

Godly Praying (Part 1)

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[0 : 00] Last week we started a new section of the Sermon on the Mount.

Jesus began highlighting the Pharisees' approach to giving, praying, fasting, fasting, fasting,! We covered the giving part last week. This week we'll start the section on godly praying.

Christ had warned his hearers against the erroneous doctrines of the Jewish teachers. Here he cautions them against their evil practices, particularly the sins of hypocrisy and worldly-mindedness. In Matthew 6.1 served as the section introduction. Jesus said, Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

With verse 1 as the backdrop, let's read tonight's text. That's Matthew 6, verses 5-8. Jesus said, 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.

[1 : 12] 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.

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.

The difference between hypocrisy and holiness is our motivation. That was the main idea last week. That concept applies to all three examples from Matthew 6, verses 1-18.

We could use it as the main idea again, but this week we'll get a little more specific. In Matthew 6, 5-8, we see that God honors prayer done with the proper motivation.

That's the main idea we'll use this week. God honors prayer done with the proper motivation. Before we get into the verses individually, we need to address some things about the whole passage.

[2 : 16] Many foolish things have been written about these verses. Some people have understood the verses to mean that there is no such thing as public prayer, but this is foolish because both the disciples and Jesus Himself prayed publicly.

Some have said that there is to be no such thing as prayer with others, meaning no prayer meetings, but this is nonsense too. You probably knew we believed that since we just had our prayer meeting.

The practice of Jesus and the early Christians refused this as well. James Montgomery Boyce said, These verses are concerned with the tendency of men to pray to themselves and to other persons rather than to God.

They teach that prayer must always be made to God and that it must be made in the knowledge that God is more ready to answer us than we are ready to pray to Him. That's an interesting statement, isn't it?

True prayer, he says, is prayer that is offered to God, our Heavenly Father. He then went on to say that he believes only one prayer in a hundred is truly offered to God.

[3 : 25] He even included the prayers of true believers in that category. Even believers, he said, fall into the trap of praying either to themselves because they fail to realize that prayer brings them into the presence of God or praying to others because they are concerned about what other people listening might think about what they're saying.

Here's a hard-hitting question that wraps up Boyce's introduction to the verses. He says, Dr. Ruben A. Torrey used to say that we should never utter one syllable of prayer, either in public or private, until we're definitely conscious that we have come into the presence of God and are actually praying to Him.

Keep that thought in mind as we look at what Jesus has to say about prayer in tonight's passage. We'll break the verses into two sections of two verses each.

Both sections have one verse where Jesus tells us what to avoid and one verse where Jesus tells us what to do. In the first section, we'll see pretense versus privacy.

Pretense versus privacy is the first section. This section calls out improperly motivated Jewish prayer. Then Jesus will tell us what to do instead.

[4 : 58] So listen to verse 5 for the behavior that Jesus said to avoid. Jesus said, 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. Notice how the verse starts. Jesus assumes that believers pray. That's a given.

We just need to avoid being like the hypocrites. Last week, we talked about the origin of the word hypocrite. A hypocrite originally was a Greek actor who wore a mask that portrayed in an exaggerated way the role that was being dramatized.

For obvious reasons, the term came to be used of anyone who pretended to be what he was not. That makes the first sentence of verse 5 easy to understand.

When we pray, Jesus warned us against pretending to be someone that we're not. In the next sentence, he goes on to describe what the hypocrites do. He says, For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners that they may be seen by others.

[6 : 12] Nothing is wrong with standing and praying in the synagogues and at the street corners. That would have been normal for a Jew during that time. At certain times of every day, the Jews were expected to stop whatever they were doing and pray.

Here's a brief overview of what the Jews had been taught about prayer. A faithful Jew would repeat the Shema early in the morning and again at night. That prayer began, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.

And it was a composite of selected phrases from Deuteronomy 6, verses 4-9, Deuteronomy 11, verses 13-21, and also Numbers 15, verses 37-41.

Often an abbreviated version, which was just Deuteronomy 6-4, was used instead. Another formalized prayer was the Shemona Esrae, otherwise known as the 18, which covered 18 prayers for various occasions.

Faithful Jews prayed all 18 each morning, afternoon, and evening. Not surprisingly, it too had an abbreviated version. Keep that thought in mind.

[7 : 24] Faithful Jews prayed all 18 of those prayers three times per day, and obviously that is why they wanted to abbreviate it occasionally, if not more often than not.

Both the Shema and the Shemona Esrae were to be said every day, regardless of where a person might be or what the person was doing. Wherever the person was, whether he was at home, in the field, at work, on a journey, in the synagogue, or visiting friends, the devout Jew was expected to stop what he was doing and to offer the appropriate prayer at the appointed time.

