

I. How *not* to pray

- A. Don't use prayer to manipulate other people, like the hypocrites do (vv. 5-6)
- B. Don't use prayer to manipulate God, like the Gentiles do (vv. 7-8)
- C. What Jesus *did not* mean: don't pray much. (see Luke 18:1-7; Romans 1:9-10; 1 Corinthians 7:5; Ephesians 1:16; Colossians 1:9; 4:12; 1 Thessalonians 1:2; 5:17; 2 Timothy 1:3)
- D. You should not quit your job to pray full time. (Acts 1-2; 1 Timothy 5:5; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-12)
- E. You don't need to be a prayer expert or a speech writer to pray.

II. To whom are you praying? "Our Father in Heaven"

- A. We are talking to *God*. (1 John 1:5; 4:8, 16; Westminster Shorter Catechism answer 4)
- B. "Our Father"
 - i. made in his image (Genesis 1:26; 5:3)
 - ii. more: in redemption: "I will be their God" (Genesis 17:8; Jeremiah 24:7; 31:33; 32:38; Ezekiel 11:20; 37:23, 27; Zechariah 8:8; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Hebrews 8:10)
 - iii. salvation=adoption! (Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:5)
- C. Speaking this way changes everything. (Psalm 42:5, 11)
- D. Not magic: communication.
- E. The basis for all prayer that will be heard
- F. Therefore: speak to our Father!

III. We have seen the heart of God.

- A. God is not simply an invisible menace and threat.
- B. God is *love*. (John 1:14, 18)
- C. Through this Jesus, God's son, we become God's sons.