

Prayer what Jesus/s Can Teach Us

As breathing is to physical life praying is to spiritual life. Without prayer spiritual life is suffocated. I want to speak about prayer in Jesus' life today.

Jesus Teaching on Prayer in the Sermon on the Mount Matt 6vv5-7.

Jesus expected us to pray. Prefacing Jesus' teaching on prayer in the sermon on the mount, he said 'when you pray' not 'not if you pray'. This doesn't allow for any other alternatives or any excuses. Why is it so important, We can say God knows our needs, why do we have to pray? Because prayer is our primary line of communication with God, and good communication is one of the main ways in growing in a relationship. If we are not praying our relationship with God will be stunted. We should never ask the question, do I need to pray because the answer every time is "yes".

He also says "do not be like the hypocrites for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you they have received their reward in full" These places are not necessarily wrong to pray in, but the motivation is wrong.- they wanted to be noticed. They prayed at set times 9,12 3 during the day so it was not difficult to arrange your walk through the city so you could stop at the street corner and be seen praying, but their motivation was pride driven. Jesus said they have already received their reward – their ego stroked.

Secondly Go into your room and shut the door, and pray to your father who is unseen. Then you father who sees what is done in secret will reward you" Pride is insidious. So whether we are giving, or praying or fasting, do it in secret so that there is no opportunity to impress and allow pride any room to raise its head.

Thirdly he says "and when you pray, do not keep on babbling like the pagans who think they will be heard for their many words. There is nothing holy about praying at express speed or praying long windy prayers. God is not impressed and nor are most people. One of the shortest prayers in the NT was Peter's prayer when he walked on the water then began to sink – Lord save me!!! His brevity was understandable!!

These are the 3 basic lessons for an effective prayer. They are simple yet profound. We need to use them!!