The most common times were at the 3rd, 6th, and 9th hours, and we know those times as 9 a.m., 12 noon, and 3 p.m. Standing was one of the acceptable postures for prayer.

That knowledge, along with the fact that Jews were expected to stop whatever they were doing and pray at certain times of the day, are the reasons why nothing was wrong with the Jews praying in the synagogues or at the street corner.

As they were going about their daily business, inevitably they would sometimes find themselves in public when it was time to pray. We must be careful to avoid taking verse 5 out of context and thinking that Jesus is condemning public prayer.

[8 : 44] What Jesus is condemning is public prayer done for the wrong reason. The problem with the hypocrites was that when they prayed, they prayed to be seen by others.

The last part of verse 5's second sentence tells us that a big difference exists between standing and praying and standing and praying to be noticed by others.

The hypocrites wanted applause and recognition, they got that, but that was all they got. Look at the end of verse 5. Jesus said, Jesus certainly is exposing the hypocrites here, but he's also exposing something else.

Listen to what Martin Lloyd-Jones had to say. He said, The tendency, always when reading this, is just to regard it as an exposure of the Pharisees, a denunciation of the obvious hypocrite.

We read and we think of the kind of ostentatious person who obviously is calling attention to themselves, as the Pharisees did. We therefore regard it as just an exposure of this blatant hypocrisy without any relevance to ourselves, but that is to miss the whole point of the teaching here, which is our Lord's devastating exposure of the terrible effects of sin upon the human soul, and especially sin in the form of self and of pride.

[10:10] That is the teaching. He goes on to say, Sin, he shows us here, is something which follows us all the way, even into the very presence of God.

Sin is not merely something that tends to assail and afflict us when we are far away from God, in the far country, as it were. Sin is something so terrible, according to our Lord's exposure of it, that it will not only follow us to the gates of heaven, but if it were possible, into heaven itself.

Now that we've seen Jesus warning us about what to avoid, let's move on to verse 6. Jesus said, 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.

Notice again the basic premise. Jesus starts the verse with, When you pray. The fact that we will pray again is a given. Jesus then goes on to tell us how we should pray, and the end of verse 6's first sentence says, Go into your room and shut the door, and pray to your Father who is in secret. The Pharisees' prayers were dominated by pretense. Our prayer life is to be dominated by privacy. Our Lord's emphasis on the need for secrecy should never be driven to extremes.

[11:40] If all our praying were to be kept secret, we would have to give up church going, family prayers, and prayer meetings. Jesus' reference here is to private prayer. The Greek words in the original text are in the singular.

Jesus has not yet come to public prayer, and when he does, he will tell us to pray in the plural. He starts out the model prayer with our Father. The primary point that Jesus makes here has to do with attitude.

If necessary, Jesus says, go to the most secluded private place you can find so that you will not be tempted to show off. Go there and shut the door.

Shut out everything so that you can concentrate on God. Do whatever you have to do to get your attention away from yourself and others and on God and Him alone. Jesus and His disciples prayed in public, but they also prayed in private.

Jesus modeled the need for intense private prayer. From what we know in Scripture, Jesus' two most intense times of spiritual opposition were during His 40 days of solitude in the wilderness and during His prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night that He was arrested.

[12:58] On both occasions, He was alone praying to His Father. It was in the most private and holy place of communion that Satan presented his strongest temptations before the Son of God.

Look again at the first sentence of verse 6. We need to learn something else from what Jesus says. That again says, But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret.

What we need to learn is the person that we need to pray to. We are to pray to the Almighty God. The Bible never teaches us to pray to Mary or to the saints or to the patriarchs or to anybody else. Such teaching is the invention of corrupt theology and it's a rejection of divine teaching. If you're praying to anyone or anything other than the Lord, you're praying in vain.

If you want to pray as Christ instructs, you must pray to God and not to anything or anyone else. The essence of Christian prayer is to seek God.

[14:05] We seek Him to acknowledge Him as the person He is and that's God the Creator, God the Lord, God the Judge, and God our Heavenly Father through Jesus Christ our Savior.

We desire to meet God in the secret place to bow down before Him in humble worship, love, and trust. We would be wrong to leave this verse without considering that this verse applies to true Christians only.

The only reason believers have access to God is because Jesus paid the price for our sins by dying on the cross. That benefit applies only to those who have repented over their sins and who have put their faith in Christ alone as their only Savior.

