

## Vertical Church Series, Part 1

### “Jesus Teach Us to Pray, Part 1” Matthew 6:5-9

Today we are beginning a series on Prayer – Calling it Vertical Church.

A) Sometimes as believers and as a church we can spend a lot of time and energy on **horizontal** relationships and needs.

B) Horizontal – I mean relationships with other people. Being given to the needs of others. –

1) Quest to **be missional** or our desire to be more like Jesus. – Jesus was a people guy.

C) **But Jesus was also a prayer guy** – Spent a lot of time in prayer and communion with His heavenly Father.

**Vertical relationship was key**

1) Jesus was the God man – God in human flesh –

D) If Jesus was given to prayer, we should see the need as well to be given to prayer.

Perhaps you are thinking – I agree with that statement – but do we really need to have a series on prayer – or do we just need to pray!

A) Or maybe you are thinking – I have been walking with the Lord for a long time -20,30 yrs – I think I know how to pray – do I really need this teaching?

B) Great questions: Here is what I want you to consider. The disciples were good Jewish – boys who grew up saying prayers. { Prayed 3 times a day!

C) After being with Jesus for 2yrs we read in Luke 11 - They asked Jesus to teach them to pray!

1) He **DIDN'T SAY**- You don't need Me to teach you to pray. – **You have been praying for years** – easy – just talk to God.

D) No – He taught them to pray- which means there are things we can learn from Jesus about prayer.

The very fact that Jesus took the time to teach His disciples to pray means there is a **right way and a wrong way to pray.**

A) Possible – we could be praying for years and actually doing it wrong!

B) I think as we consider what Jesus says – discover there are things about prayer that we might have thought **are important** that are **not important at all.**

Bb) And there are others things that – we might think are **not important that are very important.**

C) So at the very least as we consider this series –

1) My prayer is that it would broaden our scope and understanding of this incredible privilege we call Prayer!

D) We get to talk to the God of the Universe and He hears us! { **HOW COOL IS THAT?**

D. Marten Lloyd-Jones once wrote: "Prayer is beyond any question the highest activity of the human soul. Man is at his greatest and highest when, upon his knees, he comes face to face with God"

**So as we start this series today on prayer – we are going to start with Jesus{ Title Jesus teach ....**

**A)I find it ironic – of all the things that the disciples asked Him to teach them it was this – teach us to pray.**

**B)Not teach Bible studies, not do miracles, not heal – Pray!**

**1)Reason was although as good Jewish boys they had been praying their whole lives – seen parents pray – religious leaders pray.**

**C)There was something about the life of Jesus and the prayer life of Jesus that seemed so different –**

**1)They realized Prayer was a big part of it! -Teach us**

**D)START WITH JESUS Note: Words of Jesus – not PR / Not PJ – JESUS**

**Matt 6:5-6 "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. 6 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.**

**So the first thing that Jesus says about Prayer – has to do with where you pray!**

**A)You might think that's not important because you can pray anywhere!**

**You're right I think you can pray anywhere**

**B)You can pray on the 78 freeway when you're putting on your makeup**

**1)in fact I pray on the 78 I see you doing that!**

**C)You can pray on the treadmill at the gym -I do – help me Jesus let this get over with quickly and Lord make it work**

**D) You can pray out surfing at the beach, I would Lord don't let me get eaten by a shark today**

**E)You can pray all the way to school “Lord don't let there be a quiz, don't let there be a quiz”–**

**1)you can pray coming home late after curfew  
*Lord don't let my parents be awake.....***

**Yes you can pray anywhere at any time but when Jesus starts this discussion about prayer He talks about the proper place to pray!**

**A)Somehow location is important to Jesus!**

**B)So He says don't pray like the hypocrites {  
**Hypocrites pray****

**1) For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets:**

**C)Jewish pp pray three times a day, 9am, noon, six pm. –  
Plane to Israel**

**1)standing in the isle facing east – bopping up and down**

**D)Jesus says – Don't do that – don't pray to be seen by men**

See, He's talking about a group of religious people who wanted everyone to know how religious they were, how spiritual

A) They would pray in church there praying on the street corner, they're wanting to be seen by people praying

B) Sometimes this attitude is **ALSO** seen in pp who want to come **across as being eloquent**.

C) The story is Charles Spurgeon when he told the pastor next time have your devotions at home

D) Harsh? I know why he would say- that I've seen guys who when they pray you can tell they just want to be heard by men.

1) I've been to pastors conferences where guys are preaching a sermon in their prayers and now point number four

People who pray that way get all the reward that they're going to get

A) What's the reward?

B) They get seen by men clap clap that is your reward congratulations to been seen by man that was an awesome prayer

1) AVOID THAT

C) I love listening to new believers pray, so sincere!

