

BIBLE READING DAY 12, THURSDAY: MARCH 10

Importance of Sincerity (Sermon on the Mount Continued)

Matthew 6:1–34

“Take care that you do not practice your religion publicly merely to be seen by men; for in that case, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. Therefore, when you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, in order that they may be admired by men. I tell you truly, they have already received their reward. But you, when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, in order that your alms may be secret; and your Father, who sees everything done in secret, will reward you.

“And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners, in order that they may be seen by men. I tell you truly, they have already received their reward. But you, when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father in private; and your Father, who sees everything done in secret, will reward you.

“And when you pray, do not repeat empty phrases over and over, as the heathen do; for they think that the longer they speak the more likely they are to be heard. Do not be like them, for your Father knows everything you need before you ask him. After this manner therefore pray:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. May your kingdom come, may your will be done on earth, even as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we also have forgiven those who have wronged us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For yours is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory Forever. Amen.

“For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

“And when you fast, do not assume a sad countenance, like the hypocrites; for they disfigure their faces, so that men may be sure to see that they are fasting. I tell you truly, they have already received their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that you may not appear to men to be fasting, but rather only to your Father; and your Father, who sees everything done in secret, will reward you.”

“Do not store up treasures for yourselves here on earth, where moths and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moths nor rust destroy and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

“The eye is the body’s lamp. Therefore, if your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light; but if your eye is defective, your whole body will be full of darkness. In like manner, if the ‘light’ which is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

“No man can serve two masters. For he will hate this one and love the other or be loyal to this one and despise that one. You cannot serve both God and mammon.

“Therefore, I say to you, do not be anxious about your life—what you are to eat or to drink, nor about your body—what you are to put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Behold the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap, nor do they gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you, by worrying about it, can add another hour to his life? And why be anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; but I say to you, not even Solomon in all his glory was attired like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is cast into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O men of little faith?

“Therefore, do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things; and those are the things the heathen spend all their time anxiously seeking. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will have its own cares. One day’s care is enough for the day.”

Charity Toward Others, Matthew 7:1–8:1

“Do not pass judgment on others, lest you be judged yourselves. For with the same judgment you offer of others, you yourselves will be judged, and in the same measure. And why do you stare at the speck in your brother’s eye, but disregard the timber-pole in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ and behold, there is a timber-pole in your own eye? You hypocrite! First take the timber-pole out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly enough to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.

“Do not give that which is holy to dogs, nor throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them under their feet and turn and attack you.

“Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. What man among you, if his son asks him for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone? And if he asks him for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!

“Therefore, treat others in the same way you wish them to treat you. This is the real meaning of the law and the prophets.”

“Enter in by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way which leads to destruction, and many there are who enter there. But narrow is the gate and the way which lead to life, and few there are who find it.

“Beware of false prophets, who come to you dressed like sheep but really are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles? Every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears evil fruit. A good tree cannot bear evil fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree which does not produce good fruit is cut down and cast into the fire. Thus, by their fruits you will know them.

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not preach in your name, and in your name cast out demons, and in your name do many great works?’ Then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you who work evil.’

“Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house; but it did not fall, because it was founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against the house; and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”

When Jesus finished these sayings, the people were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. When he came down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him.

Approximate Timeline of Jesus’s Public Ministry														
EARLY LIFE	EARLY MINISTRY	1 st Feast of PASSOVER	SUMMER	FALL	WINTER	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL	WINTER	2 nd Feast of PASSOVER	SUMMER	3 rd Feast of BOOTHS	WINTER	FINAL PASSOVER

DEVOTIONAL DAY 12 (THURSDAY MARCH 10)

The Rules of Prayer

Based on Matthew 6: 9-13

What are the rules of prayer? I will get to that later in the devotional.

In Texas, high school football is considered a way of life and a prayer before game is often a tradition. When I played in high school, just before we took the field, our coach would huddle us in the locker room, and we would all recite the Lord's Prayer.

As we started the prayer, *"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your Name. Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil."*

When we approached the last sentence, the tone began to get louder and louder until it concluded with a yell at the end.

The Lord's Prayer is one part of the Sermon on the Mount, found in Matthew 6: 9-13. It was all part of Jesus's teaching and fundamentals to His disciples. While it can be debated exactly how many times the word "pray", "prayer", and even "praying" is mentioned in the Bible, as Christians, it is important for us to understand how to pray.

So, are there really rules for prayer? Not really. I feel there is only one rule and that is God's rule. We must speak with Him often and always give thanks and accept what He provides. The Bible list many verses on prayer, but one of my favorite verses on prayer is Philippians 4:6-7.

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

As a father of young girls and teacher in the children's department, I feel it is important to teach the children not only how to pray, but the importance of having prayer in their daily growth.

When I teach in the children's ministry, I always asked them if anyone would like to pray. Once, a young second grader said he would but didn't know what to say. I told him it is not about what you say if it comes from your heart. He was so nervous, but the words flowed with love and passion. When he finished, he asked how was it? I told him it was perfect.

It is not important to have a scripted prayer or fancy words. It's all about what's in your heart and your faith God is listening to your prayers. We need prayer in our lives and believe God will answer our prayers

Heavenly Father. Thank You for this day and I give thanks for all Your many blessings. I ask that You open my heart so I may better connect with You. Please protect us and keep our nation a Godly nation. In Your Son's Name our Savior. AMEN!

--By Robert Franks

"In prayer it is better to have a heart without words than words without a heart."

John Bunyan

WRITE DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS IN RESPONSE TO WHAT YOU HAVE READ:

WHAT DID GOD SAY TO ME?

PRAYER: WHAT DID I SAY TO GOD?

ACTS OF PRAYER: ADORATION, CONFESSION, THANKSGIVING, SUPPLICATION (How God Can Supply Needs)

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