

BACK TO YOUR FUTURE: Your Future Praying and Fasting

October 10, 2021 Matthew 6:5-18

OPENING QUESTION

Do you pray in all things, or just when you feel “worthy”? Do you fast sometimes? Why does Jesus command us to fast, that is, what is the purpose of fasting?

DON'T PRETEND TO BE SOMEONE YOU ARE NOT

Matthew 6:5-6

- God is not about *external* righteousness, but *internal*.
- Religion is using external righteousness to try and change the internal.
- Following Jesus is allowing Him to transform our internal righteousness that then leads to our external actions changing.
- Public prayer is very appropriate when practiced with the right motives. But public prayer should represent the overflow of a vibrant personal prayer life.
- Public prayer shouldn't be used to gain attention, preach a sermon, or communicate information to an audience but should reflect a genuine conversation and heart with God.
- Pray like you pray, not like someone else prays!

Think about how you pray in public and how you pray in private? How are they similar? How are they different?

DO BECOME SOMEONE YOU ARE MEANT TO BE

Matthew 6:7-8

- Again, Jesus does not forbid prayer, but calls for simplicity, directness, and sincerity in talking to God.
- Unlike the Gentiles-unbelievers in the Most High-we do not need to badger God with our requests. He is our Father, not our boss. He wants to bless us!
- Our God is a God of grace, and when we pray, we are it's giving up power, trusting, surrendering relaxing, and putting ourselves in His arms..

How do you see your earthly father, as a boss or a father who wants to bless you? When you pray, do you think of God as a boss or a Father? How would your prayers change if you viewed God as a Father who wants to bless you?

DO PRAY AND FAST - Matthew 6:9-18

9 Pray then like this:

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

10 Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread,

12 and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

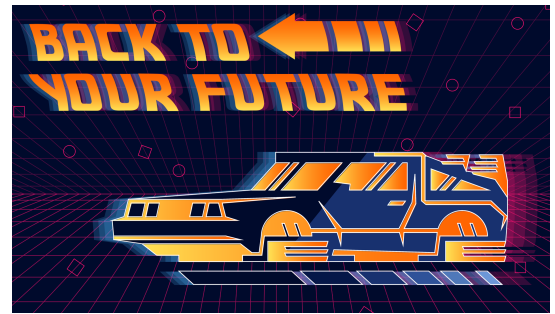
13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you,

15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

17 But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, 18 that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Take a few moments to reflect on each verse above. What does each verse mean? What do we communicate to God by praying this prayer?



CLOSING QUESTIONS

Hear

What are some things that stood out to you in this week's sermon and Scriptures?

Obey

How do you approach God and your prayer life? Do you approach God as a Father or a boss? Have you tried fasting? What benefit has it brought you? What truths can be applied to your life from the verses this week?

Pray

Pray that God will show you how much He wants to spend time with Him this week. Pray about taking a day to fast, and let the Holy Spirit teach you God's will during your fast. How does Jesus provide an example for you to follow in Matthew 6?