

"The Danger of Hypocrisy"

Part 5

Matthew 6:1-18

Introduction: Over the last 4 studies we have been in Matthew 6 where Jesus warned His listeners about the danger of hypocrisy. In **Matthew 6:1-18** Jesus spoke of 3 areas in the believer's life in which hypocrisy can enter in.

1. Giving
2. Prayer
3. Fasting

While Jesus warned about the danger of hypocrisy in these 3 areas at the same time He has given to us the standards for each of these areas in the believer's life. Now out of these 3 areas He gave more attention to prayer than He did giving or fasting. The reason is because prayer is such an important part of the believer's life and when our prayer life is in order then giving and self discipline will also be in order. Let us consider some verses that speak of prayer.

Acts 6:4

⁴ But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

Romans 12:12

¹² Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

Ephesians 6:18

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*1⁸ Praying **always** with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;*

1 Thessalonians 5:17

*Pray **without ceasing**.*

1 Timothy 2:8

8 I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

These are a few of the verses that show how important prayer is in the life of the believer. Let me show you some quotes about the subject of prayer.

"I have been driven many times upon my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had no where else to go. My own wisdom and that of all about me seemed insufficient for that day."

Abraham Lincoln

"We tend to use prayer as a last resort, but God wants it to be our first line of defense. We pray when there's nothing else we can do, but God wants us to pray before we do anything at all.

Most of us would prefer, however, to spend our time doing something that will get immediate results. We don't want to wait for God to resolve matters in His good time because His idea of 'good time' is seldom in sync with ours."

Oswald Chambers

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"I have so much to do that I shall spend the first three hours in prayer."

Martin Luther

"I think the reason we sometimes have the false sense that God is so far away is because that is where we have put him. We have kept him at a distance, and then when we are in need and call on him in prayer, we wonder where he is. He is exactly where we left him."

Ravi Zacharias

"I live in the spirit of prayer, I pray as I walk, when I lie down, and when I arise, the answers are always coming."

George Mueller

Now if prayer is to be a part of our lives and we are to pray without ceasing then we need to know how we are to pray.

That thought now brings us to our study of **Matthew 6:9-13** tonight.

Now as I said last week what we find in **Matthew 6:9-13** is not a prayer to be recited over and over again. But instead it is an outline to build our prayers upon. Jesus had just said in verse 7 not to use vain repetition and to suggest that He gave His disciples a prayer to recite over and over again would be in contrast with what He had just said. Also the very same subject of prayer was addressed at another time and it is recorded in Luke.

Luke 11:1

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And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

Jesus disciples asked to be taught how to pray. They did not request to be taught a prayer. With all of this said let us look at our text for tonight.

Notice Matthew 6:9-13

The first thing we need to do is to make an outline of the text which will help us to better grasp what Jesus is teaching here.

- I. **The Seniority of God** - *"Our Father which art in heaven"*
- II. **The Supremacy of God** - *"Hallowed be thy name"*
- III. **The System of God** - *"Thy kingdom come"*
- IV. **The Scheme of God** - *"Thy will be done"*
- V. **The Supply of God** - *"Give us this day our daily bread"*
- VI. **The Security of God** - *"And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors"*
- VII. **The Safety of God** - *"And lead us not into temptation"*
- VIII. **The Sovereignty of God** - *"For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen"*

Now as we look at this outline we can see that prayer is all about God. Let me remind you of something which we touched on last week, **prayer is not me trying to convince God to accept my will. Prayer is conforming myself to His will.** But there is something even beyond this thought. My prayers are to be for the ultimate purpose of God being glorified.

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Let me give you a very simple example. If I have a need in my life whether it is financial or physical I am to take that to God. But my request is not to be for the purpose of making life easier for me but my request is to be for the purpose of God being glorified in the way that He meets my need.

