and applying, and living out the law of God, the good Commandments of God, not in the way that the scribes and Pharisees had interpreted the law of God.

But in the way that is most obvious in Jesus, because the law came from Jesus, God from all eternity before he becomes man in the first century and therefore, who is the one who announced the Commandments on Sinai. And by whose Spirit, he caused his scriptures to be written.

And so when he interprets the scriptures, it's very different than what they heard growing up in synagogue and we saw several examples. That how the righteousness of those who are in Christ and those who walk with God in Union with the Lord Jesus Christ and walk with Christ, their righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and the Pharisees.

So those who have been taken Subject of the king are being made, not like the scribes and the Pharisees, the Hypocrites they're being made, like Christ, who is all of our righteous standing before God. He is the one who has obeyed perfectly in our place, he is the one who is atoned for us, but he is also making us to be like himself so that the kingdom that he has won for us, we would be suitable to enter and working in us, then that righteousness, that exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees.

And we heard about that from verse 21 to verse 48. 5. And then we began hearing. Last Lord's day, and the Lord helping us this Lord's day. And the next Probably, we will take one more. Have not decided yet how much to try to bite off for next. That next Lord's Day.

But we went from hearing the righteousness that exceeds that and the scribes and Pharisees to the religion. That exceeds, that of the scribes and Pharisees and whether it's those religious activities that That touch others and that have a, a horizontal. Direction as it were to those around us. Those those works of Mercy that he was talking about last week and that should be done, especially in the presence of God before the face of God, for the sight of God, even to the extent that we are careful against our hearts Desiring, that none else as much as we can help, but would know it because we want it.

So entirely to be done with him and in fellowship with him because he is our reward now and he then is our reward at the last day when all things are revealed and and those things that we did where we were, Brought him glory in our doing them and glory to whatever extent men saw them.

Then those things will bring him such great glory as the one who has completed his work in us in the last day and he who was our reward in secret in those things, those religious things that we did. Those works of Mercy. With respect to others, he who was our reward in secret as far as those things are concerned as our reward openly in the last day, when all things are made open.

Well, then in prayer, which attends or is vertically directed, especially towards God. The same thing, he is our reward and secret, and even in those religious things, which are more inward. Fasting, the humiliation of of the self, the feeling of our neediness, the denial of, uh, not so much the body, although we, we deny the physical body and fasting.

But the denying of our flesh, and our fleshliness and using the denial of the body to communicate that to ourselves and in ourselves it too, to be done before the face of God and in Fellowship with him. But we'll come to fasting next week. I just wanted you to see that progression.

Religious works with respect to others. Our religious Work. In a more godward Direction and our religious Works with Ourselves are a more inward Direction. And so here, Again, our religion is to exceed that of the scribes and the Pharisees because God himself is our reward in prayer. Just as he was in last week's portion to be our reward in our works of Mercy done towards men.

And, God himself being our reward and prayer ought to be most obvious because prayer is worship. Prayer is worship. You are asking him who can hear you? You're asking him, who can reward you? It is of the essence of Faith. Hebrews says that, you must believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

And so it already and we'll, We'll point this out a couple more times already we have made nonsense, indeed great wickedness, out of the idea of praying to any man or woman praying to any Saint praying to Mary praying to the universal spirit that is Within everyone or any of this nonsense that you may hear whether it is from the papists or any other.

Religion or false spirituality? No prayer is worship. It is done unto God and as worship prayer, is in the first case. A fellowship with a communing. With God, we draw near to him. He has been telling his people showing, his people has has gathered church. He has been showing his church that worship is a gathering near to him for some 3400 years.

At least you remember in our preaching recently through the book of Leviticus about how the offerings were, an Ascension and a tribute and a fellowship. And even the word offering which is transliterated into Greek in that, uh, that misuse by the Pharisees of of the money that, uh, that might be needed to take care of your parents.

You're like, no, it's an offering unto God. I, I signed up at the last pledge, drive at church. It's Corban. Well, that that's a transliteration of the word, the Hebrew word for offering, which means to draw near to God. Of prayer as worship is a fellowship with God and drawing near to him.

And is also a means of Grace. And those things we will we will see in the passage first that, uh, that prayer as worship is a fellowship with God. Vers. Five through six. In verses 5 through 6, it is a fellowship with God and so don't be a functional atheist, like the Hypocrites.