We see that clearly from John 14, 6. Jesus said there, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Listen also to Hebrews 10, 19-23. The writer of Hebrews says, Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that He

opened for us through the curtain, that is, through His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

[15 : 34] Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. We always must remember that prayer is a privilege for believers only.

Because of the high price that Jesus paid to provide us that privilege, we should never take it lightly. If it were not for Jesus Christ, God would have had to turn a deaf ear to every prayer ever offered by every human being.

However, He tells us that anyone can be purified in His sight through faith in the death of Jesus Christ, and that in this state, He may come. In fact, He's even urged to come.

We also need to consider one more thing about true prayer. True prayer to God is made possible through the atoning death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. But listen to Ephesians 2.18.

In Ephesians 2.18, Paul wrote, For through Him, that's Jesus, we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. Ephesians 2.18 reinforces the truth we have.

[16 : 42] It says that prayer is to be made through the Lord Jesus Christ. It also says that prayer is to be made in the Holy Spirit. It's the work of the Holy Spirit to lead us into God's presence, to point out God to us, and to make God a reality to us when we pray.

In Ephesians 2.18, the Greek word that translated access in our English actually means an introduction. So the Holy Spirit introduces us to God.

The Holy Spirit makes God real to us while at the same time instructing us how we should pray. Listen to Romans 8.26-27.

Romans 8.26-27 say, Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. Did you notice that we see the entire Trinity at work when we pray with the right motive?

[17 : 55] God the Father hears our prayer because of Christ's work, and the Holy Spirit helps us to pray as we should. Here's another quote from James Montgomery Boyce.

He said, Have you ever begun to pray and had the experience that God seems to be far away and unreal to you? If you have, one of two things may be wrong.

First, it may be that sin or disobedience to God is hindering you. The Bible quotes David as saying, If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.

That comes from Psalm 66, 18. If that is the case, you need to confess the sin openly. It may be also the case, however, that things are filling your mind or that worries are obscuring the sense that you should have of God's presence.

Then he says, What are you to do in this case? Should you stop and pray again another time? He says, Certainly not, for it is then that you probably most need to pray.

[18 : 58] Instead of stopping, you should be still and looking to God. Ask Him to work through His Holy Spirit to make Himself real to you and to lead you into His presence. Many Christians find that their most wonderful times of prayer are those in which they start without a clear sense of God's presence but come to it fully by praying.

We still have one sentence left in verse 6. Jesus tells us what will happen when we pray to God with the proper motives. Those words should encourage us and Jesus says, And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

When God is genuinely the audience of our prayer, we will have the reward only God can give. Jesus actually gives no idea in this passage as to what God's reward or repayment will be.

The important truth is that God will faithfully and unfailingly bless those who come to Him in sincerity. Without question, the Lord will repay. Those who pray insincerely and hypocritically will receive the world's reward.

Those who pray sincerely and humbly will receive God's reward. Whatever God's reward is, we know that we will be better off with it than we would be with the world's reward.

[20 : 19] So we've seen pretense versus privacy. In the second section of the lesson, we see pointlessness versus provision. Pointlessness versus provision are your points there.

verses 5 and 6 contrasted the hypocritical praying of the Jews with godly praying. Verses 7 and 8 will contrast the misguided prayers of the Gentiles with godly praying.

Jesus said in verses 7 and 8, Notice again how verse 7 starts.

For the third time, Jesus says, when you pray, he really wants us to get the message that we are expected to pray. Then he says, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do.

That's at least how the ESV translates it. Some of you have the King James or the New King James version. The King James says, use not vain repetitions as the heathen do.

[21 : 37] The New King James says, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. Partly because of those translations, some people wrongly interpret this verse to mean that we should never repeatedly ask God for the same thing.

We can prove that teaching is wrong by turning to the parable of the persistent widow. Flip over to Luke chapter 18 and we'll spend a little bit of time in the first seven verses of Luke chapter 18.

Starting with verse 1 of Luke 18, it says, and he, talking about Jesus, told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart.

He said, in a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man. And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, give me justice against my adversary. For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself, though I neither fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.

[22 : 52] And the Lord said, hear what the unrighteous judge says, and then here's the key piece, and will not God give justice to his elect who cry to him day and night?

Will he delay long over them? If you want more proof that repeating the same prayer with the proper motivation is fine, we could look at the parable of the impudent man who made the midnight visit to his neighbor in Luke 11, verses 5 through 10.

But we have a better place that we can look. We can look what Jesus did in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night of his arrest. Listen to Matthew 26, verses 36 through 44.

Again, these verses are Matthew 26, verses 36 through 44. Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, Sit here while I go over there and pray.

And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled.

Then he said to them, My soul is very sorrowful, even to death.