1) so simple God,, Jim here I was wondering if you could help me with something I'd really appreciate it thanks amen

D) I've even heard new believers **cuss in prayer** I thought it was precious, just sincere, being real

E) And I think God heard that PRAYER way more than the guy who was trying to wax eloquent and be seen by men

So don't make it your aim to be seen or heard by men **V. 6 He says go into to your room and close the door!**

A) Note this Jesus is not **prohibiting public prayer** or prayer in Church but what Jesus is saying is this:

**Prayer is primarily a private thing.**

B) So go into your room - *Wait I thought you said I can pray anywhere!*

1) YOU CAN - but for many of us – We pray way too much on the go! In the car/ in between appointments -

C) Many of those prayers – revolve around this mentality – Help me Lord, Bless me Lord, be with me Jesus, wisdom, strength,

1) That is fine – but that is not the primary purpose of Prayer –

2) Praying on the go is fine – **but there is something MORE – SOMETHING better!**

So the first thing that Jesus says is Find a place! Go into your room!

A) The specific ancient Greek word used here for "room" was the word used for a storeroom where treasures were kept.

**B)Significant- because there are treasures waiting for you in your prayer room!**

**C)Doesn't have to be a room – It can be a secure place –  
1)Backyard or my office at home – {PLACE WITH NO DISTRACTIONS**

**JESUS MODELED THIS! We read of Jesus and Mark chapter 1:35 that Jesus went into the solitary place.**

**Deserted.. Secluded... Lonely place,**

**A)Luke 11:1 a certain place – Distinct – set place – the opposite of a random place.**

**B)Jesus is saying – Pick a place – go into a private room**

**1)Pick a place that is going to be void of distractions –**

**C)First thing to note: If you desire to grow in your prayer life it's going to start with having**

**a secret place - a private place –**

**1)Also suggest a SET TIME – Me morning –**

**D)I say that because if I try to make it random – it usually doesn't happen**

**1)Set place – set time**

**E)In fact this one little verse when put into practice could revolutionize your life, not just your prayer life but your life**

**1)You stop praying so much on the go and you start setting aside a special time and a special place to spend with Jesus – HUGE**

**I Think the best way to illustrate this is my relationship with Denise**

**A)Denise and I have a great marriage – best friend – comfortable – no major problems.**

**B)But this is what we have discovered: If our only conversation is just the every day conversations,**

**1)Where we are talking ON THE GO about schedules and talking about budgets talking about all the stuff we need to do –**

**2)dealing with ministry, in dealing with the kids schedules.**

**C)If the only conversations we have deals with the daily day to day issues of life – schedules and responsibilities.**

**1)I can be sitting 3 inches away from this person I love so much and yet feel – Distant – feel completely disconnected**

**D)We just had a conversation about this last week**

**There's no problems, we are not arguing there are no issues but I can feel completely distant toward her or she can feel completely distant from me**

**A)And it's not because we're not talking/ we're talking all the time**

**B)BUT....there is a big difference between doing life together & talking about life and all those things**

**1)and getting away FOR an evening to walk at the beach {take in a sunset**

C)Or getting away and having breakfast **or getting away for a couple days** to have some just deep intimate conversation and time together.

**One deals with the random issues random chaos that we call life**

A)And the other deals with **intimate connection** and relationship that God created in the

marriage relationship to **be a mirror** of what He wants our relationship to be with Him!

**B)So you can talk to God the rest of your adult life on the go and never really feel connected to Him.**

C)Because the connection comes when you go into your room and close the door behind you

1)the connection comes when you go to that secret place where there's no distractions no cell phones and it's just you and God

D)So note the first thing that Jesus says is Find a place – Room – secluded place – private – no distractions – set place – Set time.

**Note: In the second part of v.6 He says pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.**

A)Some of you are thinking – this is what I have been missing all this time – **have been praying on the go** – in my car – in between appointments

B)Not getting answers – Reason – I need to go into a room – secret place –  
**So that must be the criteria for getting what I want**

C)After service I am going home and going into my Room and I'm going to close the door  
1)now I want to talk about my finances, now I want to talk about why she won't call me back

D)Now I want to talk about my Job –

**E) if the secret is to go into your room and close the door that's the key to getting what you want getting what you need**

1)I WILL BE ALL ABOUT THAT!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

C)Listen, that is not the point at all AND fortunately  
1)The reward is not that you get what you asked for all the time!

**D)God is way too loving for that!**

1)you see you and I pray all the time for dumb things and I am so glad that God ignores those prayers **{Garth Brooks – unanswered prayers**

**The Reward for closing the door is not that you get what you asked for! It goes way beyond that! - Let's keep going**

A)In verse seven He says **“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.”**

B) This is what He is saying – **I want your prayer time to be intelligent** – not about the length – not about repetition.