Because they have no fellowship with God and they're praying. And then in verses 7, through 15, we'll see that prayer. As worship is a means of God's grace in other words and appointed instrument. And exercise by which God has given us to depend upon him, attend to him, look to him to work.

Graciously in us a means of Grace. And whereas the the hypocrite the functional atheist has no fellowship with God and praying. Heaven. The actual atheist has no Grace from God. No help from God or God working in him. Uh, in his prayer. And so those will be the the two ways that we organize.

Our thoughts before God this morning first not wanting to be those functional atheists, those Hypocrites who have no fellowship with God. And then in verse 7 to the end of our passage, not to be like those actual atheists. Those Heathen who have no Grace from God, And they're praying.

Now, the warning about the The Hypocrites ought to ought to come home to us very quickly. And when you pray, you shall not be like the Hypocrites for they love to pray. Does that surprise you? That you're being warned here against being like someone who loves To pray. It's very similar to.

The the way that his warning when we come into chapter, seven and verse 21 or 22, somewhere in there, Cuts close. When he says to me, Many. And that day will say to me Lord Lord in your name did we not in your name? Did we not and your name, did we not?

Uh, and it was too many muddy Works. And so forth. And these are people who know that salvation is in the name of Jesus Christ. And, Her. And that. That salvation that is in his name, makes a difference in in the life. And so reformed Believers or Presbyterian Believers, who know these things in, God's mercy to us, In the theological Heritage, he's given us our Prime candidates for the warning in Matthew 7.

21, 22. Similarly here Those who love to pray. Maybe Prime candidates are prime candidates for the warning in verses 5 and 6. The functional atheist is one who loves to pray now. This is not someone who claims to not believe in God. Exactly the opposite, they claim until their horse how much they believe in God.

And yet they are functionally in their hearts atheistic. Because all of their love for praying. Uh, all of their religion is for the eyes of men, and for, perhaps the placating of their own mind and their own heart, there is no actual interaction with the God, who is the God, who created The God, Who is saving the god to whom we and all creation and all the glory thereof belong.

And so he says 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. Um, Prayer is especially for the closet. And for the assembly. The Holy assembly, we'll see that when we come to the Lord's prayer and Uh, the corporate nature of the praying there.

Uh and it may be done anywhere. First Thessalonians, 5 tells us to pray continually but oh how you need to watch your heart. About Desiring to be seen. By men. When you pray, And once when I was in the process of candidating to be called to a church attended, a worship service, Uh with the church in consideration, and in the middle of the worship in the public worship, a woman arose.

In the public worship and told the entire congregation how grateful she was that she gets to pray out in public on the steps of a prominent building in the community and what a wonderful thing it is that they make Such a display of themselves. And to that, the Lord Jesus says, 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. And so, there is a functional atheism here because he says, assuredly, I say to you, They have the reward. And here, he's not saying. Uh, they have their reward in in which uh like in verse 1, you have no reward from your father in Heaven, present tense.

And here again, we are uh we have present tense, And they have the reward, but the implication is they have all the reward. This all they're ever going to get. They wanted to be seen by men. That's what they were seeking when they prayed in their heart. Well, that's what they get.

To be seen by men. And even worse. In praying to be seen by men, they were offensive to the Living. God And so they already have all of the benefit that they may hope to have from their praying, and they can expect only condemnation. For their spiritual exercises for their religious exercises.

There is much religion. That incurs the wrath of God. In fact, we can say it even more strongly than that. Can't we? All religion. Except that which has been appointed by God and comes through Christ in the manner that he commands Is offensive to God. Spirituality is not in and of itself, a good thing.

Religion is not in and of itself, a good thing. Praying. Even. Ostensibly superficially to the god of the Bible. Is not in and of itself. A good thing. Functional atheists. Have the reward of men's esteem. They may have the reward of being thought crazy by men and patting themselves on the back.

For how persecuted they are for their public religion. When they were doing it to be seen by men to begin with. They may even have men's Fellowship. In their praying. Doing it with a group of others who are there for the same reason. And that can be a very A very intimate thing, something that draws and joins.