[24 : 03] Remain here and watch with me. And going a little further, he fell on his face and prayed, saying, My father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.

Nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will. And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping. And he said to Peter, So could you not watch with me one hour?

Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Again, for the second time, he went and prayed.

My father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done. And again, he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words again.

We know Jesus cannot be forbidding repetitiveness done with the proper motivation because he does that same thing himself. So let's explore what he really does mean here.

[25 : 07] Here again is the ESV's rendering of that phrase from Matthew 6-7. Jesus said, Do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do.

That's a little bit better translation, but in this case, the NIV actually is closer to a literal translation of Jesus' original words. Listen to how the NIV translates the phrase.

The NIV says, Do not keep on babbling like pagans. Do not keep on babbling like pagans. The Greek word that the King James and the New King James translates as vain repetitions and that the ESV translates as empty phrases means babbling.

Jesus is saying that we are to avoid using words or phrases that make no sense. The classic biblical example of vain repetition, empty phrases, or babbling, however you prefer to call it, comes from 1 Kings 18 when Elijah takes on the prophets of Baal at Mount Carmel.

Look at 1 Kings 18. We're going to spend a little bit of time in two separate sections there and we'll start first using verses 21-24. So here are 1 Kings 18 verses 21-24.

[26 : 29] They say, And Elijah came near to all the people and said, How long will you go limping between two different opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him.

But if Baal, then follow Him. And the people did not answer him a word. Then Elijah said to the people, I, even I only, am left a prophet of the Lord, but Baal's prophets are 450 men.

Let two bulls be given to us and let them choose one bull for themselves and cut it in pieces and lay it on the wood and put no fire to it. And I will prepare the other bull and lay it on the wood and put no fire to it.

And you call upon the name of your God and I will call upon the name of the Lord and the God who answers by fire, He is God. And all the people answered, it is well spoken.

The narrative continues on in verses 25 through 29 and it says, Then Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, Choose for yourselves one bull and prepare it first for you are many and call upon the name of your God but put no fire to it.

[27 : 40] And they took the bull that was given them and they prepared it and called upon the name of Baal from morning until noon saying, O Baal, answer us. But there was no voice and no one answered.

And they limped around the altar that they had made. And at noon Elijah mocked them saying, Cry aloud for he is a God. Either he is musing or he is relieving himself or he is on a journey or perhaps he is asleep and must be awakened.

And they cried aloud and cut themselves after their custom with swords and lances until the blood gushed out upon them. And as midday passed, they raved on until the time of the offering of the oblation that there was no voice, no one answered, no one paid attention.

The type of vain repetition or babbling that Jesus warns against in our passage tonight is exactly what we see in 1 Kings 18, 26, 28, and 29.

The prophets of Baal cried out all day long but they received no answer. They received no answer because they were praying to the wrong God and that's God with a little g. In fact, they were praying to no God at all.

[28 : 57] Going back to Matthew 6, 7, Jesus ended the verse by explaining why the Gentiles used repetitive babbling. He said, for they think that they will be heard by their many words.

The Jews had picked up the practice from the Gentiles who believed that the value of prayer was largely a matter of quantity. So the longer the better, they thought. Those who prayed to pagan gods thought that their deities first had to be aroused, then conjoled, and then intimidated and badgered into listening and answering just as we saw that the prophets of Baal did on Mount Carmel.

People still fall victim to the same type of babbling, mindless repetition today. If you don't believe me on that, here are just a few examples. Many Buddhists spin wheels containing written prayers believing that each turn of the wheel sends that prayer to God.

Roman Catholics light prayer candles in the belief that their request will continue to ascend repetitiously to God as long as the candle is lit. Catholics also use rosaries to count off repeated prayers of Hail Mary and Our Father.

The rosary itself came to Catholicism from Buddhism by the way of the Spanish Muslims. Certain charismatic groups today repeat the same words or phrases over and over until the speaking degenerates into unintelligible confusion.

[30 : 25] John MacArthur says, It is not honest, properly motivated repetition of needs or praise before God that is wrong, but the mindless, indifferent recital of spiritual-sounding incantations or magical formulas over and over.

Not only must our hearts be right before God will hear our prayer, but also our minds. Thoughtless prayer is almost as offensive to God as heartless prayer. In most instances, they go together.

Do you see the pointlessness of using mindless babbling repetition in our prayers? So we've seen the pointlessness. Look now at Matthew 6-8 for the provision.

Jesus says in verse 8, Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him. The first part of verse 8 is self-explanatory.

following the behavior that Jesus just condemned in verse 7, we can easily discern why Jesus would say, Do not be like them. The last part of verse 8 also is easy to understand, but it's so important that we need to spend some time to look at it.

