

Introduction

1. Prayer is something most people engage in, in all world religions for many reasons - 98%
2. Speaker at Men's Convention, who was a chaplain to paratroopers in armed services, said that when they jumped out of a plane, they all became believers & prayed for God's help
3. 2nd in a series on "Sermon on the Mount", where Jesus introduces a radical new teaching about how people should obey God's laws and worship God, unlike Jews' spiritual leaders
4. 5:20 **"For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven."**
5. Jesus under the New Cov, was teaching his followers to change the way they lived for God

I 6:1-8 Christians must be different in the way they give and pray to God**A 6:1 God does not reward self-centred acts of righteousness**

1. Lord lays down some basic principles of how His followers must serve & worship God
2. Jewish spiritual leaders had wrongly added many manmade laws to help Jews obey OT law - thought were impressing God, but they showed no compassion, mercy, love.
3. Wore special clothes, prayed loudly in public, tried to show how religious they were
4. Many would have thought they were really holy and treated them with great respect
5. Jesus said they received their reward from people, but God will not reward them at all

B 6:2,5 How not to give and pray as motives are wrong

1. Lord called the Pharisees/spiritual leaders "hypocrites" for wanting to impress people
2. Whenever they gave money to the poor or prayed to God, was done publically in synagogue/street corners to impress men, Jesus said they received their reward in full
a 6:2 When they gave to needy/God they blew trumpets publically, for all men to see
b 6:5 They loved to pray standing in synagogues/street impressing many, but not God
3. eg In Zululand gatherings, when giving money amount announced - everyone clapped

C 6:3-4,6 How to worship God with your personal giving and praying

1. Lord Jesus taught that those who placed their trust in Him must be different from Jews
2. God rewards Chns spiritually when they give/pray secretly as He sees their motivation
a 6:3-4 Giving to support God's work locally and overseas is between yourself and God
 Important thing is what the heart is thinking as you give money with your hands
 Remember God gives us all we have (**Deut 8:17-18**), pray how much He wants us to give
b 6:6 Try and find a quiet place to pray on a regular daily basis, including Bible reading
 It requires discipline every day to choose a suitable time- your special time with God

D 6:7-8 Quality not quantity of words in prayer

1. Don't have to use big/many words when praying as God knows attitudes of our hearts
2. Many religions pray to false gods, repeat same prayers over and over, God won't hear
3. Although God knows what we need before we ask Him, He still commands us to pray

II 6:9-15 Lord's Prayer helps Christians live with God in control of their lives

A General –More people around the world know these words than any other part of Bible
Prayer comes directly from God, who uses plural pronoun-remember others + ourselves

B 6:9a Must Pray this prayer to God, our Heavenly Father and no-one else

1. Jesus clearly tells us to pray to our Creator God, not Mary, other saints, dead or alive
2. All who repent, place their trust in Jesus, can with Jesus call God our Father-relational
3. This rel'shp means Chns can approach "Our Father" in heaven-unique among religions
4. God is centre stage in this prayer – It is God's Agenda that is the focus of this prayer

C 6:9b-10 First three requests Relate to God, His nature and character

1. **6:9b Hallowed be your name**-Request that God's name be glorified –His nature/character
 - a. Teaches Christians to realise they depend 100% on God to supply all their daily needs
 - b. His power in creation, wisdom, holiness, love, justice, mercy, grace, truth, integrity...
 - c. Pray His qualities will be known by more/more people - Chns seek to bring Him glory
2. **6:10a Your kingdom come** Request about God's present and future kingdom - 2nd coming
 - a. God's kingdom which God has set up in hearts of all born-again Chns thru' Holy Spirit
 - b. Many things will happen to show God is fulfilling His plan for world as gospel spreads
 - c. Pray God's future glorious Kingdom will come soon when Lord returns to judge world
 - d. Will be time when power of sin, sorrow and Satan will be thrown out of the world
3. **6:10b God's will be done on earth as in heaven** Request more people will obey God, his word
 - a. Pray more people will repent/believe in Jesus,-obey God's word like angels in heaven
 - b. Each believer must seek to know God's will for their lives, willing to submit to/obey it

D 6:11-13 Prayer requests which relate to all the needs of Christians as God's people

2. **6:11 Physical needs – Pray for today all our basic physical needs, not just food**
 - a. Teaches Christians to realise they depend 100% on God to supply all their daily needs
 - b. Christians must depend on God for daily health, strength, food, clothing, work
Deut 8:17-18
3. **6:12a Mind needs** Our sins **separate us from God, must ask God daily for forgiveness**
 - a. Prayer condemns all self- righteousness -centredness, -justifying - seek God's mercy
 - b. Sin is doing things in disobedience to God's word, rejecting God's control over self
4. **6:12b Mind needs – Pray about our feelings towards others - Jesus expands in 6:14-15**
 - a. Don't expect forgiveness if pray with hearts of malice, hatred/dislike towards others
 - b. To pray like this is just formality, hypocrisy – like saying "Don't forgive me at all"
5. **6:13a Spiritual needs** Pray for protection against our weaknesses-all can fail **1 Cor 10:13**
 - a. Confess weaknesses, ask for God's strength not to fail or go to places that tempt

6. **6:13b Spiritual needs** Prayer to protect us from danger – evil from world, flesh & devil
 - a. Evil influences surrounds us –can see, feel, hear about it – drugs, sex, excess alcohol
7. **Footnote** Gives praise to God **For yours is the kingdom, & the power & the glory forever. Amen**
 - a. Declares-all world Kingdoms rightfully belong to God with final control, power, glory

III 6:14-15 Consequences for Christians who refuse to forgive others

1. **Imprisons person in the past**
 - a. Will keep the pain alive
 - b. Suffers the most
 - c. Resentment, anger builds up
 - d. Become irritable, cranky
 - e. Say unwise things
 - f. Stops spiritual growth
2. **Produces bitterness within**
 - a. Like infection spreads to all parts of personality
 - b. Becomes sarcastic, cynical
 - c. Seek revenge, payback
 - d. Can poison other relationships eg Marrieds
3. **Gives Satan an entrance to wreck person's Christian faith Eph 4:26-27**
 - a. Satan will exploit 2 Cor 2:5-11 divisions between Christians in church
 - b. Mistrust develops
 - c. God & church are defamed
4. **Will break down relationships with fellow Christians & others**
 - a. Blame others not self
 - b. Become withdrawn
 - c. excessive apologies
 - d. can't relax
 - e. justify self
 - f. temper outbursts
5. **Will break down believer's fellowship with God**
 - a. 6:15 Why reject having sins forgiven?
 - b. Each personally responsible to God, no matter what others do – **Matthew 5:23-24**