People together. But the functional atheist, the one who is praying to be seen by men, who's doing his worship, to be seen by men, Does not have fellowship with God. He doesn't have the great reward and prayer, those great rewards. God's fellowship with us. Oh, this is the great reward and prayer isn't it?

And also of God's pleasure And are coming through Christ, we come in the way that God has said Independence. Upon his grace in the son, by the help of the spirit and the whole Triune

God has glorified and pleased in the way that we come. And we take great pleasure and pleasing him and in his glory, in our coming in that way.

The reward of prayer is particularly God's pleasure in Christ. Because as we come whatever he sees in us, that is pleasing unto him. It's not from us, is it? It is from the Christ who is already all of our righteousness before God. And the Christ who is now conforming us to his own character and his own conduct and the display of Christ in us.

Pleases the father, who from all eternity Delights in the glory of his son and for his son to be the great display of his glory. Now, in time, through whom he created through whom, he redeemed in whom he displays himself as Yahweh. The only true God whom before whom every knee bows and unto whom every tongue confesses like next week's Isaiah passage will say about Yahweh and then Philippians 2 comes and says Yahweh from Isaiah is Jesus and God loves for the display of his glory.

Those with rewards prayer. They are not rewards that are gained by other people seeing you. There are rewards that are gained in fellowship with the Living God because of what he sees. When you pray, So, God's children have him. That have him in the worship of prayer, but you and you group, when you pray, go into your room.

And you don't just go into your room and when you have shut the door, Pray to your father who is in the secret place, who is in secret. And your father who sees on secret Will reward you. Openly. Those who Those who are not functional atheists those who have God, as father.

They love to pray alone. They love to have God alone. Oh they love to pray in the assembly too and they love to gather with his church. There is that specialness in the secret place? Where they want to be just alone with God. Not just in the way that that some of the moms, especially I want to be alone with God and so they keep on getting up earlier and earlier, Before the children, start the chaos.

So that they can have. Uh, so that they can have a a moment's piece to be able to think. But in order, in addition to the piece To be able to think there's the specialness of the isolation. There's a specialness of the intimacy. Where you are, praying in a place.

And in a way where there is just you and your father through the Sun by the help of the spirit. And there's no possibility of dividing that pleasure with the, with the desire, the fleshly desire to be seen for my own sake. Because all of the Delight is in your father who is in secret.

And who sees in secret and so he, he gives logistical counsel, doesn't he? For developing that pleasure of what God sees in the secret, place of your heart and with him as you pray, He says go into your room and don't just go into your room, go into your room and close the door.

Child. I don't know about your household, but I mean, just reinforce for those who It's with wisdom that Mom and Dad have open door policies, you know, unless you're changing or whatever it is good, that you be out where you can be seen, you know, maybe your home has a computer's only out in public places policy, that's wisdom.

Uh, because There are things that you can desire to be secret for the wrong reason. Now he's saying For praying. Have a closed door policy. Pray in such a way and in such a place and it's such a time. That it is just between you and God. He's not here.

Saying, Daniel was wrong. Right when they made the law against the praying and he went three times a day like clockwork. Everybody knew what Daniel was going to do and where



Daniel was going to be and uh and you know they could And yeah, they Collect their evidence against him first.

He's not saying Daniel, he's saying, Plan how and where you pray in such a manner as to do it, especially only entirely unto your father? Who sees in secret. God's children, love to have him alone and then when they pray in public, it's he whom they love to have.

The more you are exercised in your life, the more you develop the Habit and the skill and the dynamic of interacting with God himself in your heart and praying in secret and himself as your reward in praying. The more you do that at home, the more able you will be as God, grows you to do that in the public worship.

And in the midweek, prayer meeting, and wherever else, you pray, even in your family worship with your household. So that you will, you will not suffer as many of us have, and we felt convicted and rightly. So, from that Affliction, where somebody else is leading in prayer because it's household prayer, or it's prayer meeting prayer.

It's public worship prayer. And we're just sort of keeping up a little bit in our minds, uh, so that so that we can, uh, kind of get through, uh, and, uh, you feel nothing and you might even Might even come to your senses a couple of times in the midst of.

Is it over yet? Oh no. And you know the Uh, through Jesus Christ, or in his name, or whatever, is some sort of magic incantation to bring you back to alertness.

