

Lord, Teach Us to Pray

Chapter 17 – Your Heart: Secret Versus Show

Park Plaza Brookside * Fireside Room

March 27, 2016

HOPPY

EASTER

Matthew 6:5-8 (NIV)

⁵ “And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ⁶ But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. ⁷ And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

Matthew 6:5-8 (MSG)

⁵ “And when you come before God, don’t turn that into a theatrical production either. All these people making a regular show out of their prayers, hoping for stardom! Do you think God sits in a box seat? ⁶ “Here’s what I want you to do: Find a quiet, secluded place so you won’t be tempted to role-play before God. Just be there as simply and honestly as you can manage. The focus will shift from you to God, and you will begin to sense his grace. ⁷⁻⁸ “The world is full of so-called prayer warriors who are prayer-ignorant. They’re full of formulas and programs and advice, peddling techniques for getting what you want from God. Don’t fall for that nonsense. This is your Father you are dealing with, and he knows better than you what you need. With a God like this loving you, you can pray very simply.

Matthew 6:5-8

- After the “Sermon on the Mount”
- Before the “Lord’s Prayer”
- Ellicott’s Commentary for the English Reader: The Jewish custom, more or less prevalent throughout the East, and for a time retained at certain seasons in the Christian Church, was to pray standing, with outstretched, uplifted hands, and there was nothing in the attitude as such that made it an act of ostentatious devotion; nor would there have been any ostentation in thus joining in the common prayer of the congregation assembled in the synagogue.

Matthew 6:5-8

- Does not say that we should never pray in public.
- Jesus prayed publicly, and John 17 records his high-priestly prayer
- Does not say we should discourage “corporate” prayer
- Our own worship service has 5+ prayers

Quick Survey:

- How many class members have ever been accused of offering “ostentatious” prayers? (NOTE: Not the same as a really long prayer, especially before a holiday meal.)
- How many class members have ever walked down the street with uplifted hands praying loudly so ever one could hear?
- If you answer “yes” to either of these questions, how frequently do you exhibit such behavior?
- If nobody answered “yes,” then why are we discussing this topic?

“Ostentatious” or “Play-Actor” Christian?

- Maybe Jesus is talking about more than prayer?
- More concerned with their “appearance” before others
- Christian on the “Outside” vs. Christian on the “Inside”
- How frequently does someone “remind” you about their church-related activities or charitable contributions?
- Jesus is saying, “Don’t be a holy-roller show-off”

“Ostentatious” or “Play-Actor” Christians

- Mel Brooke: “That’s it baby! If you’ve got it, flaunt it.”
- Will Rogers: “Too many people spend money they earned ... to buy things they don’t want ... to impress people that they don’t like.”

“Ostentatious” or “Play-Actor” Christian?



- “Honk if you love Jesus” bumper sticker.
- So I did. They didn’t wave with all their fingers.
- Wouldn’t let me turn in front of them.

“Ostentatious” or “Play-Actor” Christian?

- Are you motivated by pride?
- If so, God does not hear those prayers since they are not meant for his ears
- What is in your “heart”?
- Are you keeping your eyes on Jesus?
- Who are you when you are alone?

“Secret” Prayer

- Jesus rose early to pray alone (Mark 1:35)
- Jesus sent everyone away one afternoon, and escaped to a solitary place to pray (Mark 6:46)
- Jesus waited till the others went to sleep so he could pray (Luke 6:12)
- In Matthew 6, Jesus is TELLING us to spend some alone time with God.

Why?

Why?

- From personal experience, Jesus is telling us it worked for Him.
- It is not for God's benefit, it is for **OUR** benefit
- Example: Every night before she goes to bed, our daughter, Alayne, physically holds my hand and tells me good night. It gives her a sense of peace and security. It “completes” her day. Same goes for us when we pray.
- We can lay the cares of the world before his heavenly throne (but be sure to not pick them up again when we leave)

Why?

- No need to be prideful when alone with God
- Voltaire: “We are rarely proud when we are alone.”
- Saint Augustine: “It was pride that changed angels into devils; it is humility that makes men as angels.”

Why?

- It strengthens us
- It refreshes us
- We are reminded and given the opportunity to refocus on God, and put our eyes back onto Jesus
- Countless other reasons ...