1) Rabbis thought – prayer had to be long in order to be heard – Jesus saying that is not the case

C) Avoid – vain repetition! -

Now I am going to say something here that could potentially offend some of you. Or make you never want to pray in public –

A) **That is not my heart** – I just want us to be those who pray intelligently.

B) So here goes: I think there is something that many of us do especially when we are praying in public in groups – **that could fall into this category of vain repetition.**

C) Some of us when we pray have the tendency to say **the Lord's name over and over again.**

1) Lord I thank you Lord for my wife Lord, And Lord  
.....

D) We don't talk to anyone else like that – do we? So Denise what are you doing today Denise – you want to get on Bike ride Denise? **DATING**

1) Problem – trying to not forget my name!

**Why do we do that ?**

A) I think it has to do with two things – one we are really not thinking about what we are saying.

B) Two – We don't like to pause – uncomfortable silence - especially publically

C) If you have that habit – I want to encourage you to try to pray more intelligently – **NOT DO THAT!**

**So avoid vain repetition – not about many words**

A) Jesus wants us to know that God is not moved by the specific content of your prayers or the length of your prayers

B) God is not moved by **eloquence or even theology**

C) Jesus is telling us that Christian prayer is supposed to be humble.

Christian prayer is to be simple

**8 "Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.**

A) Jesus says here something that perplexes us a bit – **Your Father knows your needs before you ask Him.**

B) Here is what that means: The primary point of prayer is not to go to God, say, “God, here's what I need.”

1) It's not like God's in heaven going, “Thanks for telling me. I had no idea.

**C) You are unemployed? You got ripped off? Wow!**

I must have been asleep at the wheel. I appreciate the information. Now I'm all caught up.”

D) See God sees and knows everything. When we come to prayer we're not telling God something He doesn't know.

1) **Jesus says God knows your needs before you ask Him!**

Now this one statement has caused a lot of people to wonder about Prayer – **To think what is the point – why am I praying?**

A) If you've ever thought that if you have ever wrestled with that, you are **on the verge** of an **incredible breakthrough in prayer.**

B) If you're thinking I'm going to go to my room and close the door but He already knows what I'm going to ask - **then what am I going to say in there?**

C) If you have ever thought that - You are on the verge of understanding that maybe there's something about prayer that you never understood before

**The key of prayer is NOT primarily about asking God for things and telling Him what you need.**

A) We can do that! Jesus doesn't discourage that / No We should do that - He invites us to do that! But prayer is about something greater!

B) Jesus is wanting us to see and understand that Prayer is about so much more than Help Lord, bless me Lord – take care of this Lord.

C) **So what is the point ?-**

1) Listen, the most important thing in life is not your Job/business/ Not your marriage/ not your kids. Not your possessions – Not fantasy football.

**D) The most important thing in life is your relationship with Jesus Christ**

**The relationship that is to be characterized by intimacy and connection**

A) And prayer is a HUGE part of that!

**Prayer is about connection**

B) I didn't understand this for a long time in my relationship with the Lord

1) I was always taught – **Prayer was the way that I talked to God** and His word was the way that He talked to me.

C) So I figured – He has a lot more to say to me than I needed to say to Him

1) So I spent a lot more time reading and studying the Bible than I did praying.

D) God, I need you to talk to me! –

**But prayer is about so much more than – me simply talking to God –**

A) Prayer helps me connect with Jesus – Prayer is a connector.

B) **I study the word – I hear a sermon** – prayer is that which allows me to make it a part of my life.

1) Prayer is the conduit that takes what is going into my head and makes it resonate in my heart.

**C) That is one of the reasons – we often take a few minutes at the end of a Bible study to sing a few songs – we say: Let's pray this in.**

**D) Take it to the Lord – ask Him to help you make it a part of your life.**

**Studying the Bible can be purely informational – intellectual –**

**A) Prayer is relational**

**B) The point is being in His Presence- the point of prayer is spending time with Him**

**I BELIEVE WHAT I AM SAYING IS SUPPORTED BY THE NEXT THING THAT JESUS SAYS**

**ABOUT PRAYER – V.9**

**9 In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.**

**A) So this is how you start : Start by Declaring God's glory**

**B) When you start don't start with your wants- needs - Start with God.**

**1) AND CALL HIM FATHER!**

**C) When we say "Father" we use a privileged title, demonstrating a privileged relationship.**

**1) It was very unusual for Jews to call God "Father" because it was considered too intimate.**

**D) There are only Fourteen times in the Old Testament where God is referred to as Father, always done so nationally.**

**1) He's the Father of the whole nation of Israel.**

**There is no prayer to God as Father in the Bible until Jesus. Once Jesus comes He says, "Pray like this. 'Our Father.'"**

**A) In the four gospels Jesus speaks of and prays to God as Father 60 times.**

**B) And the word that He uses here for Father – is ABBA – We know that word means – Daddy – intimate expression.**

**C) Jesus is teaching us here that Prayer is primarily about spending intimate time with God – with Dad!**

**This to me is amazing. God's not impersonal He's personal. He's not a force. He has a name.**

**A) He's not angry. He's loving. He's not far away. He's close.**

**Aa) He's not negligent. He's involved in the life of His children.**

**B) So talk to Him as your daddy-**

**1) In my opinion this is the central key to prayer – is knowing who I am talking to – DAD**

**C) If we understand that God is Dad then we will naturally speak to Him anytime about anything**

1)because we know we are loved, cared for, and safe with Him.