No. The servant who preaches understands that so well because he's experienced it. But the more Your father is your reward, in your praying in secret. The more he will be rewarded in praying in the family worship and in the prayer meeting and in the public worship. And he will be your reward openly.

Out in public. There's always a temptation to be seen praying. Well, And the desire even to have your children. Seen appearing to pray. Well, Which is not the same as your children, actually praying. Well, there's a love your child more than your child's reputation for your family. You know, we had a child once who attended a church business meeting at the age of three or four and And she was well trained to try to pay attention.

But God bless her. She fell asleep a few minutes into the meeting but she fell asleep in this position. Uh, aimed at the podium of the business meeting and the, the ministers and Elders. And the role behind us thought that she had paid. The most wrapped attention to the entire business meeting when she was really just asleep in front of them.

It's not the same, is it? That's actually paying attention. We wish to we wish to Have God as a reward praying in secret, especially those of you who lead you dads, who lead your mom. You moms, who pray with your children, especially when you, uh, when you are giving them discipline, you elders, and who lead in the public worship, you men who lead in the midweek prayer.

Prayer meeting, you want to develop this praying in the secret place and having God as your reward. So that even when you lead in prayer, You're you are praying in part for the sakes of those who hear you, like, Jesus at the tomb of Lazarus, who, who prays. And he says, I don't say this for my benefit but for those around me who are, who are hearing me, But you need to have your desire to have, you must desire to have this secret life of fellowship with God in prayer, so that that is what comes out when you lead.

And training and teaching and modeling for them that they would have the same in secret so that they would have the same reward openly in the family Worship in the public Workshop when they follow and if God has been your reward, In secret, and then openly in the, the corporate Gatherings for prayer throughout this time.

How then will he be your reward? In whom you have delighted and whom you have been pleased to Delight, glad to Delight and whose glory has been your aim and your desire and your satisfaction and then you come to the last day and when all is revealed about who he was to you and what he was doing in you and all of those good works that were done by by faith in Christ, and we're not meritorious in themselves.

But they were unto the praise of God, who was who was producing, what was good of them in you. And then the last day he is glorified and he is your reward even then. As he rewards you openly. One day our fellowship with him and our pleasure in him.

Will not be halting and difficult and small and disappointing. But even as he grows you in that communion with him in prayer, remember the true Widow? From our deacons training passages. And in first Timothy 5 who by the age of 60, by by Decades of gods, giving her fellowship with him.

In all of the other things in her life and growing her in that fellowship with him, that she has in prayer and her season now, of usefulness, in other things is winding down and she is able by the spirits progressing, having progressed her to have an actual fellowship with God and and sweetness in her time with him that she's able to continue all the time in prayer.

Thrown her to that. And everyone whom Jesus Christ is saving will come at last in the last day when he who has begun who had begun. The work will have then completed his work in the day of Christ, Jesus and your Delight in him and fellowship with him and desire for his glory will be perfected.

And that. That will be. Your? And everlasting reward. And so, God comes to us in this passage. Similarly to, as he came to Abraham after he rescued lot and offended caderly Ulmer in his Coalition and then he refused to accept anything from the King of Sodom. And he offended that King and all of his Coalition, he had rejected, any reward from the plunder for himself and you remember how God comes to him after that?

Not be afraid. Abraham. I am your Shield. And you're exceedingly, great. Reward. And the Lord, Jesus is saying. As by faith in him, you learn to draw near to God in him and have him himself as your reward in praying. God. Giving himself to you. Not only is your Shield.

But as you're exceedingly, great. Reward. Oh, who cares to be seen by men? When you're praying, can be sampling, a foretaste of that growing in the desire for and the enjoyment of that. Don't be a functional atheist. Don't be a hypocrite. Who prays to be seen by men. Such prayer is not a fellowship with God.

And in the second place. Don't be like the Heathen either. So he adds a second instruction here. Now, he's not warning about those who have Bible religion without Grace in the heart. He is warning about those who have no biblical religion at all. When you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the Heathen do.

For they think that they will be heard. For there are many words. You see these actual atheists CC, then they have no Grace, how can they have Grace? Maybe we should remind ourselves of what Grace. By Grace you have been saved and that not of yourselves by Grace, you have been saved through faith and that night of yourselves.