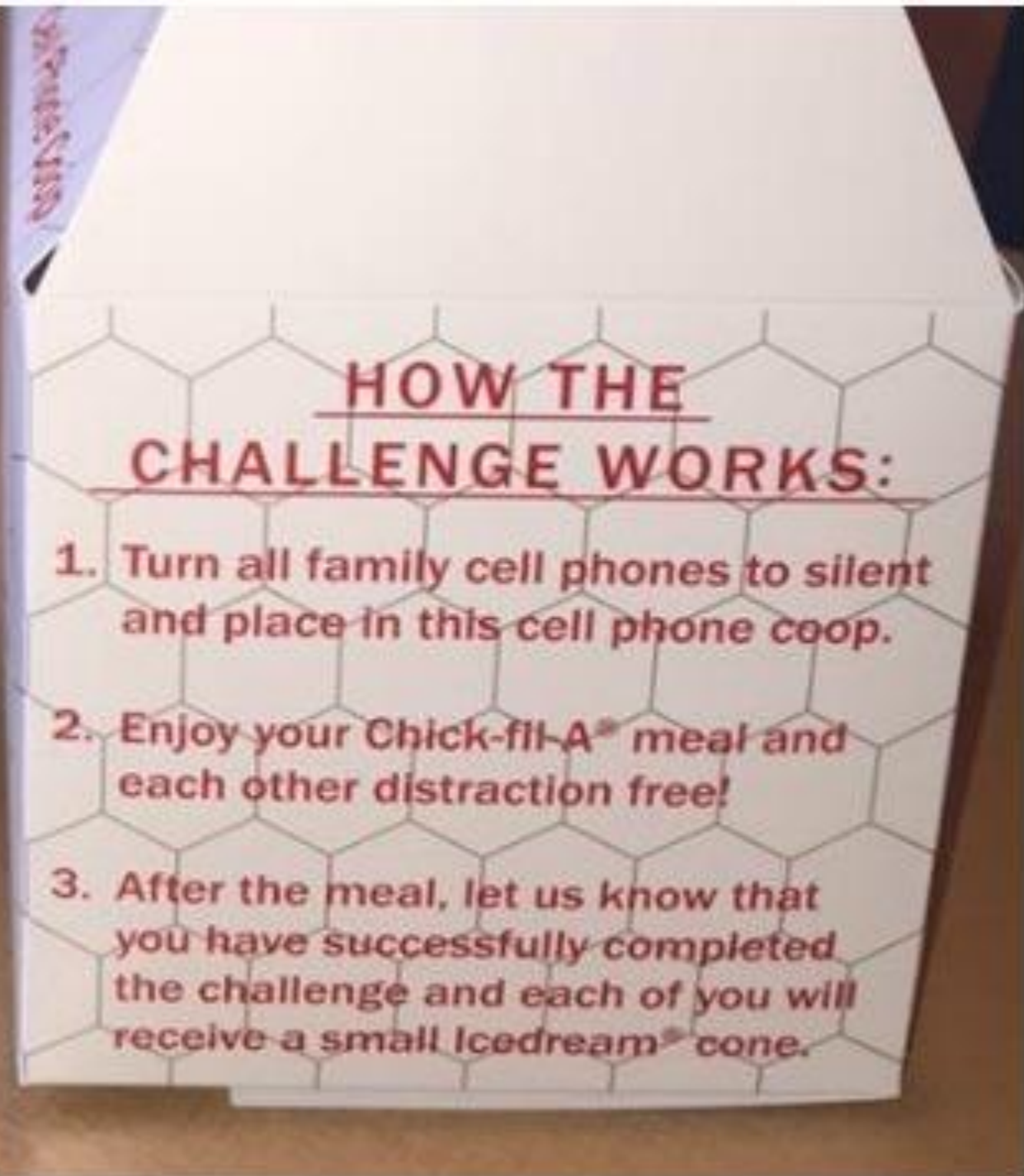
How?

- How does Yale out rebound Baylor?
- <https://youtu.be/P6A2ZgKV6n0>

How?

- You go to your room or other secret place where you can be alone
- Biblical closets or rooms where rather ordinary
- Where do you go?





HOW THE CHALLENGE WORKS:

1. Turn all family cell phones to silent and place in this cell phone coop.
2. Enjoy your Chick-fil-A® meal and each other distraction free!
3. After the meal, let us know that you have successfully completed the challenge and each of you will receive a small Icedream® cone.

How?

- You close the door
- If you keep the door open, it is too easy to become distracted
- Cell Phone Coop – got off to a rocky start
 - First thing that happened, everybody started arguing
 - Then settled down, and had a nice meal

How?

- You put your focus on God and your eyes on Jesus
- You start talking
- You start listening

Prodigal

- “Prodigal” by OneRepublic
- <https://youtu.be/SSwf60xqkE8>
- Website: <http://onerepublic.com/>
- Wikipedia – OneRepublic: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OneRepublic>
- Ryan Tedder (lead singer) born in Tulsa, OK and attended ORU
- Wikipedia – Ryan Tedder: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ryan_Tedder

Parable of the Prodigal Son

- Many times this parable is used to demonstrate our Heavenly Father's desire for us to be "saved"
- Can this parable be used in a "broader" sense?
- Can this parable be used to explain our Heavenly Father's desire to spend time with us each day?
- I have one regret – I did not spend more time with my Grandfather when he was in a nursing home here in Tulsa, and I was in law school.
- I am able to visit/talk/connect with my own parents each day. Dana and her sister visit/talk/connect with their parents each day.
- When we don't pray daily, are we any different from the Prodigal Son?

This Week's Assignment

- Go to your room
- Close the door
- Put your focus on God, and your eyes on Jesus
- Start talking
- Start listening
- Repeat daily

Continue to Pray for Us!



- Clint Hill
- Chris Mayfield
- Reece Morrel Jr.

Closing Prayer

O Lord, show us why we pass up so many opportunities to get alone with You. Help us realize our time with You in quiet is priceless. It's where we can hear from You best, be the most honest before You, and enjoy the most blessings of Your presence and rewards. Thank You, Lord, for choosing to be so near to us, and for inviting us to spend time alone with You, just the two of us. Help us die to our pride and then delight in spending time alone with You. Amen.

“Ostentatious” or “Play-Actor” Christian?



Benny Hinn & Dove One



How rough is first-class these days?

“Ostentatious” or “Play-Actor” Christian?



- Tammy Faye Baker
- Known for:
 - Big hair
 - Bad make-up
 - Always crying

“Ostentatious” or “Play-Actor” Christian?



- Francis Chan
- Founder of Cornerstone Community Church in Simi Valley, CA
- Author of Forgotten God and Crazy Love
- Featured speaker at the Tulsa International Soul Winning Workshop

“Ostentatious” or “Play-Actor” Christian?



- Billy Graham
- During 1949 revival in Los Angeles, William Randolph Hearst sent a two word telegram to his newspaper: “Puff Graham”