

# **Jesus on Prayer**

Matthew 6:5-15

*We'd all like to get better at prayer. Jesus shows us how.*

1. How not to pray (v5-8)

2. How to pray (v9-13)

3. A critical component: closeup of one petition (v14-15)

## FOR FURTHER THOUGHT:

1. Where and how did you learn to pray? Have there been times of significant growth in your prayer life? What would you say caused the growth?
2. Do you make use of the Lord's Prayer? If so, what is its value to you? Do you use it as an outline for prayer, or as a prayer you recite? Are there dangers in just repeating it?
3. Public prayer has its hazards – see Mt 6:5-8. Is it wrong to pray in public? (See Mt 18:19-20, Acts 1:24, 3:1, 4:24-30.) What are some ways in which you've seen public prayer abused? Is it possible to pray in public in just the same way as if we were in private? How do we free ourselves from self-interest in public prayer?
4. If God already knows our need (v8), why pray? How do we navigate between the errors of fatalism on the one hand and trying to manipulate God on the other?
5. Look at one or more of the prayers of Paul (Ephesians 1:17-19, 3:16-19, Philippians 1:9-11, Colossians 1:9-12). What things did Paul pray for?
6. Why does Jesus put so much emphasis on forgiveness (v12, 14-15)? See also Mt 5:21-24 and Mt 18:21-35. What's the relationship between our forgiving others and our being forgiven? Do we earn forgiveness from God by forgiving others?
7. Pray through one of the prayers of Paul (see #5 above), asking God for the things Paul asked Him for.