It is the gift of God. Grace, is that good? That we as the opposite of what we deserve, we receive good from God. That is from God and in God, that is opposite what we deserve. But it's also power for those who have only weakness. So blessing for those who deserve only wrath and power, for those who have only weakness, my grace is sufficient for you for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

And with those as the, the two great ways that we hear and think about Grace from the Bible, we come to realize and understand Grace, is God being all that he is unto us for all that we are not Or God giving himself and all that he is unto us to be all that we do not have.

And if you have fashioned your God, whether with your hands or with your mind, however it has been if you have fashioned your God there's no Grace. He depends upon you. He's like these Idols that we've been hearing about, Over and over in Isaiah. And next. Lord's Day, Lord, Lord willing will come to To have that little Humorous.

Glimpse into. Into when Cyrus overtakes Babylon and how the Babylonians. The get captured because their gods are too heavy. Yeah, Bell and Nebo are, you know, sitting in the cart and as the oxen try to pull, they fall down bell bows down, and Nemo Stoops. The oxen can't get the cart going because his massive metal gods are too heavy.

And then ox, and cart and gods and owners all together. Go into captivity. If your so-called God, Can be manipulated by the number of times you pray. He is a figment of your imagination. So, the actual atheist is trying. To manipulate his God, to do what he wants. When you pray do not use vain repetitions as the Heathen do for they.

Think they will be heard for their many words. And so we, we try to be Tried to manipulate God, by Uh, by what we do or maybe. It's not so mechanical as that it can be mechanical as that. I mean, some of you may have seen someone with some beads out And praying over and over again.

And every time they make a repetition they move on to the next bead and they think it's so spiritual. No, it's not. Well, it is It was not the good kind of spiritual. It is a manipulation of a false deity. Who will hear you if you repeat it enough times?

There's more subtle ways of doing that. Thinking that. Because of how well you speak. You will be hurt. And I don't mean learning to speak according to the Bible. I mean, learning to phrase things really eloquently so that they sound good. This is a partner, isn't it to being seen by men?

It's is being heard by men. Or even in secret. Approaching prayer in such a way as as we will manipulate God, the, the point of the unfortunate Widow. Is not that God must be overcome. By our persistence, our brute force of not stopping praying. It's that God who is not like the judge in the illustration.

He is surely hearing every time, and he surely already knows and desires what to give you. And so there is no one more worth continuing to pray to than that. God, and so, keep praying and never give up. For if the evil of the, of the of that judge can be overcome by.

How that would o. Praise how much more is the good of your father, laid holdeth. By persisting in prayer. And so when we come to God, there is that unbelieving? Mistrusting, Spirit attitude that can come from our flesh where we're asking for something, but we're doubting that God wants to do us that good.

That idea that it's too great. A thing that we're asking for or too good. A thing that we're asking for which is utter rubbish, Your father knows what you need before you ask him, he sent his son into the world while we were still enemies. Christ died for us.

He did not spare his own son but gave him up for us and how much more certainly will he give you all things? And so, do not come to God with a halting Spirit, a suspecting Spirit. As if you, you just need to pray hard enough or you just need to figure out the the right words.

Like it's some sort of, uh, Daughter incantation. Or you just need to do it enough times. Because there's a certain number that you get to and you've accrued enough prayer Force to get it done. Don't come to God with a halting and doubting. Don't come. To bend him to your will.

Don't come to bend him to your will. Come submitting yourself to his.

You see that verse 7? The Heathen are trying to bend their God, to their will. Verse 8, Jesus says They've got the wrong will. We don't come. Praying to seek our will be done. We make our requests known to God. Be anxious for nothing, but in all things. By prayer and supplication with Thanksgiving.

Make your requests known to God. You you come and make your requests known to him. But you come submitting to the fact that your request might not be right. You study scripture and you want to have your heart and mind conformed to his But even then some particular Providence that you desire may not be a right thing to desire or it may be something that in and of itself would be good but it is not that best way that he has determined to bring you.

What is good. And so if he himself is going to be your exceedingly, great reward forever. If you are going to be perfectly holy and perfectly happy forever, you come praying and making your requests known to the one who has already figured out decided better than figured out. He decrees, he doesn't discover, Who has already decided how he is going to get all of those upon whom.

