

Big Idea: Jesus taught us what to pray, and also how. We return this morning to the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9-13, and now consider the explanation of prayer that precedes it (verses 5-8). Jesus warns us about motives, and ineffective prayers. This brings us full circle to the heart of the Lord's Prayer, which is God's will, rather than our own.

I. A Warning about Motives

“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. 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. (Matthew 6:5-6)

In what ways are motives key to both prayer and many other areas of the Christian life?

Does this preclude public prayer?

II. A Warning about Empty Phrases

“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. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. (Matthew 6:7-8)

What is an example of “empty phrases” in prayer?

How important is it for our prayers to be sincere?

III. Foundations of the Lord's Prayer

“Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” (Matthew 6:9)

What does this prayer assume or presuppose?

Why pray? What difference does it make?

IV. A Few Minutes of Private Prayer

Christians: why can you pray with confidence?