

## Personal Prayer:

1. Matthew 6:5-15 Jesus IS saying you have got to have a strong, personal prayer life.
  - a. The store room: a room with no windows.
    - i. What he's after here is motivation.
    - ii. Of all the spiritual disciplines the one that no one can see is secret prayer.
    - iii. Do you pray naturally? Do you regularly go to God in prayer?
    - iv. There is peer pressure to do corporate prayer. Your secret prayer life will tell you about the index of your heart.
  - b. Your religion is what you do with your solitude. When you're totally alone where does your mind go? Your real god is what you most effortlessly think about.
2. Active/passive rhythm to petitionary prayer (Eugene Peterson, Answering God)
  - a. Evening and Morning prayer in Psalm 4 and 5 bring out a rhythm that you'll need. You can see it in the Lord's prayer itself.
    - i. "Thy kingdom come" is praying to put the world right.
    - ii. "Thy will be done" is praying to put your heart at rest about the world.
  - b. Evening prayer is "I put these worries of mine in your hands", it's passive.
    - i. Psalm 4, to put your heart at rest so you don't worry.
    - ii. Praying your worries into God's hands.
  - c. Psalm 5, Morning prayer, is active, going after things in the world that aren't right
3. Psalm 4
  - a. Puts our hearts at rest.
  - b. Jonathan Edward's first sermon at 18: Christians should be happy
    - i. Our bad things will turn out for good.
    - ii. Our good things can never be taken away from us.
    - iii. The best things are yet to come.
    - iv. Conclusion: If as we lay our requests to God, we find ourselves not receiving comfort
      - (1) Then make sure what we're asking for aren't idols
      - (2) Be sure what we are asking for are not enhancing our sense of superiority over others or it will just make us more bitter.
      - (3) Be sure that when we ask for things we spend time rejoicing and thanking God for the things we already have and cannot lose in the gospel.
  - c. God will always give you what you would have asked for if you knew everything he knows.
4. Psalm 5
  - a. Prayer is rebellion against the status quo
  - b. It's both spontaneous and disciplined
  - c. Listen carefully to the sighs of your heart,
    - i. it has to be turned into prayer or you'll become miserable
    - ii. Or if you can't pray for it maybe you should give it up.
  - d. He's got certain things he's working on.
  - e. It's expectant. Jesus was given the prayer of rejection we deserve, so that we can be given the prayer of acceptance he deserved. That is how petition unburdens the heart.

5. In case you don't know how to spend time with God. 3 things to do and a 4<sup>th</sup> if God blesses
  - a. Bible reading: Take a passage, a paragraph, read it three or four times and answer these questions
    - i. Make a list of everything the passage tells you about God or Christ
    - ii. List everything it tells you about yourself
    - iii. Look for examples, commands, promises.
  - b. Meditation: Chose one or two things that you learned to meditate upon
    - i. It's not praying, it's not studying, it's talking to yourself before God, communing with the target of your meditation. Ps 103 is an example.
    - ii. Two ways
      - (1) Shorter: Two questions
        - (a) How would I be different if this truth were explosively alive in my innermost being?
        - (b) Why is God showing me this today?
      - (2) Longer:
        - (a) Adoration: How can I praise God for what I see in this little verse?
        - (b) Confession: What wrong behavior, bad attitudes, false emotions do I fall into when I forget?
        - (c) Thanksgiving: How is the grace I have in Jesus Christ the key to overcome the sin I've just confessed?
        - (d) Supplication: What do I need to do or become in light of this?
      - (3) Meditate until the Holy Spirit begins to preach to you.
  - c. Prayer
  - d. Contemplation