**When you become a dad it teaches you a ton about God.**

A)And when the Bible says God is Father you start to understand.

B) I'm **not perfect like He** is but I love my kids like He loves His kids. And I want to serve my kids like He wants to serve us as His kids.

1)I'm available for my kids like God is available for us as His kids.

C)When one of my kids needs something – they come to me – they don't approach me – **Dearest great and awesome father – {nice ring}**

1)I beseech thee – canst thou give me \$5.00 ice cream  
NO!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!1

D)Hey Dad can I have some ice cream – Sure here is \$10.00 dollars bring me back some too!

**It doesn't have to be all formal – it doesn't need to take 50 minutes – They don't need to get prostrate on the ground –facing east.**

A)Just approach me as Dad in a respectful manner – That is what Prayer is

**B)For some pp prayer is way too uptight, way too formal, way too serious.**

1)And I'm not saying that prayer isn't serious business, but what we're depending on is the love and the grace and the mercy of Dad.

C)The Bible says that's why we can approach the throne of grace boldly. **Dad loves me. Dad listens. Dad cares. Dad's good. Dad's available.**

1)I just need to talk to Him. That's what prayer is.

**The heart of prayer is about spending time with Dad!**

A)What a Dad He is - I love my kids. But God the Father's love is perfect.

B) I serve my kids, but I only have so much time, energy and money and God has inexhaustible resources.

1)Sometimes I can't be with my kids cause I got to work or I got to travel. God is always available to be with His kids.

C)I can **only be in one place doing one thing** at a time. But God is omnipresent, He can be everywhere, helping everyone at the same simultaneous moment because He is God.

**That is why Jesus says: When you pray say Dad who is in heaven –**

A)He is saying there is intimacy – He is Dad – there is greatness – He is sovereign, omnipotent.

**Aa)Our Dad's the king. How cool is that?**

Bb)He rules over all nations and all kings and all kingdoms and all races and all genders and all religions and all political affiliations.

B)He rules over all times and places and peoples. There is no one and nothing that is not under the authority of Dad.

1)So there's nothing you can't talk to Dad about.

**C)If you understand God is Dad it'll revolutionize your prayer life.**

**D)You won't feel like you're going to middle management with a clipboard who's keeping score hoping to fire you.**

1)God's not like that.

**E)You won't feel like you're going to an impersonal distant force. God's not like that.**

1)You won't feel like you're coming before an angry judge. God's not like that toward His children for the children of God. God's a loving Dad.

**2)God's a loving Dad. You can interrupt Him.**

That's okay. You can make requests of Him. That's okay. He always hears and answers prayers.

**1 John 3:1 Behold – be amazed**

**A)Some of you really struggle with this idea of God as Dad – the reason is you have a lousy dad. –**

**B)Your dad left. He abused. He abandoned. He raped. He beat. He divorced your mom. He walked out on your family. He is a horrible man!**

**C)What I would say is this, do not judge God by your earthly father, judge your earthly father by your Heavenly Father.**

1)“My dad was a jerk; I guess God is a jerk. Or I just can't relate to God as a father.

**Instead Embrace what the Bible says about God as your Father – He is a wonderful Father who loves you completely.**

**A)So much so that He sent His son Jesus to come to earth – become a man, perfect man - in order to go to a cross to pay the price for your sin.**

**B)So that you could become His child – so that you could be adopted into His family – Place your faith in Christ**

**C)Important to understand – God is not the Father of every human being – He is the Creator – But He is only the Father to those who believe in Jesus**

**John 1:12**

**12 But as many as received Him,{JESUS} to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name**

**IS HE YOUR FATHER? OR JUST CREATOR?**

HAVE YOU RECEIVED JESUS?

BECOME HIS CHILD TODAY – FAITH IN JC

**DISCOVER - He is a wonderful Father who loves His kids perfectly – completely – Who is there for His kids – who is attentive**

**A)Who is for His Kids – THEIR BEST INTEREST –**

**B)Who desires more than anything that we would learn to spend time with Him – enjoy intimate relationship with Him.**

**C)So Jesus says – When you pray find a private place – Don't spend all your time on your NEEDS, WANTS AND WISHES – Father knows that stuff**

**Call Him Father – Learn to enjoy His presence**

**D)Key to prayer**