THE PATTERN OF PRAYER
(Part 1)

"PURE MOTIVES, PROPER MINDSET"
(Mt.6:5-8)

Context: In Matthew 5:21-48 Jesus contrasted the tradition of men with God's true intent of the Law. Note how repeatedly Jesus said: "It has been said...but I say unto you".

Now in Mt.6:1-18 Jesus Christ exhorts his disciples to **not make a theatrical show of their spiritual activity**. In verse 1 the phrase: "to be seen" is the greek word "theomai" from which we get our English word "theater". The word "hypocrite" (v.2, v.5, v.16) originally referred to a play actor; One who wore a mask to pretend he was somebody or something he was not.

To summarize this context, Jesus is basically commanding us to: 1) give without hypocrisy (6:1-4), 2) pray without hypocrisy, and 3) fast without hypocrisy (6:16-18).

Today we will study how to pray without hypocrisy (6:5-8).

I. PRAY WITH A PURE MOTIVE (v.5-6)

A. DON'T TRY TO IMPRESS MEN (v.5)

"Hypocrite" = had externals only; (ex. of people today who deceive themselves into thinking they are Christians just because they have religious externals.)

"synagogues & street corners" - were places where they would be easily seen.
*in synagogues they would impress the religious crowd.
*on street corners they would impress everyone who passed by
(the greek word translated "street" refers to a very wide, major street where they would have a large audience.)

Their sin was pride; A desire to uplift self; (they actually prayed to no one but themselves - see Lk.18:11)

Christians are unconsciously tempted to increase the eloquence and length of their public prayers while they decrease in sincerity.

Ill. One time a preacher in Boston said after praying an ornate and elaborate prayer: "that was the most eloquent prayer ever offered to a Boston audience" He was more concerned about impressing the audience, than he was in making contact with God.

Appl. Don't try to impress men. What matters is what God thinks of you.

*Note: This verse does not mean that public prayer (ex. in Church) is wrong. (See Lk.3:21, 11:1; Mt.14:19; Jn.11:41,42; Acts 20:36: I Cor.14:16) (ex. Solomon's public prayer at the dedication of the temple II Chron.6)

It was their attitude that was wrong.

"they have their reward" = They wanted |hd0:HHfq (D c8`R|

@|

N|$@`@Br~~

B|$@p$L"|F|@|p$C`@p83 |
|

|~`
d`

@f~|@&|$|p| Jer.7:16

No one can both sin and pray. "True prayer will prevent us from sinning, or sin will prevent us from praying"

Ex. Simon the Sorcerer (acts 8) who asked Peter to pray for him because he knew he was not able to pray for himself while in such wicked sin.

Read I Jn.3:22 Obedience is necessary before prayer will be answer.

THE SINS THAT PREVENT GOD FROM ANSWERING YOUR PRAYERS ARE:

A. **PRAYING WITH A SELFISH SPIRIT** (James 4:3)
Wrong motives in prayer. ex. of selfish praying - Mt. 20:20-ff The mother of James & John.
"seek ye first the kingdom ... and all these things shall be added unto you" Mt.6:33.

Some pray that their spouse will get saved just so that they might enjoy (the benefits of his/her salvation) a peaceful and "happy" home rather than out of concern for their soul.

B. **PRAYING WITHOUT FAITH** (Mt.21:22)
Unbelief is sin!
The word "amen" comes from the Hebrew word [ ] which is most often translated "believed".
Example: Gen 15:6 "Abraham believed God..." Transliterated it reads "Abraham amened the Lord" When you conclude your prayer with "amen" you are actually saying "so be it" or "it will truly happen" This is faith!

C. **PRAYING WITH UNFORGIVENESS** (Mk. 11:25-26)
Bitterness and holding grudges are the equivalent of hatred. Such attitudes grieve the Holy Spirit.
We are to forgive 70 times 7 (Mt. 18:21-22)
We must forgive as Christ forgave us (Eph.4:32)

D. **PRAYING WHEN THERE IS DISOBEDIENCE IN YOUR MARRIAGE**
(I Pet.3:1,7)
Wives not submitting (v.1) "hinders" your prayers v.7.
Husbands not loving (v.7) "hinders" your prayers v.7.

"hindered" = cut in on (interfered with)
You will not pray together if your relationship is not right.
God will not answer you if your relationship is not right (because you are living disobediently to His commands)

II. THE PERSON GOD WILL ANSWER

A. THE ONE WHO PRAYS IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOD'S WILL (I Jn. 5:14)

Praying in Christ's name is praying in Christ's will.

B. THE ONE WHO ABIDES (REMAINS) IN RIGHT FELLOWSHIP WITH CHRIST (Jn.15:7)

Our relationship never changes, but our fellowship may.
Our union with Christ never changes, but our communion with Him may.

C. THE ONE WHO IS A GIVING CHRISTIAN (Prov.19:17; Lk.6:38; II Cor.9:6-7)

It does not make sense for a stingy Christian to ask anything from God. This is inconsistent!

Concl. If you are not experiencing answers to your prayers you must make sure that you have 1) a right relationship to God (saved), and if you are saved 2) a right fellowship with God (sanctified).o try to do God's work without God's power"
II Chron.7:14

The power of the Holy Spirit is vital! Cp. the book of Acts - the power & boldness of the disciples because of prayer. See acts 6 - the results of the apostle's praying.
Cp.Eph.3:19

Concl. Prayer is a necessity ("don't leave home without it")
(if Christ prayed, how much more should we?)to maturity by providing necessary nutrition (EX: Eph. 6:4 - "Bring them up..." = same word)

Men, we are to provide for our families! When children come along, the wife must be at home, not be out providing for the family.

In our relationship to Christ (the groom), do we provide for Him, or does He provide for us (the bride)?

We are commanded never to worry about our needs (Mt. 6:25-34) - Because our Heavenly Father will provide!

Can your wife and children be as secure about you?

Wives have gone into the workplace (something God never intended (Titus 2:5) because

of a husband that didn't provide.

Dad, you are the "bread winner."

If you are not working to provide, it's not to the blame of society, circumstances, ill fortune, etc., it is because of sin in your life!

I Tim. 5:8 - "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."

The best way to provide is not to just bring in the paycheck, but to bring in yourself.

They need you - your time, etc, more than your money.

IV. ARE YOU PROTECTING YOUR FAMILY? (Eph. 5:29b)
Xble to tell, but God sees your heart!