

UPPER ROOM SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY

Living the Life of the Beloved/Belonging: Matthew 5-7

Pastor Jim Otte

Spring-Summer, 2018

Lesson 13 – (June 10, 2018) Matthew 6:5-

Lessons from Last Week:

- a. Painters and Pointers are both gifts from God!
- b. Gratitude, for what God has given, drives generosity.
- c. Generosity and gratitude make it possible to love your enemies and pray for (the benefit of) those who persecute you.

Opening Discussion:

- a. What was your childhood experiences with prayer, i.e. family traditions: mealtime and bedtime prayers; family devotions; etc.
- b. What are your adult experiences or habits with prayer?

Matthew 6:5-8

⁵ “And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ⁶ But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. ⁷ And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

- a. “when you pray...” – Prayer was one of the highest priorities for good Jews.
 - a. *“He who prays within his house surrounds it with a wall that is stronger than iron.”* (Ancient Rabbinic saying).
 - b. Jewish liturgies mandated scripted and memorized prayers three times a day.
 - c. Pagan worship practices included incantations spoken for hours on end.
 - i. **1 Kings 18:26.** *So they took the bull given them and prepared it. Then they called on the name of Baal from morning till noon. “Baal, answer us!” they shouted. But there was no response; no one answered. And they danced around the altar they had made.*
- b. to be seen by others”
 - a. The Jewish mandate of prayer required three times of prayer: morning, mid-day, and mid-afternoon. Devout Jews stopped what they were doing, and wherever they were – to pray.

- b. The posture was to stand with head bowed and arms outstretched; easily seen by others.
- c. **The Beloved Life Principle #30:** You have fallen into the trap of “seen by others,” when you _____ too much about what others think of the quality of your public praying.

c. “when you pray, go into your room”

- a. Jewish houses, typically, consisted of one room. This suggests that Jesus is using a metaphor for your inner self: your soul.
- d. **“close the door”** – quiet your mind; unplug from distractions; park your smart phone; breathe...
- e. **“when you pray, do not keep on babbling”** – the pagan belief was that the prayer was heard on the basis of the quality of the prayer, and the sincerity of the one doing the praying. Mantras were often repeated endlessly.
- f. **“for your Father knows what you need before”**

⁹ “This, then, is how you should pray:

**“Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,**

¹⁰ **your kingdom come,
your will be done,**

on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ **Give us today our daily bread.**

¹² **And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.**

¹³ **And lead us not into temptation,^[a]
but deliver us from the evil one.^[b]**

a. The order of the petitions reveals the priorities of a beloved disciple:

- a. Petitions 1-3: God and His glory
 - i. **“daily bread”** – maintenance of life – God as Provider
 - ii. **“debts and debtors”** – receiving and giving forgiveness – God as Redeemer
 - iii. **“temptation”** – spiritual protection – God as Deliverer

¹⁴ **For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.**

- a. **“if you forgive other people when they sin” – (“paraptoma”) – “slipping across the line”** – when others impulsively or temporarily lose control of what they say or do to you; unintentional offense.
- b. **“if you forgive...do not forgive...your Father will...”** – Just as the flow of God’s grace from Him to you, ought to flow from you to others...so forgiveness is an outgrowth of that grace!
- c. **The Beloved Life Principle #31**: God’s forgiveness of you is an event; your forgiveness of others may be a _____ over time. This is accomplished by:
 - a. Inviting the other person to tell you his/her reasons for the slip up.
 - b. Being open to cutting him/her some slack.
 - c. Refusing to brood or constantly replay the offense over and over.
 - d. Praying for the other person and treat him/her with kindness in your thoughts, words, and deeds.
 - e. Reminding yourself: “And I forgave him/her.”

Matthew 6:16-18

¹⁶ **“When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ¹⁷ But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸ so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.**