

Introduction:

- A young man went into a drugstore to buy 3 boxes of chocolate: small, medium, and large. When the pharmacist asked him about the three boxes, he said, "Well, I am going over to my new girlfriend's house tonight for supper. Then we are going out for the evening. If she only lets me hold her hand, then I'll give her the small box. If she lets me kiss her on the cheek, then I'll give her the medium box. But if she really lets me smooch seriously, I'll give her the large box." He made his purchase and left. That evening as he sat down for dinner with his girlfriend's family, he asked if he could say the prayer before the meal. He began to pray, and he prayed a most earnest, and intense prayer that lasted for almost five minutes. When he finished his new girlfriend said, "You never told me you were such a religious person." He said, "And you never told me your dad was a pharmacist!"
 - It is essential to pray..... whatever the circumstances!
- We are going after the Kingdom this year! So far we have: 1. Defined the Kingdom—It is God's rule/reign in our lives and community. 2. It is mysterious because it seems so insignificant in the natural but is so powerful in the spirit. 3. The priority of the Kingdom—Seek it! Seek it first above anything you do! You will know if you are seeking the Kingdom if you are expending energy to do and if you see it as valuable enough to do something about it.
- We are told to seek the Kingdom and we are told to pray: Thy Kingdom Come! Matthew 6:10

I. When You Pray, Don't Don't be a hypocrite and don't ramble on.A. Don't be like the hypocrite. 6:5

1. Hypocrite - Gr. actor. It includes reciting, miming, gesturing.
 - a) An actor learns his lines and repeats his performance night after night day after day. And most generally does that for a crowd.
 - b) Jesus is saying, "Do not be an actor", playing a role. Be the real you. You are not performing for God or for others. One of the things that makes us actors when we pray is our unbelief. An actor does not believe he is the person he is presenting, he is pretending. He is going through the motions to convince others...and God.
 - c) The only reward of acting is what others say about you. Ie. Mrs. Nally, my English teacher who was very strict. Each morning I would say, "Good morning Mrs. Nally" She really liked me, but I didn't fool her, I still had to earn the grade.
2. God really wants us to approach Him as real because He is real and He wants a real relationship.

- B. Don't babble on like those of other religions do (like the gentiles). He is referring to those outside of the discipleship community. He is teaching His followers. Are you His follower?
1. Because they are outside of the disciple community, they do not know God. Therefore, instead of trusting God to hear them they badger God to act on their behalf like He is some kind of reluctant deity. IE. Many words is a form of manipulation. Like children trying to get something from dad or mom.
 2. Their approach to God is therefore with many words: babbling with many words not sure what they are saying. IL. It is like 'filibustering God'. Wear Him down with words and He will give in.
 3. The issue is not the method or frequency of prayer but are we in the attitude of faith which should be inspiring us. Because God carries the loving concern of a Father. And not only that, He knows everything even before we ask. So, given those two things why would we approach God with many words and babbling? Jesus simply says...
 4. Don't be like them
- C. God is moved by faith. Not by our acting and not by our many, repetitive words.
1. Neither acting nor many words will grant access to the Kingdom of God.
 2. Jesus is moving his hearers out of the realm of the flesh and into the realm of the Spirit/Kingdom of God. Jesus is after something for us!

II. When You Pray, Do

- A. Pray to your Father. Jesus says to do this in private.
1. Kryptos - secret or hidden. Out of public view. Why? It is the way of the Kingdom! IE. treasure *hidden* in the field, the yeast *in the lump* of dough. They are the mystery of the Kingdom, the power of the concealed thing. What you do in secret has huge ramifications.
 2. Father sees **everything!** Opposite of trying to be seen by everyone. Better to be seen by Father in secret than the crowds in the open. **"The man who prays on the street corner is seen by everyone but God. But the man who prays in secret is seen by no one but God."** Which do you prefer? In the secret place, the follower of Jesus encounters God who is in 'secret'! The God who is 'invisible' is the opposite of the hypocrite who encounters the 'visible' crowd.
 3. What we do in stealth/secret God rewards openly... Gr. *Apodidomi* - "To give or do something in fulfillment of an obligation or expectation," Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1985). TDNT (p. 167). Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans.
- B. Know that Father knows your need before you ask.

1. Note what Jesus is about to do. In light of what we studied last week (seek first the kingdom). Because Father knows what we need... we are directed to pray for what is needed most...the Kingdom.
 2. Therefore acknowledge the relationship with Father with Honor and with Worship.
- C. Pray like this: Worship Him! Make Him the focus. When you read the book of Revelation you see Worship as the primary activity of heaven. Jesus is saying...on earth as it is in heaven. Make it primary here. Worship is our number one priority in ministry.
1. *Our Father may your name be kept holy*: Proper prayer, right praying is simply the approach to God as an expression of trust in relationship to Him as 'Father.' This is real! It is not mechanical! God inhabits our praises. So to praise is to stage an invasion of heaven on earth!!!
 2. *Our Father*... Jesus gives them a model prayer to pray. It is not to become a repetitive prayer though it is certainly o.k. to pray. What Jesus is saying is that the following words will express trust in a heavenly Father which has been stated in vs. 6, 8 to be the basis of prayer.

