

I Am Resolved To Pray **Mt. 6:5-13**

Thesis: To help us better understand our private prayers and encourage us to continue in them.

Introduction:

- A. The type of prayer that we are discussing today is our private prayers.
 - 1. Our private prayers are different from our public prayers.
 - 2. In our public prayers, we are leading others as we make a common prayer before God.
 - 3. In our private prayers, we are pouring out our heart to God.

- B. In this passage, Jesus compares what we should do to how the Pharisees were.
 - 1. The Pharisees did things for a show; they wanted everyone to know how great they were.
 - 2. Jesus tells us that we should not be like them.
 - 3. In this comparison, Jesus gives us principles of prayer that we should follow.

I. Our prayers should be made in the secret place (6:5-6).

A. Our private prayers are not to be made so that they can be heard by others.

- 1. The Pharisees would pray their private prayers in public places, often on the street corners or the synagogues.
 - a. They did this for one reason: **“that they may be seen by men.”**
 - b. They wanted everyone to know how righteous they were.
 - c. Their reward for their prayers was the fact that everyone would see how great they were.
 - d. When they did this, they would not have a reward from God.
- 2. The Pharisees prayed publicly so that others could hear of their righteousness.

B. When we pray, we should go to a private place.

- 1. Jesus says that we go into our room, shut the door, and pray to the Father (6:6).
- 2. When we pray, we do not do so for the purpose of others hearing us.
 - a. When others are able to hear our private prayers, it leads to the temptation of saying things in order to be heard.
 - b. If no one is around, it removes the temptation of uttering a long prayer just so that others can hear us.
- 3. Also, when we pray for ourselves, it is no one’s business as to what we pray for.
 - a. No one needs to know the sin that we struggle with.
 - b. No one needs to hear what we ask of God.
 - c. There are certain things that no one needs to know about our relationship with God.

4. There are certain things that should remain a secret.
 - a. Jesus has just talked about our charitable deeds, which were to be done in private (Mt. 6:1-4).
 - b. When we must rebuke a brother, we do it in secret (Mt. 18:15).
 - c. Family matters are best when kept to the family involved.
5. The point is that there are certain things that should remain private, and our private prayers are one of them.

C. Notice the privacy of the prayers of Jesus.

1. Jesus constantly went out before daylight to pray.
2. Jesus would also find a deserted place so that He could pray in peace.
3. Mk. 1:35 - Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.
4. Mt. 14:23a - And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray.
5. Lk. 5:16 - So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.

II. Our prayers should be sincere (6:7-8).

A. In our prayers, we do not use vain repetitions.

1. The Pharisees were not condemned because they uttered long prayers.
 - a. They were condemned because they intentionally made their prayers long in order to impress people.
 - b. They wanted everyone to know how great they were, and therefore they would use “vain repetitions” so that their prayers would be longer.
 - c. Mt. 23:14 - Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation.
2. It is not a sin to have long prayers.
 - a. It is not the length of the prayer that matters; it is the sincerity of the prayer.
 - b. If we utter long prayers just so that we can be heard for our many words, we are no better than the Pharisees.
3. In order for our prayers to be acceptable to God, they must be sincere.

B. If our prayers are sincere, then we believe that they will be answered.

1. God knows what we need, and He promises to give us these things (6:8).
 - a. Mt. 6:32-33 - For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. {33} But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.
 - b. Mt. 7:7-8 - Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. {8} For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

- c. God knows the things that we need, and because He is a loving God, He will give us those things.
2. Part of being sincere in our prayers is believing that God will give us the things that we ask for.
 - a. If we do not think that God will grant us our request, then our prayers are not sincere.
 - b. **Mk. 11:23-24** - “For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says. {24} Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.”
 - c. **Js. 1:5-8** (directly, James is speaking of wisdom, but it applies to all prayer) - If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. {6} But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. {7} For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; {8} he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.
3. When we ask things of God, we must ask according to His will.
 - a. **I Jn. 5:14-15** - Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. {15} And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.
 - b. God knows what is best for us.
 - c. He promises to give us the things that we need, not necessarily the things that we want.

C. Notice the sincerity in the prayers of Jesus.

1. Some of the prayers of Jesus were long.
 - a. **Lk. 6:12** (Before selecting the 12 apostles) - Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.
 - b. **Jn. 17** – Jesus prayer before He went to the garden with His disciples.
 - c. **Mk. 14:32-42** – Jesus indicates that His prayer in the garden just before He was betrayed by Judas was about an hour in length.
2. No matter how long the prayers were, Jesus was always sincere in His prayers.

III. Jesus then gives us an example of prayer (6:9-13).

A. In our prayers, we praise the Father (6:9-10).

1. We recognize God for who He is.
2. We praise Him for what He has done.
3. Strong emphasis is placed upon God as our Father.
 - a. Notice a few reasons as to why God is our Father.

- 1) He is our Father because He created us.
- 2) He is our Father because He sustains us.
- 3) He is our Father because He seeks us to be faithful to Him (Lk. 15 – The Prodigal Son).
- 4) He is our Father because He sent His Son to die for us.
- b. Because He is our Father, His name is hallowed among us.
 - 1) “Hallow” means “to make holy, or sanctify” (Strong’s).
 - 2) It is a term of reverence directed to towards the Father.
4. We pray that God’s will is done on earth.
 - a. If God’s will is done, then we will go to heaven.
 - 1) Mt. 7:21 - Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.
 - 2) I Tim. 2:3-4 - For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, {4} who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.
 - 3) II Pet. 3:9 - The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.
 - b. We should all want to do the will of God.

B. We pray for our earthly needs (6:11).

1. In this prayer, Jesus says that we pray for “our daily bread.”
2. Even though God knows we need these things and He has promised to give us those things, He still wants us to ask for them.

C. We pray for our spiritual needs (6:12-13).

1. Jesus specifically mentions two things.
 - a. He prays for forgiveness from God.
 - 1) Forgiveness is our most basic need from God.
 - 2) Without being forgiven, we cannot enter into heaven.
 - 3) Our forgiveness is based on our willingness to forgive others.
 - 3) Mt. 6:14-15 - For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. {15} But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.
 - b. He also prays that we are not led into temptation.
 - 1) If we are not tempted, we will not sin.
 - 2) Js. 1:13-15 - Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. {14} But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. {15} Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.

- 3) **I Cor. 10:13** (When we are tempted, God provides a way of escape) - No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.
2. In our private prayers, we pray for our spiritual needs.
 - a. It is only God who can provide us with the spiritual things that we need.
 - b. **II Pet. 1:3** - as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,

Conclusion:

Someone once said that we are to pray as if everything depended upon God, and work as if everything depended upon you.