



**“Prayer Tips from Jesus, Part 1”  
(Matthew 6:5-15)  
Pastor Peter Yi  
April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

**Introduction:**

*TNIV Matthew 6:5-15* <sup>5</sup>“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. <sup>6</sup>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. <sup>7</sup>And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. <sup>8</sup>Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

<sup>9</sup>This, then, is how you should pray: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,

<sup>10</sup>your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

<sup>11</sup>Give us today our daily bread.

<sup>12</sup>And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

<sup>13</sup>And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.’

<sup>14</sup>For if you forgive others when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

<sup>15</sup>But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Prayer is our lifeline to God. It is the only means of communicating with Him. Yeah, there are other things that the bible states people did to relate to God, like offerings and sacrifices, acts of obedience and the like, but those were not really means of communication. In terms of methods or ways or avenues of us relating with God, talking with God, there is only one way prescribed by the Bible. That’s prayer.

If that is the only way to speak to God, then it’s very easy to see that when our prayer life is in trouble, then our relationship with God is not far behind. Friends, the craving of our hearts is to know and be known by God. And this must be sought out through prayer.

We all know we ought to pray. And we’ve never ever regretted spending too much time in prayer. And yet, we still do not pray. I am the first to admit this. I don’t think I’ve ever woken up on Saturday morning thinking, “Yes, Saturday morning. Sleep deprivation! I can’t wait to get into the freezing cold, into a freezing car, on a cold dark morning, drive 20 minutes to church, and pray.” But never once have I regretted coming to pray. Never once have I left a prayer meeting thinking I could have been, should have been doing something else. Never. I think you’ll all agree.

Today’s message is a reminder to return to prayer.

Sometimes we only pray in great emergencies and yes sometimes God uses those scenarios to get us back to Him, but that’s not the normal prescribed lifestyle of prayer Jesus taught us. There were several guys like that in the bible.

Pharaoh

**Exodus 8:8-9** **8** Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, “Pray to the LORD to take the frogs away from me and my people, and I will let your people go to offer sacrifices to the LORD.” **9** Moses said to Pharaoh, “I leave to you the honor of setting the time for me to pray



for you and your officials and your people that you and your houses may be rid of the frogs, except for those that remain in the Nile."

**Exodus 8:28** 28 Pharaoh said, "I will let you go to offer sacrifices to the LORD your God in the wilderness, but you must not go very far. Now pray for me."

**Exodus 9:27-28** 27 Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron. "This time I have sinned," he said to them. "The LORD is in the right, and I and my people are in the wrong. 28 Pray to the LORD, for we have had enough thunder and hail. I will let you go; you don't have to stay any longer."

**Exodus 10:17-18** 17 Now forgive my sin once more and pray to the LORD your God to take this deadly plague away from me." 18 Moses then left Pharaoh and prayed to the LORD.

Saul

**1 Samuel 28:15-16** 15 Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?" "I am in great distress," Saul said. "The Philistines are fighting against me, and God has departed from me. He no longer answers me, either by prophets or by dreams. So I have called on you to tell me what to do. 16 Samuel said, "Why do you consult me, now that the LORD has departed from you and become your enemy?"

We never hear about the prayers of Saul or the psalms of Saul. In fact, there's only one record of Saul praying to God. And even after God answered his prayer, he failed to keep his end of the deal. King Saul's communication with God seemed to be about himself, not God. It was about him saving face and self-preservation. It is questionable whether or not Saul had a genuine relationship with God.

King Saul of course stands in stark contrast to King David who wrote a huge chunk of the psalms, which were basically prayers written to music. His psalms are probably the most visceral and intimate conversations with God that we have in existence.

So if we resonate more w/ Pharaohs and Sauls, what can we do become more like Davids? Jesus gives us the answer.

I'm sure that in this room there are beginners, novices and experts in the school of prayer.

There are some of us who've never prayed. We're still investigating Christianity. We're not sure there's a God out there who listens to us.

There are some of us who rarely pray. It may be a time thing. A priority thing. It may be a lazy thing. It may be related to sin. Perhaps we've gotten out of the habit. But for whatever reason, we rarely pray.

There are some of us who sometimes pray. You join others when they pray at church. You pray when there's an emergency. But it isn't very consistent.

Some of us pray well. Your prayer life is pretty consistent. Content is good, length, regularity. It's all there.

And then some of us are experts in prayer, plunging the depths of God deeper and deeper every time we pray. We call these people prayer warriors.

Whichever stage of prayer you are in, the prayer we're about to look at today is for you because all of us have room to grow in prayer. This prayer is amazing in that it is a prayer that you can pray, or it a prayer that you can use as a template for all other prayers.

And it's a prayer for the person who's been a Christian just a few days and it is a prayer for the person who's walked with God all of their lives.



*I taught all three of my children how to ride their bikes. This is how I did it. 1) I got them a bike. 2) I exposed them to other riders in the neighborhood so they could see how much fun it could be. 3) I gave them a few pointers. These are the pedals. You place your feet on them. And this is what moves the bike. These are the handle bars. You don't want to let go of them. And most importantly, if you need to stop and you will need to stop, pedal backwards. 4) Let's practice. I'll grab the seat, I'll run beside you.*

It's basically the same with prayer. The Lord's Prayer is a great place to start for beginners, novices, and experts. It's the perfect place to start for the person who's been out of prayer for a season. It's the perfect prayer to begin practicing and learning and getting better at praying.

But before we look at this model prayer, Jesus first shows us what prayer should **not** be like.

<sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>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. <sup>7</sup>And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. <sup>8</sup>Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

- Don't pray for show, to look spiritual in front of others. Pray with sincerity and honesty.
- Don't think the more words I pray, the more likely my prayer will be answered. Jesus says it doesn't work that way. Word's matter when we pray. And it's not always about length or number of words. Look at the Lord's Prayer. It's not very long. It's actually quite short. A prayer you can pray in 30 seconds. Just related to this point about wordiness in prayer, there's what I consider to be a poor prayer habit among many people. And that's the careless, often thoughtless repetition of the Lord's name. Whether it's Lord or Father or Father God. There's a great story I read about this and I'd like to share it with you.

[Read story] Prayer Conversing with God by Rosalind Rinker, pp.30-31.

I'll take this story one step further and say that it's borderline taking the Lord's name in vain.

Now, let's take a look at this prayer in more detail.

### **This, then, is how you should pray:**

1. The Lord's Prayer is an example or outline of how we should pray.
2. The Lord's Prayer is a kingdom focused prayer.

### **Our Father in heaven,**

3. A Kingdom Prayer recognizes that God is our Father and we are his children (See Mar 14:6; Rom 8:5; Gal 4:6.)

We are heirs, co-owners, co-investors. We have a stake in this Kingdom. Why? Because the Kingdom of God is a family business. It's about the King, the King who is our Father.

### **Hallowed be your name,**

4. A Kingdom Prayer is honors God.



Hallowed is a word we don't use much these days. This is hallowed ground is probably the only place we see this word. And in that instance we think of cemeteries, cathedrals and the like. But the word for hallowed is the same word as holy, which is the same word from which we get the word saint. When the bible speaks of the name of God or the name of Jesus it means the person of God and the person of Jesus. It's not some magic formulas in the name. The power is in the person. So in this prayer it's saying, holy are you God. Your name is set apart. Your name is unlike all other names. Your name, you, God, you and no other, are holy.

Kingdom prayers are God honoring prayers.

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

5. A Kingdom Prayer is God centered not man centered.

If we were to dissect much of our prayers, I think we'd be horrified to find out how self-centered they really are. We discover that the prayers are about my little kingdom—the little empire that I've built that has me as King. And we're asking the true King to recognize and bless my Kingdom. And that kind of prayer is absurd, because there can be no competition with the true King. We can't have his rule sometimes and our rule at other times. So when we pray, your kingdom come, your will be done, it's a prayer that recognizes who the king is. It recognizes that at the end of the day, what I want matters so little, if anything at all, and what really matters is what God wills.

**On earth as it is in heaven.**

6. A Kingdom Prayer is God sized.

Kingdom prayers realize that some things can only be accomplished by God.

7. A Kingdom Prayer is cosmic in its scope.

Kingdom prayers span the globe, and they reach the heavens. How far are our prayers reaching?

**Give us today our daily bread.**

8. A Kingdom Prayer is personal.

While our Kingdom prayers are cosmic in scope they are also incredibly personal. They are prayers of the parent who's child has wandered. They're about the woman who's womb is barren. They're about the man who's reputation has been smeared. They are about the person who's marriage is on the rocks. They're about the person struggling with depression. Kingdom prayers, make no mistake are incredibly personal prayers as well.

**Give us today our daily bread.**

9. A Kingdom Prayer is a prayer of simplicity.

It's not about the digits in our salary or the cars in our garage or the labels on our clothing. A Kingdom prayer is a prayer of simplicity. Lord, provide for me today. Help me to walk by faith today. Jesus be my bread of life today.

**Forgive us our debts,**

10. A Kingdom Prayer recognizes our own sinfulness and our need for a Saviour.

At the core of the Kingdom is a King. A King who created a Kingdom. Not with sword and spears. But with flesh and blood. Not with aggression and tyranny, but with gentleness and love. The Kingdom of God is about Jesus, the Saviour. The Kingdom of God is about sinners for whom Jesus died.

One of the most powerful prayers that you can pray, if you are a seeker, is this. "Jesus, come and be my king."



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**As we also have forgiven our debtors.**

11. A Kingdom Prayer values relationships that are restored. (Mat 5:23-24).

Receiving forgiveness is usually a lot easier than giving forgiveness. And yet that is what the King asks of us. Forgive. Forgiveness believes that Jesus can make it right. Forgiveness believes that Jesus' death was sufficient. Forgiveness believes that love rules where hatred once ruled. Forgiveness believes that, I too, am one that was deeply forgiven. An unforgiving spirit, my friends, will quench our intimacy with God. He won't allow us to draw close. Forgive, just as God forgave you, Jesus said.

**And lead us not into temptation,**

12. A Kingdom Prayer realizes that sin hinders the progress of the Kingdom.

My personal sins, the sins of a community, the sins of a government or nation hinder the progress of God's Kingdom. So what do we do as followers of Christ? We use one of our most powerful weapons. Holiness. To pray "Lead us not into temptation" is the hearts cry of saying "God, oh God, make me holy." Take this sinner and make him clean.

**But deliver us from the evil one.**

13. A Kingdom Prayer recognizes that there is a spiritual enemy that is against us.

We have two offensive weapons in our spiritual arsenal. They are the Word of God and prayer (Ephesians 6:16-17). Don't look for other weapons. They aren't there. Just those two.

This is how we are to pray.

**Conclusion:**

Folks, intimacy with God cannot happen when we are self-centered and consumed w/ ourselves. Intimacy with God can only occur when our eyes, our hearts, and our minds are focused on God and His Kingdom. When our lives become in line with God through prayer, that is when we truly find intimacy with our heavenly Father.