

LIFE GROUP

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The Good Life in Prayer March 23, 2025

Summary

In this sermon, *The Good Life in Prayer*, Pastor Heather Flies explores Jesus' teaching in Matthew 6:1-18 on giving, praying and fasting as essential marks of a disciple. Jesus challenges His followers to examine their motives, emphasizing that true righteousness is not about seeking public approval but living with a heart fully devoted to God. He warns against hypocrisy, encouraging secret generosity, private prayer and humble fasting, assuring that God sees and rewards what is done in faith. The message also highlights the Lord's Prayer as a model, guiding believers in worship, surrender, dependence, forgiveness and protection. Ultimately, the call is to follow Jesus completely, with sincerity and intentionality in every aspect of faith.

Scripture

But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." 1 Samuel 16:7 (NIV)

"Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven." "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. Matthew 6:1-8 (NIV)

"This, then, is how you should pray:

"Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

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And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.'

For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins." Matthew 6:9-15 (NIV)

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' Matthew 25:34-39 (NIV)

You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder. James 2:19 (NIV)

Let's Start

If you could have an unlimited supply of one thing (besides God!), what would it be and why?

Gratitude and Prayer

How has God worked in your life since we were together?

Let's Talk

1. What is something new you learned in the message?
2. Why do you think Jesus emphasizes doing acts of righteousness in secret?
3. What does the Lord's Prayer teach us about our relationship with God?
4. During the message, Pastor Heather gave a prayer pattern from the Lord's Prayer to help us structure our prayers: Worship, Surrender, Dependence, Forgiveness and Protection. How could using this pattern affect your prayer life?
5. Have you ever experienced a deeper connection with God through giving, praying or fasting? What was that like?
6. Pastor Heather shared this quote from Jeremiah Burroughs: "Christians find that what really makes them happy is wanting only the things that God chooses to give them. Their happiness arises not from [the gifts they receive], but from their willingness to be satisfied with what God gives them...[They are] learning to accept that God's will is best...As time goes by, Christians find increasingly that the source of real happiness is God Himself. In heaven He is the only source of happiness." How can you practice finding your happiness in God Himself rather than in the things He gives or withholds?

