

Secret Place

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2,3 The Landing Video & artwork
- B. Slide4 Hallen Baby Dedication 3rd: Joshua & Amanda. *Jack Taylor Hallen.*
- C. 3rd only: Pray for Jen Mellor heading back to Kosovo Monday.

II. Slide5 Intro: Secret Place

- A. Slide6 I was able to take a Sabbatical rest this week up in Pismo Beach. I could stare for hours at the ocean & its vastness. On 1 of my hikes I was on a hill over looking multi-million dollar homes on cliffs over looking Shell Beach. I wondered if they still appreciated the view? Did they still see the ebb & flow of the swells? Sea birds diving for their prey? Mother Sea Otters grooming their young? Sunlight shimmering/dancing/twinkling on top of the water?
- B. Slide7 This morning we have before us *the greatest prayer of the church* in last 2000 yrs
 1. 1000's of sermons been preached on it, yet its depth will never be exhausted.
 2. 6 petitions are absolutely perfect for every man & woman who have ever lived
 3. The initial focus is upward, 3 requests having to do with God's glory. And the 3 remaining, for our well being.
 - a) God 1st, man 2nd...*the ideal in prayer*: His glory *before* our wants.
 - b) Parallel to the 10 commandments (4+6).
 - c) Bonhoeffer, "*it's not only the pattern for prayer, it's the way Christians must pray.*"
 4. So when we approach the *Our Father...do we still see it? Or have we stared at it too long? said it too many times by rote?*
- C. As a *giving heart* was expected, *when you do a charitable deed* (2), so is Praying, *when you pray* (5), and fasting, *when you fast* (16).
- D. Jesus gives us 4 instructions to guide us in our Prayers: *Pray in Private b4 praying in Public; Pray Sincerely; Pray in God's Will; Pray w/a Forgiving Spirit.*

III. Slide8 PRAY IN PRIVATE BEFORE PRAYING IN PUBLIC (5,6)

- A. The Pharisees faithfully gathered at 9am, Noon, & 3pm, to pray in the synagogues or at the Temple.

1. Is there anything wrong w/seeking God 3 times a day? (No, Daniel did)
 2. **But** the Pharisees were not doing it *to seek the Lord but to be seen by man*.
 - a) **On the street corner** - *“Oh, I can’t wait to get to the synagogue. Oh Lord you are truly a Magnificent God.”*
- B. **Do you have a secret Place?** Your Father does & He awaits your presence.
1. **Slide9 Ps.91:1** *He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.*
 - a) A **shadow** isn’t normally good protection...**unless** your talking about being behind your big brother as he protects you. **Or better yet** in this case when God’s wings are hovering inches above you in protection mode, like a protective mother Eagle.
 - b) *Run to your secret place, as a wild animal does to his hole or den for relief, when the hunter has him in chase, & the dogs are near.*
 2. When you go into an airplane’s bathroom you latch the door, & when you do, *the light comes on brighter*. **Maybe** it’s the same when we enter our secret place, it’s there that He gives brighter illumination.

IV. **Slide10 PRAY SINCERELY (7,8)**

- A. Repeating a prayer is *not necessarily* a *vain repetition*.
1. Both Jesus & Paul repeated petitions [**Jesus** in/Garden. **Paul** w/his thorn in flesh]
- B. **All of us** have one routine prayer in our system: *Once we get rid of it, then we can really start to pray.*
- C. He’s saying, *don’t pray w/your mind on hold & your mouth on automatic.*
1. Make sure your **mind** is **engaged** & your **heart** sensitized.
- D. Isn’t it interesting Jesus places this here, right before the very prayer that is *oft repeated*.
- E. **Slide11 Many words** - *Some peoples prayers need to be cut short on both sides & set on fire in the middle.*
- F. **Praying isn’t for God’s information.** *How often people start explaining to God all the details, as if He didn’t know.* [or is it for the group? Always ask, **who** are you talking to?]

V. **Slide12 PRAY IN GOD’S WILL (9-13)**

- A. I think we've all heard the Hawaiian word for mainlanders, *haoli/haole*.
1. Alice Kaholuoluna gives us the origin of the term: Before the missionaries came, my people used to sit outside their temples for along time meditating and preparing themselves before entering. Then they would virtually **creep to the altar** to offer their petition and afterwards would again sit along time outside, this time to **breathe life into their prayers**. The Christians, when they came, just got up, uttered a few sentences, said Amen and were done. For that reason my people call them *haolis*, "without breath," or those who fail Slide13 to **breathe life** into their prayers.¹
 - a) Not to be mindlessly repeated, but genuinely prayed. Or it's *say vs. pray* (He made this abundantly clear in his intro)
- B. We don't hear the Disciples asking the Lord to Teach them to: Preach, prophesy, cast out demons, worship, witness, find their ministry or gifts, start up home fellowships, grow a church, how to be a relevant church, but *teach us to pray*. Lk.11:1 (when they saw Him praying)
1. Why? They must have noted He did this often. And that this was His key for *strength, wisdom, leading, instruction, communion, & fellowship*.
- C. This prayer is only 65 words long. And it takes about 20 seconds to pray. [3 to God +3 for us]
1. God's name be honored and respected. God's kingdom be completed. God's will be implemented.
 2. For our physical needs, daily bread. For our social needs, forgiving & being forgiven. For our spiritual needs, temptation and deliverance.
- D. Lets look at 6 elements of this prayer: *God's Person, Purpose, Provision, Pardon, Protection, & Pre-eminence*.
1. Slide14a GOD'S PERSON (9)
 - a) Our Father - not Omniscient one (thou He is), not Elohim (strong one), not the mighty one, nor the I am...but Father. *God is as accessible as the most loving human parent*. [Father only 14x's in whole OT. 17 in this sermon. 70x's in gospels]
 - b) Did God change? No, but we did.
 - (1) Jn.1:12 Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

¹ Kent Hughes, The Sermon on the Mount, Pg.161. From Nels Ferre, Strengthening the Spiritual Life, pg.1.

