

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

Dangerous Praying

Matthew 6:9-10

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PowerPoint Presentation included: NONE

SermonAudio Blurb: Too often the reason we do not evangelize is because we are not burdened with spreading the name of our Lord throughout our city. Our comfort and our pleasures reign supreme in our hearts. But when we learn to pray as our Lord taught us, it gets dangerous, because something must change, radically.

I. Introduction.

- A. What is prayer?
 - 1. We talk about it a lot, perhaps do it a lot less, and often struggle with it.
 - 2. Prayer is us willfully telling God something.
 - a. Notice it is willfully. There is deliberation here.
 - b. It is not merely talking to God off of the top of your mind.
 - c. It is specifically and willfully bringing to God a message you desire to tell him.
 - 3. Many different ways that you can pray.
 - a. You can confess—acknowledge—sins that you have done.
 - b. You can thank God for something or someone.
 - c. You can praise Him, which is different from thanking Him.
 - d. And you can request things from Him.
 - 4. All of this seems rather neat and nice. It sounds holy and religious. And most would agree it is good to do.
- B. But what I want to help us learn today is that true prayer is dangerous prayer.
 - 1. For true prayer should be a missional prayer. It should be focused on what God has done, is doing, and who God is.
 - 2. And that makes it dangerous.
- C. Our passage is Matthew 6:9-10.
 - 1. Give basic background leading up to it.

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II. Our Father in heaven.

- A. The first step to dangerous praying is to be in the right relationship with God.
 - 1. Explain the gospel again.
 - 2. Only those who are rightly related to God through Jesus can call Him Father.
 - 3. John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name
 - 4. But once you have received Jesus as Lord and Savior you become a child of the living God. And you can say, "Father."
- B. The second step to dangerous praying is to recognize that only your heavenly Father will affect any change.
 - 1. Note the emphasis upon the fact that the father to whom we pray is our heavenly Father, not our earthly one.
 - 2. There are many things we might ask of our fathers here in this world, but to know what to ask of our heavenly Father requires us to rightly see Him as He is.
 - 3. This is part of the value of considering Revelation 4-5 two sermons ago. To see Him high and lifted up. To see Him above all the chaos and broken, dark realities of this age. And to see Him intimately concerned for us as He redeems us through Jesus Christ.
 - 4. To ask any of this of anyone or anything other than God is simply to fail to grasp your basic need of His sovereign care in even the minutiae of life.
 - 5. So to pray rightly we come to our true and eternal Father who is enthroned over all and there we begin to pray in a manner pleasing to Him.
- C. So what does a child of God pray for?

III. Hallowed be Your Name.

- A. Notice what is happening here. Jesus is making a request to His Father. This is not a statement of fact, it is a request.
 - 1. What comes out of your mouth when you first begin to pray is often what you are most passionate about.
 - 2. What is Jesus' passion? That His Father's name be hallowed.
- B. Hallowed means to be sanctified. Sanctified means to be set apart and treasured.

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1. Here it means that we desire to see the name of God as holy.
 2. It is to revere it, to desire to see it exalted and cherished. It involves trust and obedience.
 3. Note the supremacy of the position of this request for it is telling.
 - a. The primary purpose of prayer is to make much of God. It is not to make much of you, your desires, or your perception of what should be done.
 - b. My old pastor said it something like this, “Prayer is to impress us with God, not for God to be impressed with us.”
 4. But also it reveals both the passion of God and the reality of this age we live in.
 - a. The passion of God is for the fame of His name. Nothing less can do for all other things are but creations.
 - b. But also the reality of an age in which everything and anything is hallowed more than our Creator and Sustainer.
 - (1) This started in the beginning when Satan spoke to Eve and challenged the essential truthfulness and goodness of God by twisting and distorting the very words of God. The charge was clear, God was not holy, good, true or faithful.
 - (2) And follow the story of the bible all the way to the end of Revelation where Satan again stirs up the nations to come against our Lord enthroned in Jerusalem in an unholy hatred.
 - (3) Everything in between is simply the repeat of what came before. God is not seen as holy, worshiped as holy, much less loved or obeyed.
- C. What is meant by “name.”
1. It is not merely something by which we identify someone like we treat our names in America.
 2. Rather it speaks of ones nature or reputation.
 3. Isaiah 8:12-13.
 - a. What does making God hallowed [meaning ‘holy’] mean here?
 - b. It is fearing God and not man.

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- c. It means that you fear God in such a way that you obey Him. It is more weighty of an issue for you to displease God than infuriate man.
 - d. Jesus said that we are not to fear the one who destroys the body, but rather fear His Father, who can destroy both the body and the soul.
 - e. You fear God more than you fear losing your job, your reputation, your spouse or your child.
- D. Missional prayer is dangerous because it sees the world the right way.
- 1. You see that this is a world where the name of the Lord is not held in fear nor delight.
 - 2. You see in this world that God's approval is of no value, but the approval of man is a great idol.
 - 3. You see that your money shall not save you, or family shall never save you, and your power or authority means nothing to the Sovereign God.
 - 4. So you pray, "Oh Father, make your name, your reputation so massive in my heart that I am willing to lose anything that you might be exalted!"
 - a. Now that is dangerous.
 - b. Paul reveals to us a little about his prayer life in Romans 9:1-3.
 - (1) He is impassioned about the name of God being maligned by his fellow Israelites.
 - (2) Do not think that this is all about them getting saved and not going to hell.
 - (3) It is all about the name of God not being exalted by the very people of God.
 - (4) When he is in Athens, Greece all he can see is the idolatry and becomes provoked again in his spirit.
 - 5. What is the passion of God? It is to display His glory in its fulness to all of creation.
 - a. Over and over in the Old Testament He speaks of what He is doing and has done for His name's sake.

