

## **Sovereign Grace Church**

### ***“Righteous Prayer”* outline**

September 2, 2018

#### **Matthew 6: 5-15**

**This morning our sessions on the Sermon and the Mount and the Lord's Prayer converge. Prayer is a central characteristic of what it means to be a follower of Jesus. It is certainly a stretch to affirm that we have a personal relationship with someone with whom we never communicate! I know who President Trump is....but I do not know him....and I have never communicated with him. It is also possible to know someone without knowing a great deal about them. (Think of the surprising stories your grandparents have shared with you about their growing up.....things you hadn't known before.....but you know them!) Our prayers to God are meant to be conversations with Him. They are to be interactive and one can potentially communicate with God without really ever stopping. One can walk with someone in silence and still know that you are walking with them. When we do converse, our conversations should be easy and have a natural flow. Private prayer can certainly be a challenging part of the Christian life....but it is still central to what it means to follow Him.**

**But when we think of public prayer things begin to get even more challenging. We think of how others who are hearing our prayer are reacting. Are we asking for the right stuff? Are our words adequate? Am I speaking the truth? Have I said anything wrong? Am I communicating at all? What if the words don't come? Will I stammer? This is the type of situation that Jesus is speaking to in His Sermon on the Mount. The interesting question is: Is it possible to pray in secret in a public setting? Jesus would say, by the way, that it most certainly is.**

#### **1. Bad Prayer vv. 5,7**

- **typical prayers of the day**  
Lk6:12; Ac 16: 25
  
- **praying to be Seen by others**
  
- **praying to get God's attention**  
I Kings 18:26-29; Lk 18: 1-8

#### **2. Good Prayer vv 6, 8**

- the secret place?  
I Cor. 2: 15
  
- Do we need to get God's attention?  
Isa. 65:24; Rom. 8: 26; I Kings 18:36-37
  
- Rewards?

### 3. The Lord's Prayer

## Concluding Questions

### Questions for Conversation and Reflection

1. Do you look forward to prayer? If not, reflect on why that is the case. If you do, reflect on why that is the case. What needs to change in order for your prayer life to change? Do you think your view of God or your general theology can inhibit your prayer life as well as encourage it? How so?
2. How can God really want to hear what you have to say if He already knows what you want to say better than you do?
3. Is prayer something that can be taught? To everyone? How might our prayers reflect our standing before God? Do you think it is possible to pray as an unbeliever? How does the Lord's Prayer fit in to your prayer life in general?
4. Have you ever been called upon to pray in a public setting? Was it different than when you prayed privately? How can we cultivate prayer that is 'secretly' in public?