Let me give you one more. If you are facing a storm in your life and you go to the Lord about the storm the majority of the time we ask to have the storm removed or for us to be removed from the storm. There is nothing wrong with that prayer but we must not stop there. We must also ask for strength if we are to go through the storm so that as we go through the storm God would be glorified. You see our prayers are to be all about God and His glory not about us having an easy path in this world.

I. The Seniority of God

"Our Father which art in heaven" - As we come to God the first thing we are to do is to see Him as our Father. Now let us understand that this is a Truth only for believers. Only believers can call God Father. This does not apply to unbelievers in this context.

There is a teaching among liberal churches that God is the Father of all people and that all people will one day go to heaven. That is a lie straight out of the pit of hell. Now in the sense of creation we are all from God but in the sense of a parental relationship, only believers are children of God. Jesus made that very clear when He spoke to the religious leaders.

John 8:44-47

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44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

45 And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.

46 Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

47 He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.

As we come to the throne of grace we are to first of all understand that God is our Father. But just what does that mean to us when we say that God is our Father? There is a depth here in this thought that we will not fully understand until we step into eternity. But let us consider a few thoughts about God as our Father so that we have something here to hold onto. Because God is our Father:

1. He is our Protector.

If we consider an earthly father that loves his children we know that one thing which he is concerned about is their protection and that father will give his life if needed to protect his children.

This is the very way that God feels about you and me. We are His children and so He protects us in ways that we do not understand.

Job 1:7-10

7 And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

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⁸ *And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?*

⁹ *Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?*

¹⁰ *Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.*

Psalm 144:1-2

Blessed be the LORD my strength which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight:

² *My goodness, and my fortress; my high tower, and my deliverer; my shield, and he in whom I trust; who subdueth my people under me.*

There are many other verses in the Word of God that speak of God's protection for His children. Therefore this means that as we walk in the will of our Father we can trust Him to protect us. Fear does not need to be a part of our lives because our lives are in the care and the hands of our Father.

Notice the Words which God gave to Joshua after the death of Moses as Joshua was stepping into the place of leadership.

Joshua 1:9

⁹ *Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.*

2. He is our Supplier.

Let us allow our minds to once again to consider an earthly father who loves his children. This earthly father knows it is his responsibility to provide for his family and so he does the best he can to meet the needs of his family.

The very same thing is true of our Heavenly Father. Many believers spend so much of their lives in worry and anxiety wondering how they will ever make it through the week, the month, or the year. Listen, we do not need to worry about our needs. Meeting our needs is the responsibility of our Father and His resources are impossible to deplete.

Psalm 50:10

¹⁰ For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.

Psalm 37:1-5

Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.

² For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.

³ Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

⁴ Delight thyself also in the LORD: and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

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⁵ Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.

Psalm 37:23-26

²³ The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.

²⁴ Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.

²⁵ I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

²⁶ He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed.

I could go on and on but you get the point. Our Father will meet our needs.

3. He is our Teacher and He is infinite in wisdom.

An earthly father teaches his children many things and behind all of his teaching is his desire for his children's safety and well being. He also teaches his children to make the right choices so as not to bring shame to the family's name.

In the same way our Heavenly Father is always teaching us as we go through life. Ultimately His desire is that we learn to walk by faith.

Hebrews 11:6

⁶ But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

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In all of this we must understand that God never ceases His teaching in our lives.

Philippians 1:6

⁶ Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

This means that our Father will lead us down paths and through situations we do not desire to be in.

Mark 6:45-51

⁴⁵ And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people.

⁴⁶ And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray.

⁴⁷ And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land.

⁴⁸ And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them.

⁴⁹ But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out:

⁵⁰ For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid.

⁵¹ And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered.

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He forced His disciples to get into the ship and sail into the midst of the storm to strip them of self dependence and make them more God dependant. But let me show you the reason behind it all for them and us.

Psalm 23:1-3

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

² He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

³ He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Conclusion:

God is our Father and our lives are all about Him receiving glory through us and whatever we face.