

How not to... (Matthew 6:5-8, 14-18)

Introduction

- Jot down a few things which spoil prayer meetings.
- What is the Sermon on the Mount all about?

i How not to pray (v5-8)

- What wrong motive in prayer is Jesus attacking in v5-6?
- What does Jesus tell us to do instead?
- List three ways in which we might be guilty here.
 - i)
 - ii)
 - iii)
- What wrong practice in prayer is Jesus attacking in v7-8?
- Is it OK to repeat yourself in prayer?
- How would you prove that?
- What is Jesus actually saying is wrong, then?
- List two ways in which we might be guilty here.
 - i)
 - ii)
- What perspective will help us not to go astray?

ii How not to be forgiven (v14-15)

- What is, sadly, often present in church life?

- In which other passage does Jesus teach on this subject?
- In that passage...
 - How big was Servant One's debt?
 - What does he receive?
 - What is the only appropriate response to that?
 - Why is his attitude to Servant Two so inappropriate?
 - What must it do to us to know that God has cancelled our immense debt of sin?
- How should we think when someone sins against us, then?
- What does it show about someone when he/she is unwilling to forgive?
- What three things might help you to show grace to those who hurt you?
 - i)
 - ii)
 - iii)

iii How not to fast (v16-18)

- What might fasting Pharisees do in Jesus' day?
- What does Jesus tell us to do instead?
- What assumption lies behind Jesus' words here?
- What is fasting associated with in the Bible?
- When might you fast, then?

Conclusion

- How does Jesus often refer to God in our passage?
- Why does that matter?