He has set his love there. So you hear the difference between the false deity in verse 7 and the true God. Your father knows the things you have need of before you ask him in this manner, therefore pray. You ever noticed that? That the Lord's Prayer. Is an illustration of theistic prayer.

It's an illustration of how to pray when you know that God is your father. It's an illustration of how to pray. When you know that God's will is better than yours. And so, Begins with. Our Father. In heaven and you just you just stop there and learn so much.

Now, we're not going to go. Um, In as much detail here because we want to keep the context fresh and in view but it is first and foremost praying to a father, who knows what you need. Praying to a father. And so, as we have said, laying hold of his willingness, not overcoming unwillingness, you do not come to an unwilling father.

You do not come to an unwilling God. Not only is he more knowledgeable of what you need, he is more desirous to give it to you than you are to ask it of him. And so you Praying to a father, which means you are laying hold of his willingness.

You are the one who has the halting Spirit not him. You are the one who is hindered in desire for true and full and everlasting, good for yourself, not him. I saw you'd come. He said, father. Our Father. This is something that Obviously we are not God but there's a dynamic in the minds and hearts of our children that we We tried to reinforce to them.

Often refusing things that they ask. Intending to give them better things. Sometimes things they would not have thought were better before we started. And then we would do the things and we would talk to them of the things of God and they would learn that pleasure in him, that was better than the fleshly pleasure that they had asked for. It's much easier to do when the kids one and two and three.

Don't wait until later. We would choose for them things that they would not know to choose. And, you know, we live in the society that Uh, that so strongly. Emphasizing giving kids, whatever pleases them. Even to the point now of the greatest wickedness and perversion and bodily harm imaginable.

Giving kids whatever they want. But kids ought to learn. That what they want is not always best. They ought to learn. That it is best to have whatever mom and dad, God has chosen for them. And then there's a lot of onus upon you. Isn't there Mom and Dad?

To desire and give your kids better things than what they ask. So that they don't drown themselves and suffocate in the rubbish that the flesh would have them ask for that. The world is training them to desire. And there will come a day, that, that That one and two and three-year-old.

Is a 30 and 40 and 50 year old And they have a heavenly father who, Is a perfect. Anti-Type. The the perfect one of whom. My mom and dad were just examples in their lives. When you train your child to do that, the Lord working graciously in their in their hearts.

They develop this habit of coming to you and asking for something. And knowing that, whatever the answer is going to be. It's out of a greater desire to do them good than they have for themselves. And it is with more wisdom of what is good for them than they have in themselves.

And you and I dear believer, we need to come to our heavenly father that way. Not as if we're trying to overcome his unwillingness. But laying hold of his willingness. And so we come, we pray in such a way, that submits ourselves to his will, or as you can see, if you, if you grabbed an outline, this word of submit, it's a beautiful word, a wonderful word God, has set himself over us, and we are to submit to him.

And and children are to submit themselves to their parents and wives or to submit themselves to their husbands and congregations. Submit to their elders and spiritual things and submit to their deacons and in their oversight over Ministry and everything. The word submit is fine but because it is not as uh doesn't have as sweet connotations as easily.

The way it is often used and maligned, we're using the word Embrace So we're submitting to his will but embracing his will. We're praying to a father, who knows? The what we need, most of all is him. He knows what we need. And therefore prayer is a means of Grace for learning submission.

To embrace his will. Rather than to try to impose ours. Upon him. And so, you notice the, uh, your your of the first half of the prayer and the, the, uh, us us us of the second half, Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be your name, your kingdom come your will be done.

If our God gets everything that he wants, we will get everything that we need. If our God gets all the glory that is due to him, we will get all the blessedness that we have in him and his glory. So if we pray genuinely theistically, we pray as those who Embrace his will.

Rather than coming to impose our own.

And, We come, yes, making our requests known to God, fine. But, In all things by prayer and supplication with Thanksgiving. Make your request known to God. You're not thanking him saying. I thank you in advance God, because I know you're going to do what I say. No, you come with Thanksgiving, knowing That he has never once in your life.

Done anything other. Then what is best for bringing you into the full blessedness, that Jesus has secured for you? So thanking him already for what he has done up to that point thanking him for what he is doing, in the midst of the thing, it's giving you anxiety. Be anxious for nothing but and and so forth.

