Grace COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH
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WOW – Word on Wednesday
The Blueprint for Powerful Practical Living!
Matthew 6:7-21

Intro: We live in a world build on performance. Everyday, we are conditioned to curate our lives for an audience – whether that is through what we post online, how we present ourselves at work or even how we act when we walk into church. It's so easy to start doing good things for the wrong reasons, slowly trading genuine devotion for public applause. That exact temptation is what Jesus confronts in this whole chapter on the Sermon on the Mount. In verses 7-21, Jesus shifts our focus from the stage to the secret place.

1. **The Posture of True Prayer: Trust over Technique (vs 7-8)**

A. Avoid Empty Repetition (vs 7) – Jesus warns against "heaping up empty phrases"

- Greek word "battalogeo" meaning scramble or babble mindlessly.
- Pagan worshipers tried to manipulate or worry their gods through sheer words of volume. — 1 Kings 18:26, Ecclesiastes 5:2

B. Rest in the Father's Knowledge (vs 8) – Prayer is not informing an ignorant God; it is aligning our hearts with a loving Father who already knows our needs. — Isaiah 65:24

2. **The Pattern of True Prayer:** God's glory before our needs. **(vs 9-13)**

God centered worship (9-10)

A. Intimacy and reverence "Our Father which art in Heaven"

- We must approach our sovereign Ruler with the humility of a child. — Romans 8:15

B. Holiness "Hallowed be Thy Name"

- We must first respect that God's character is to be honored, revered, and set apart as holy in our lives. — Psalm 111:9

C. Submission "Your Kingdom Come, Your Will be Done"

- True prayer surrenders our personal agenda to God's sovereign reign and redemptive plan. — Luke 22:42

D. Personal Centered Petitions "Give us this day our daily bread"

- Daily provision, acknowledging day by day dependence on God's physical and spiritual sustenance. — Exodus 16:4

E. Relational Pardon "Forgive us our debts as we forgive others of their debts"

- Confessing our spiritual bankruptcy before God, while extending grace to others. — Ephesians 4:32

F. Spiritual Protection "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil" — 1 Corinthians 10:13

- We must recognize our own moral weakness and rely on God's promises to guard us. — 2 Thessalonians 3:3

3. The Proof of True Prayer: A forgiving heart **(vs 14-15)**

A. The only commentary on prayer: immediately after finishing the Model Prayer, Jesus circles back to one specific petition (forgiveness).

B. Grace received must be grace extended.

- Holding on to bitterness contradicts the very mercy we ask God to show us.
- It reveals a heart that has not truly grasped the weight of its own forgiven debt. — Matthew 18:21, Mark 11:25

4. The Practice of True Fasting: Secret Devotion **(vs 16-18)**

A. Rejecting performative piety (vs 16): Hypocrites = literally stage actors.

- Deliberately neglected their appearance, wearing gloomy faces and disheveled clothes so others would admire their spiritual discipline. — Isaiah 58:3-5
- They made their faith bring attention to their face, not their Father. — Matthew 23:5
- Applaud from people is the entirely of their reward.

B. Seeking the Audience of One (vs 17-18)

- Jesus commands believers to wash their faces and anoint their heads. — 1 Samuel 16:7
- Why? So that maintaining normal hygiene and joy the sacrifice of fasting is known only to God. — Colossians 3:23-24

5. The Priority of True Treasure: Eternal Investment **(vs 19-21)** — Proverbs 23:4-5

A. The Fragility of Earthly Wealth (vs 19)

- In the ancient world, wealth was held in fine garments (vulnerable to moths); grain/metals (vulnerable to rust); and coins hidden in walls or floors (vulnerable to thieves).
- Every earthly asset is temporary. — James 5:2-3

B. The Security of Heavenly Wealth (vs 20)

- Storing up treasure in Heaven means investing our time, resources, generosity, and obedience into God's eternal Kingdom.
- When we store up in Heaven, things cannot decay or be stolen. — 1 Timothy 6:17-19

C. The Diagnostic of the Heart (vs 21)

- Jesus does not say "your treasure follows your heart, He says your heart follows your treasure".
- Whatever you pour your time, money and energy into will inevitably capture your affection and worship.
- Most people assume that you put your money and time into what you already love.
- Jesus reverses that order and teaches that your heart follows your treasure. — Proverbs 4:23
- Your emotional attachment to that thing automatically grows.
- An honest mirror – We can easily deceive ourselves with religious words, but treasure never lies. — Colossians 3:1-2
- What you protect, prioritize, and spend on reveals what you truly worship.