



# RESILIENT

## When You Pray

Matthew 6:5-18



# Matthew 6:1-18 Structure

Verse 1 - Warning regarding motivation for spiritual practices.

Verses 2-4 | **GENEROSITY**: Human-praised vs. Father-rewarded

Verse 5-8 | **PRAYER** Human-seen vs. Father-rewarded

Verse 9-15 | **PRAYER** The Lord's Prayer

Verse 16-18 | **FASTING** Human-seen vs. Father-rewarded



# Matthew 6:5-8, 16-18



# This Morning

1. What is hypocrisy?
2. What is Jesus NOT saying in this passage?
3. What is Jesus specifically warning against?
4. How should we approach prayer and fasting?
5. What is a possible application for us?



# 1. What is hypocrisy?



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3. Prioritizing secondary matters while neglecting the primary. (Matthew 23:23-24)





# 1. What is hypocrisy?

1. Saying one thing and doing another. (Matthew 23:1-3)
2. Judging another for sinning in a way that you sin in as well. (Matthew 7:1-5)
3. Prioritizing secondary matters while neglecting the primary. (Matthew 23:23-24)
4. Performing deeds only to be seen by others. (Matthew 6:1-18, 23:5-7)



# Knowing Ourselves



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1. The Sermon on the Mount is a mirror that helps us know our true condition.
2. Sin is not just a set of easily recognizable deeds, but a condition that finds all kinds of subtle outlets.
3. Our sin expresses itself even in our most “spiritual” activities.
4. Knowing our true condition should prompt us to run to Jesus.



## 2. What is Jesus NOT saying?





## 2. What is Jesus NOT saying?

1. He's not discouraging acts of righteousness that are seen.

Matthew 5:16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

Matthew 6:1 Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.



## 2. What is Jesus NOT saying?

1. He's not discouraging acts of righteousness that are seen.
2. He's not discouraging public prayer.
  - Jesus prayed publicly himself.
  - The early church gathered corporately to pray.
  - Paul encouraged prayer in such a way that we could say "Amen" to each other's prayers. (1 Corinthians 14)



## 2. What is Jesus NOT saying?

1. He's not discouraging acts of righteousness that are seen.
2. He's not discouraging public prayer.
3. He's not discouraging persistent prayer.
  - The persistent widow. (Luke 18:1-8)
  - The persistent neighbor. (Luke 11:5-13)
  - "Pray without ceasing." (1 Thessalonians 5:17)



3. What is Jesus warning against?



### 3. What is Jesus warning against?

1. Praying or fasting with myself in view.



## Luke 18:10-14

“Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’



## Luke 18:10-14

But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”





### 3. What is Jesus warning against?

1. Praying or fasting with myself in view.
2. Assuming the effectiveness of my prayers depends on the manner in which I pray.



# 4. How should we approach prayer and fasting?



## 4. How should we approach prayer and fasting?

1. Simply do it.

“...when you pray...”

“...when you fast...”



# Martyn Lloyd-Jones

“(Prayer) is the highest activity of the human soul...Everything we do in the Christian life is easier than prayer.”





# Should we fast as Christians?



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Yes! Not only does Jesus communicate an expectation of fasting in this passage, but...

1. Jesus himself fasted. (Matthew 4:1-11)
2. Jesus expected fasting once he left. (Matthew 9:15)
3. The leaders of the church at Antioch fasted before sending out Paul and Barnabas. (Acts 13:1-3)



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1. Fasting is simply abstaining from food (and sometimes other things) for the sake of connection with God.
2. Fasting reinforces the connection between body and spirit.
3. Fasting tends to remind us of our dependence on God and compels us to lean on Him in faith.



## 4. How should we approach prayer and fasting?

1. Simply do it.
2. Look and act normal.

“...do not look gloomy like the hypocrites...(but) anoint your head and wash your face...”



## 4. How should we approach prayer and fasting?

1. Simply do it.
2. Look and act normal.
3. Acknowledge the presence of God.

“...pray to your Father who is in secret...”

Psalm 139:7 Where shall I go from your Spirit?  
Or where shall I flee from your presence?



## 4. How should we approach prayer and fasting?

1. Simply do it.
2. Look and act normal.
3. Acknowledge the presence of God.
4. Pray to your Father.

“...pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”



5. What is a possible application?





## 5. What is a possible application?

Schedule an extended time with God this fall.