[31 : 40] Jesus said, Your Father knows what you need before you ask Him. Did Jesus say there, Your Father knows what you want? There's a big difference between your Father knowing what you need and your Father knowing what you want.

Obviously, the Father knows what we want, but He only promises to give us what we need. Jesus makes it clear that God is focused on the needs, not the wants.

So why then does God make us ask Him if He already knows what we need? Listen to what John MacArthur says about that. He says, Prayer is sharing the needs, burdens, and hunger of our hearts before our Heavenly Father who already knows what we need, but who wants us to ask Him. He wants to hear us. He wants to commune with us more than we could ever want to commune with Him because His love for us is so much greater than our love for Him. Prayer is our giving God the opportunity to manifest His power, majesty, love, and providence.

The last part is important to understand. Again, that says, Prayer is our giving God the opportunity to manifest His power, majesty, love, and providence.

[32 : 57] Here's a question to ask yourself. Would we typically see God as our provider if we always received what we need before we ask Him about it? We have to avoid carrying Matthew 6 and 8 too far and James Montgomery Boyce helps us see the balance in that.

He wrote, There is a great deal involved in this verse, of course, for it certainly does not mean that God will grant any stupid thing we ask for. God is willing, but if we are to receive the things we ask for, we must have a knowledge of God's will and God's ways.

These are given to us only through Scripture. 1 John 3, verse 22 illustrates that point. John wrote in 1 John 3, 22, Whatever we ask, we receive from Him because we keep His commandments and do what pleases Him.

So, why do we receive what we ask? We receive what we ask because we keep His commandments and do what pleases Him. Remember that Matthew 6, 8 promises that God will give us what we need.

We never need anything that is inconsistent with God's commandments or with what pleases God. Then Boyce goes on to say something that should always encourage us.

[34 : 19] If we can answer yes to being a person who knows God's word and to being a person who seeks to please God and being a person who keeps God's commandments, this is the assurance we have.

He says, If you are those, then you may pray with great confidence to God the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Holy Spirit. Hebrews 4.16 puts it this way.

Hebrews 4.16 says, Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and grace to help in time of need.

Again, listen to Hebrews 4.16 again. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

By the way, in a bit of a cliffhanger, we left Elijah on Mount Carmel with the prophets of Baal. 1 Kings 18 shows how God never answers improperly motivated prayer, but it also shows how God always answers properly motivated prayer.

[35 : 27] In 1 Kings 18, the motive for Elijah's prayer was to manifest the glory of God. God always answers that prayer. So let's go back to 1 Kings 18 and look at how the showdown on Mount Carmel ended.

1 Kings 18.30-35 summarize how Elijah built an altar to God and dug a trench around it. He put his bull on a pile of wood and had the people douse the wood with water three times.

The water had so much excess that it completely filled the trench. So we'll pick up the narrative now in 1 Kings 18.36 and read through verse 39.

Starting in 1 Kings 18.36, it says, And at the time of the offering of the oblation, Elijah the prophet came near and said, O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and that I have done all these things at your word.

Answer me, O Lord, answer me that this people may know that you, O Lord, are God and that you have turned their hearts back. Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust and licked up the water that was in the trench.

[36 : 49] And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and said, The Lord, He is God. The Lord, He is God. Remember the main idea.

God honors prayer done with proper motivation. Early in the lesson, we heard a quote from Ruben Torrey and it reminded us to consider that every time we pray, we need to remember that we are in the presence of God.

Here's another quote from Torrey that highlights the positive aspect of that knowledge. The day came, he wrote, when I realized what real prayer meant. Realized that prayer was having an audience with God, actually coming into the presence of God and asking and getting things from

Him.

And the realization of that fact transformed my prayer life. Before that, prayer had been a mere duty and sometimes a very irksome duty. But from that time on, prayer has not been merely a duty, but a privilege.

One of the most highly esteemed privileges of life. Before that, the thought I had was, how much time must I spend in prayer? The thought that now possesses me is, how much time may I spend in prayer without neglecting the other privileges and duties of life?

[38 : 14] Ruben Torrey understood tonight's passage and he also understood the teaching of Hebrews 4.16. Again, that's the verse that says, Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace that we might find mercy and grace to help in the time of need.

Let's pray. Father, we thank You for this reminder of what prayer is and what prayer is not.

We pray, most importantly, that You help us remember the privilege that we have to come into Your presence every time we pray. Help us take advantage of that privilege and help us use it wisely so that we can bring glory to You.

Be with us as we go through the rest of the week. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Thank you.