



Till You're Blue in the Face  
Matthew 6:5-7

Sermon Series: *The Lord's Prayer*

# Introduction

- Luke 11:1 (NASB):
  - *“It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples.’”*

# Introduction (cont'd)

- Somehow, from observing Jesus, the disciples knew that prayer-or at least something that happened to Him in the process of prayer-was the key to all of the miraculous things Jesus did.
- The average Jew in Jesus' day spent about three hours per day in prayer.

# I. What's the Point in Prayer?

- Before concluding that prayer doesn't "work," you need to ask yourself how you've been trying to use it.
- Matthew 6:6 (NASB), "But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees *what is done in secret* will reward you."

# What's the Point of Prayer (cont'd)

- However, having our requests granted is not the primary goal of prayer.
- Neither is prayer a way to alert God to our needs.
- A primary purpose of prayer is to spend time in conversation with the Father.

# What's the Point of Prayer (cont'd)

- Prayer is not about answers, it's about rewards.
- Matt. 6:6, “...and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.”

## II. Where Prayers Go to Die

- The *Phantom* Prayer
  - “*When you pray...*” (Matt. 6:5a)
  - One of the main problems with our prayers is we don't pray.

# Where Prayers God to Die (cont'd)

- The **Phony** Prayer
- **Matthew 6:5 (NASB)**, *“When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.”*

# Where Prayers Go to Die (cont'd)

- Have you ever done it-changing both your tone and your vocabulary-so that others could get a feel for your superior spirituality?
- To be asked to pray in the synagogue service in 1<sup>st</sup> Century Palestine was a mark of distinction.

# Where Prayers Go to Die (cont'd)

- Jesus had a succinct response to such showboating, ***“They have their reward.”***
- ***If you want recognition, good. Take it.***
- ***If you want other people’s approval, fine. Enjoy it.***
- ***If you want us to say you’re wonderful, ok. You’re wonderful.***

# Where Prayers Go to Die (cont'd)

- Notice the difference between the two rewards Jesus talks about.
- For the hypocrite, their reward feels good for the moment but is never enough to satisfy the demands of pride.
- For the humble and pure in heart, the reward comes from God Himself.

# Where Prayers Go to Die (cont'd)

- The **Frivolous** Prayer (Matt. 6:7)
  - *“And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words.”*

# Where Prayers Go to Die (cont'd)

- To the 1<sup>st</sup> Century Greeks and Romans, prayer had both its formal and magical sides.
- This is different from the idea of *perseverance* in prayer, which Jesus later applauds and encourages.

# Where Prayers Go to Die (cont'd)

- Jesus calls the hypocrite's prayer, "*meaningless repetition.*"
- The actual Greek word for this is *battalogeo*.
- This word means "to speak foolishly, to chatter." It is where we get our English word *babble* from.

# Where Prayers Go to Die (cont'd)

- 1 Kings 18 (Elijah on Mt. Carmel).
- *“Keep it up!” he shouted above the din. “Either he is occupied or gone aside, or is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and needs to be awakened”* (1 Kings 18:27 NASB).

# Where Prayers Go to Die (cont'd)

- Why would God put a story like this in the Bible?
- ***God's reward is reserved for those who seek His heart, not His attention.***

# III. The Lord's Prayer

- ***The Three-Part Address***
  - Our-**Stresses community**
  - Father-**Stresses relationship**
  - Who is in heaven-**Stresses authority**

# The Lord's Prayer (cont'd)

- ***The Three-Part Commitment***
  - Hallowed be Your Name - **Commitment to holiness**
  - Your kingdom come - **Commitment to participation**
  - Your will be done - **Commitment to obedience**

# The Lord's Prayer (cont'd)

- ***The Three-Part Petition***
  - *Daily bread-Trust for physical provision*
  - *Forgiveness of debts-Trust for cleansing from sin*
  - *Deliverance from evil-Trust for power over temptation*

# The Lord's Prayer (cont'd)

- ***The Three-Part Benediction***

- Yours is the kingdom- ***Focuses on His rule***
- The power- ***Focuses on His sufficiency***
- The glory- ***Focuses on His presence***

# John 15:5 (NASB)

- *“I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.”*

# Invitation

The background is a rich, textured red with a gradient. It is decorated with various abstract elements: thick, dark red wavy lines that sweep across the frame; thin, dark red circles of varying sizes, some containing smaller concentric circles; and clusters of small, dark red dots scattered throughout. The overall effect is dynamic and celebratory.