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- b. He says to the pharaoh of Egypt, Exodus 9:16 "But, indeed, for this cause I have allowed you to remain, in order to show you My power, and in order to proclaim My name through all the earth.
 - c. Psalm 31:3 For Thou art my rock and my fortress; For Thy name's sake Thou wilt lead me and guide me.
 - d. Psalm 109:21-22 But Thou, O God, the Lord, deal kindly with me for Thy name's sake; Because Thy lovingkindness is good, deliver me; 22 For I am afflicted and needy, And my heart is wounded within me.
 - e. Isaiah 48:9-11 For the sake of My name I delay My wrath, And for My praise I restrain it for you, In order not to cut you off. 10 "Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction. 11 "For My own sake, for My own sake, I will act; For how can My name be profaned? And My glory I will not give to another.
- E. But this will only be dripping from your lips if it is your passion the same passion as God's.

IV. Thy Kingdom Come.

- A. Here we see the missional sense of this type of prayer.
 - 1. We learn something in this passage, we see that the Kingdom of God is not here.
 - 2. Remember my sermon last week that we are to be kingdom outposts, advancing and expressing the kingdom.
 - 3. We will only do that when we desire to see His kingdom here.
- B. What is meant by this? A couple of different ways.
 - 1. For each of us individually we see in 6:33 we see that we are to be busy seeking God's kingdom more than creature comforts.
 - a. We trust that our Father will really care for us as we labor for Him.
 - b. We trust that in the end all shall be made right.
 - c. We trust that we are to reflect that in our actions, purchases, time investments, and such.

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2. It is a personal reception of Jesus as Lord over your life and passions.
(May I suggest that this simple sentence is worth a week's serious meditation?)
 3. But the greater sense is evangelism, sharing the gospel that others might come to see Jesus as Lord.
- C. Think of how the Kingdom of God is described by Jesus.
1. Mustard seed to a great tree.
 2. It is leaven/yeast, ultimately leavens the whole batch of dough.
- D. This is what drives missions both here and over the rest of this globe– Psalm 67:1-3.
- E. How does this look in missional prayer?
1. First it is prayer of preparation.
 - a. Prayer for the lost (Matt. 6:10; 1 Tim. 2:1-4)
 - b. Prayer for laborers (Mat. 9:35-38; Acts 13:1-3)
 - c. Prayer for personal holiness and unity in believers (Ps. 51:10-13; John 17)
 - d. Prayer for open doors for the gospel to be shared (Col. 4:2-6)
 2. Second, it is prayers for proclamation.
 - a. Prayer for bold proclamation (Acts 4:29-31)
 - b. Prayer for the proper words to be proclaimed (Eph: 6:18-20)
 - c. Prayer for seizing God's timing (Col. 4:2-6)
 - d. Prayer for protection to proclaim (Rom. 15:30-33)
 - e. Prayer for power to proclaim (Eph. 3:18-21)

V. Thy will be done.

- A. Amazing what this means.
- B. To many hold to a form of fatalism. Other spend far too much time considering the sovereign rule of God over all things.

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- C. And the result is that we fail to realize that God's will is not being done over much of the earth.
 - 1. And it is a missional prayer to ask that it be done.
 - 2. These are prayers of mercy and of relief.
 - 3. Prayers of justice.
 - 4. Prayers of social concern.
 - 5. Prayers regarding the environment.
- D. Let me give you several other ways this would be prayed in the lives of new Christians as we seek to see God's will more and more manifested in this world.
 - 1. Prayer for new converts to be protected from the evil one (Matthew 6:13; John 17)
 - 2. Prayer that new converts will abound in love for believers and all men (1 Thessalonians 3:9-11)
 - 3. Prayer new believers will bear fruit in every good work (Colossians 1:2-11)
 - 4. Prayer that new converts will know and do God's will (Colossians 1; 9; Ephesians 1:17-18)
 - 5. Prayer for the seed of God's Word to bear fruit in folk's lives (2 Thessalonians 3:1).

VI. Conclusion.

- A. So let us pray right now. I want each of you to tell your Father in heaven what is on your heart.
- B. For some here, you are not yet a Christian. Here you should ask God to open your mind to who Jesus Christ is and what He has done on your behalf.
- C. For many this should be a time simply to repent of self-centered prayer.
- D. Father God, savior of sinners, open our eyes to this world to see it as you see it. Open our hearts to love it as you love it. And open our mouths to pray for it as you desire us to do so. Let your name be exalted in our city, let your name be exalted in our lives. Give us a passion, awaken our slumbering hearts, and give us boldness with your gospel. Amen.

VII. Benediction.

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To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Small Group Questions

- Review the several passages listed in the final part of the sermon.
- Spend some time examining the prayers of those in the group.
- Practice together as a group coming up with prayers that are more God-centered, kingdom-oriented from the various requests that come up.