It's not giving God anxiety. It is obeying, the God who is doing it for your good and his glory. So, with Thanksgiving, and then forward-looking You're thanking him in part that he's not going to do what you say. You might be asking for some good things and you're thanking him for if he does.

And you might be asking for something that isn't as good and so you're thanking him for not doing whatever that is. You come with Thanksgiving, not because of how the specifics that he is going to do conform to what you're asking for. You come with Thanksgiving. Because whatever he is going to do is perfect.

And so we Embrace as well, we Embrace his will by hallowing his name. As Jesus did.

You know, I think we're going to Stop here. I really wanted to. Um, Keep the context fresh, it will be up to you. In part and dependence upon the grace of God. How much of that benefit you receive? Uh, the more you meditate upon the scripture and what it is taught thus far between now.

And next, Lord's day, the more fresh that will be for you as we come into the rest of the the exposition. How, but don't be. One of these atheists for whom prayer is not a means of Grace. For the believer, prayer, is that fellowship with God in which he trains us to embrace him and his will for us.

Even the Lord Jesus. Who did not have any resistance to the will of God at all. Used prayer to fortify himself in the garden. For what was coming on the next day. You must never read. Jesus is praying in the garden as an unwillingness to go to the Cross.

He was. Unto Cyrus of the suffering. Of the Cross. And the wrath of God turned upon him for all of our sin, but he was willing And he was employing prayer which is a means of God's grace unto us to stir up that willingness If it is possible. Let this cup.

Come let this cup pass from me. He knew it wasn't possible. He set his face toward Jerusalem, he warned his disciples. He called one of them Satan for suggesting that it might not happen. But he was using. Biblically shaped prayer to embrace the necessity of it for the glory of his father and the good of his church for whom he was dying.

He was using prayer as an exercise of embracing the will. Of his father. They're acting speaking as a man. Jesus has a human will in addition to a Divine will there is not a division of will in God, but there are two Wills in Christ. Using prayer as an exercise.

For embracing the will of his father as he set himself to the cross in the next day. That was good for Christ and needful for Christ, how much more for you and when we come to work through the Lord's Prayer, Lord willing next. Next Lord's day. If he spares us to one another, if he takes me you can Rejoice for me and If he returns, we'll Rejoice together.

But as you, you come to the, the Lord's Prayer next week, come Thinking about prayer as an opportunity to have the spirit who helps us in our praying and trains Us in our praying, in addition to interceding, for us to having the spirit train Us in submitting to the will of God train Us in and embracing.

The will of God. Oh, dear Christian. Don't pray like a hypocrite. Prayer like someone who looks forward to it, as fellowship with God. With him as your reward, not what other people see or how you feel. But him himself. And don't pray like a heathen. Pray, as someone who has not manipulating God to be more like you.

But on whom God is using prayer to work to make you more like you ought to be Embracing his will.

How we thank you, Father. In this life that you have desired. And obtained for us in Christ, and are applying to By your spirit where we may have. Fellowship with you. Thank you. Lord, Jesus. For teaching, in such a way as Uh, to deliver. Your disciples from the hypocrisy.

That plague the scribes and the Pharisees help us Lord. There is so much hypocrisy left. Uh, in us and that which remains from our former nature outside of you. And we pray for our children. That they would hear and seek from You, by Your Grace, that genuine work in the heart.

Lord. We know because of our own fleshliness and the various Dynamics how Endangered, they are. Of just wanting to be seen by Mom and Dad and just wanting to be seen by the congregation but we look to You O. God. To give them to know you as their reward in prayer.

We pray that you would come by your spirit and Call unto yourself, Whoever has not been and then For those of us who have Lord, We confess there's so much hypocrisy left. And so overcome it. And oh, Lord. So much even. Mistrust. As if you were unwilling to do us, good.

Don't let us think or feel that way help us by your spirit. Grant that by his ministry to us our hearts would cry. Abba Father. Grant That he would pour out in our hearts like a drink offering that he would shed abroad in our hearts. Your love. Your love towards us that we might love you.

Who have loved us and be sure. Of that love from you, which is in Christ Jesus and therefore from which nothing can separate us. And so help us in prayer and help us in all of our religious life, we pray Through Jesus Christ. Amen.