III. The First Thing You Say

- A. There are three clauses that Jesus starts with to teach men how to pray.
1. The clauses:
 - a) *Your name be kept holy.*
 - b) *Your kingdom come.*
 - c) *Your will be done.*
 2. Here is what we know of these clauses:
 - a) The verbs: "kept, come, be done" are all verbs, of the aorist imperative, third person. The first and third are passive the second is active.
 - b) Aorist is something that God has done in the past with continuing results into the future. They are imperative in they are to happen with urgency and with command. "In a prayer such an imperative is in effect a plea for God's action to bring about His desired state of affairs." France, R. T. (2007). NICNT Matthew (pp. 245-246). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publication Co.
 - c) The clauses are not something that we are asking God to do. They are something that already are and will also be. The prayer really is like a command, decree. IE. Kings issued decrees. The spokesman and people agreed to them as if they were done and still were happening! IE. Nebuchadnezzar - All will bow to the statue.
- B. Therefore, the first thing you are to do when you pray is to bring yourself into agreement with what God wants before you begin to ask Him to come into agreement with what you want. He wants us to make the Kingdom a priority.

1. God's priority is that the Kingdom come to us (Lk 12:32 *His pleasure to give us the kingdom*), come into the earth, and come to every nation.
2. God is looking for His rule/and His reign to come to us, come into the earth, and come to all nations. Why? Because, even though His Kingdom is present not everyone recognizes it or acknowledges it. See Mt 13 the Mystery of the Kingdom. Seed, yeast, mustard seed, treasure.
3. The clauses as prayed are:
 - a) *Your name be kept holy*: "... that people may recognize and acknowledge its holiness, by giving God the reverence which is his due." *ibid*.
 - b) *Your kingdom come*: is that people may recognize and acknowledge both the presence of and the coming of His kingdom.
 - c) *Your will be done*: the third clause builds off of the second. The essence of the coming of God's kingship is that he is happily obeyed and his purpose fulfilled.
- C. To get something out of heaven we have to first go into heaven. "This is the primary focus for all prayer...if it exists in heaven, it is to be loosed on earth!" Bill Johnson
 1. Faith grabs hold of that reality. The will of God is seen in ruling presence of God.
 - a) *"For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom."* (2 Corinthians 3:17, NLT) Where ever the Spirit is demonstrating the Lordship of Jesus, liberty is the result. Or, where ever the King is exercising his dominion/rule, the fruit of that rule is freedom. God in response to our cries brings His world into ours.
 - b) If it exists in heaven it is free to exist here.
 - c) Opposite of that: If it is not free to exist in heaven, it must be bound here and not have freedom to exist.
 - d) *"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind (declare to be improper and unlawful) on earth must be what is already bound in heaven; and whatever you loose (declare lawful) on earth must be what is already loosed in heaven."* (Matthew 16:19, AMP) Note: already bound, already loosed. Therefore, heaven is our model. WhooHooo!!! On earth as it is in heaven!
 2. When His rule collides with disease, people are healed. When His rule runs into the demonized they are set free. The Kingdom is for the whole man...Spirit, soul and body.
 3. I love this illustration by Bill Johnson: *"Suppose I have a successful restaurant and you want to purchase the right to a franchise. By purchasing my restaurant you would be investing money to obtain its name and all that goes with it. Menus, layout, management, training of works, etc. In essence, I would superimpose the main restaurant over each new location until all new locations looked alike."* When

we pray for His Kingdom to come we are asking Him to superimpose the rules, order, and benefits of His world over this one until it looks like His!

4. As Christians we are ambassadors in this world who represent another. An embassy is actually considered a part of the nation it represents. *"I promise you what I promised Moses: 'Wherever you set foot, you will be on land I have given you—'"* (Joshua 1:3, NLT)
5. Therefore when you pray/intercede it is never to be a complaint session! *Your Kingdom come! Your will be done.*

Conclusion:

- Don't act like you are talking to God. Get real and speak with Him as one who speaks with a friend.
- Don't ramble on with lots of words attempting to bend the arm of God. You are not strong enough.
- Simply come with the priority of speaking what is important to Him first.
 - Your name be kept holy.
 - Your Kingdom come.
 - Your will be done. On earth as it is in heaven.
 - We put those things before our needs and desires.