

Small Group Outline for Week of January 4, 2021
WEFC January 2021 Prayer Message Series
Message 1: Matthew 6:5-8

To Encourage you:

Key Statement: As a Christian, as part of the Body of Christ, as the Temple of the Holy Spirit; we pray. I understand that Scripture commands us to Pray; I understand that we have a need to Pray - but in this message I want to encourage us with the **Invitation to Pray**. In this three-part series we will look into 3 passages that Jesus teaches us in prayer, within His famous Sermon on the Mount. Today we will look at Matthew 6:5-8.

Jesus cleared the temple of the sellers and money changers; it would appear twice. It so bothered Him that the place for the Gentiles to worship was turned into a mall; making it both crowded and loud-no place for prayer. "My House shall be a House of Prayer!"

House of Prayer

Isaiah 56:7

- *I will bring them to my holy mountain of Jerusalem and will fill them with joy in my house of prayer. I will accept their burnt offerings and sacrifices, because my Temple will be called a house of prayer for all nations.*

Jeremiah 7:11

- *Don't you yourselves admit that this Temple, which bears my name, has become a den of thieves? Surely I see all the evil going on there. I, the Lord, have spoken!*

Follow this through with me:

- Jesus wanted His physical Temple to be a House of Prayer - the building
- In relationship with Jesus, we also have become the God's Temple; we then also become that House of Prayer
- 1 Corinthians 3:16
 - *Don't you realize that all of you together are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God lives in you*
- 1 Corinthians 6:19
 - *Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, 20 for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.*
- 1 Peter 2:4-5
 - *You are coming to Christ, who is the living cornerstone of God's temple. He was rejected by people, but he was chosen by God for great honor. 5 And you are living stones that God is building into his spiritual temple. What's more, you are his holy priests. Through the mediation of Jesus Christ, you offer spiritual sacrifices that please God.*
- We as the Temple of the Holy Spirit are to be houses of prayer

Discussion: what do you think about you not only being the Temple of the Holy Spirit, but also a House of prayer? How do you feel about that?

Focused Biblical Text for this Message: Matthew 6: 5-9

Three points Jesus is making: When: assumption we will pray, affirming our need and desire to pray

- When you pray... don't pray publicly for show; Check your motive for praying
- When you pray... go to a quiet, private place (the temple was to have quiet places)
 - Sharing: where is that quiet place or places that you go to pray?
- When you pray... there is no need to babbling and repetitious prayers

- See 1 Kings 18: Elijah and the prophets of Baal
- God hears us when we pray. Jesus uses the term “Father.” He knows what you need. Too many people have twisted this verse and said, “Why do I need to pray if God already knows what I need?” This misses the point. Father speaks of relationship and care. To talk about your needs and your feelings, your fears, your heart.

Let me say one more thing I feel I need to say, when it comes to our prayer times: in your quiet place, have your Bible with you. I know I taught on this before, when we have our quiet times, here is what I encourage, and what I do:

- Choose a regular time
- A cup of coffee
- A journal to write your thots and prayers and notes
- Your Bible (holding the Book) and a reading schedule or devotional guide
- Bible and prayer always go together:
 - Bible Reading without prayer is dry
 - Prayer times without the Bible is dangerous

Weekly Reflection:

1. Go to the Quiet time - create the time if you don't have one (re-create or change it)
 - Take 10 minutes: focus on one passage of Scripture
 - Then pray whatever comes to your mind or heart - write it down
2. Challenge yourself to read the Bible in a year
 - One Year Bible
 - Online search for reading plan
 - Post one on our website
3. Plan for a Prayer Gathering on Sunday, January 17, 2021 at 7:00pm
4. Extra Study: take a concordance and see where the words “pray” or “prayer” are used in the Gospels and in the Book of Acts (www.biblegateway.com). Be sure to check the context.

Looking over the Weekly Reflection, what will you do this week?
 What are 2 or 3 important items of prayer for this month of January?
 Share and pray for each other.