- c) There are **only 2 people** on this planet that can call me *father* (Zach & Mical) C&T father-in-law
- (1) To everyone else I'm *Brian, Pastor Brian, Mr. Bell, or something else* :)
 - (2) **But**, If I opened up the opportunity to whomever would like to be adopted, then there would be others who could call me **father**. **But In this I** wouldn't change, **they** would.
 - (3) **So God** didn't change...**we** did, **we** became His sons/daughters. [or maybe you haven't yet?]
- d) **In Heaven** - Don't forget that. *In heaven* is the balance of intimacy (**Father**) w/an affirmation of God's sovereignty & majesty (being **in heaven**)
- (1) Eccl.5:2 **God is in heaven, you are on earth, let your words be few.**
- e) **Hallowed** - **Holy** is your name (*hallowed ground*)
- (1) **Glory in His Holy Name** (1Chrn.16:10). **Give thanks to His Holy Name**(1 Chrn.16:35)
Praise His Holy Name (Ps.30:4)

2. Slide14b GOD'S PURPOSE (10)

- a) Your either saying: Your will be done, or My will be done.
- b) **You can either:** *be still & know that He is God* **or** *tell God to be still & know that you are you.*
- c) **You want your will to be done?** He'll allow it.
You want to reject God? He'll help the situation by rejecting you.
If you want your way? He'll let you go your way.
- d) Robert Law said, *Prayer is a mighty instrument, not for getting **man's** will done in heaven, but for getting **God's** will done on earth.*
- e) We have no right to ask God for anything that will: *dishonor His name, delay His Kingdom, or disturb His will on earth.*

3. Slide14c GOD'S PROVISIONS (11)

- a) **Give us** - Not give **me**. *No singular pronouns* in the Lord's prayer.
- b) **This day** - Did He insert this so we'd pray at least daily?
- c) **Daily Bread** - **Why daily?** *Does He have need of us?* **No!** We have need of Him. He is our bread.
 - (1) Pray daily for the *coming day's provision* of life's essentials.

(a) Recognize that **all sustenance for life** comes from God.

(2) Be content w/*your daily bread* & quit looking at *your neighbors slice*.

(3) **Life does not come to us all at once**. Tomorrow is not ours; **but** when it does come, God will supply both **daily bread and daily strength**.

d) **Our Prayer:** *Lord give us both the bread of **Heaven** & of **earth**, that which feeds my soul & sustains my body.*

4. Slide14d GOD'S PARDON (12)

a) No prayer of mortal man could be complete w/o confession of sin.

b) We should always have **debts to own** & therefore always have need to cry, *Forgive!*

c) *Could it ever read? Lord, Forgive me my debts, even if I won't forgive any debtors. Or, Forgive me my debts, but don't you dare think I'm forgiving my debtors.*

d) **What is found in Christianity which is not found any other religion? That was the question** asked at a seminar featuring several prominent Christian theologians. **C.S.Lewis**, the brilliant thinker & gifted author was caught in traffic while the rest of the panel puzzled over this question. After about an hour, Louis arrived and the question was posed to him, to which he replied, *That's simple. The forgiveness of sin.*

(1) This is the *magnetic draw* to Christianity. **I think this is why we are all here. We were & are in need of forgiveness of sin. And** only Christianity provides that in the blood of Jesus Christ.

5. Slide14e GOD'S PROTECTION (13)

a) As the **last petition** asked forgiveness for **sins that we've committed**, **this petition** asks for strength *not* to commit **future sins**.

b) **Lead us not into temptation** - Testings (*But I thought testing's were good for us? Yes*)

(1) But let us not say, *Lord test me! I'm ready!*

c) This is a pray of humility. *If you think you stand take heed lest you fall.*

(1) Its asking, *do not allow us to come under the sway of temptation that will overpower us & cause us to sin.*

d) **But deliver us from the Evil One** (Satan) - Satan is a powerful being...*yet*, he trembles when **the weakest saint** is upon his knees.

6. Slide14f GOD'S PRE-EMINENCE (13B)

a) This short Prayer ends in an explosion of Praise...For yours is the kingdom & the power & the glory forever. Amen.

(1) All rule, might & honor, belong to You God & let them forever be ascribed.

E. When praying: remember the Person of God, He's my Father. Then remember the Purpose of God, His Will not mine. Then remember the Provision of God, our daily bread. Then remember the Pardon of God, I'm forgiven so then I can forgive. Then remember the Protection of God, from testing & from the Evil one. Then, I'll always end by Praising Him, for Yours is the kingdom...

VI. Slide15 PRAY WITH A FORGIVING SPIRIT (14,15)

A. In this *appendix* to his prayer...he now expands vs.12b.

B. He's not teaching that believers *earned* God's forgiveness by forgiving others; for this would be contrary to God's free grace & mercy.

1. However, If we truly experienced God's forgiveness, then we will have a readiness to forgive others.

a) Eph.4:32 forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

b) Col.3:13 Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

C. True Praying is *a Family Affair* (Our Father)

1. If the members of the family aren't getting along, how can they claim to have a right relationship w/the Father?

D. When people fail, don't rub it in...rub it out (Forgive them) Courson

E. *It may be a blessing to be wronged, since it affords us an opportunity of judging whether we are indeed the recipients of the pardon which comes from the throne of God.* Spurgeon

F. How very sweet it is to pass by *other men's offenses* against ourselves, for in this we learn how sweet it is to the Lord, to pardon us.