

**Cultivating
a Christian Character**

Studies in
The Sermon on the Mount
Matthew chapters 5-7

Praying Properly
Matthew 6.5-18

1. A Study in Contrasts, vs5-8

- **Potential audiences vs 5-6**
 - visible humans, for their applause v5*
 - an invisible God, who sees and hears us v6*
 - an encouragement to pray privately*
- **Potential rewards vs 5-6**
 - human approval now – and nothing else v5*
 - divine payback throughout eternity v6*
 - our prayers really do help people 2 Cor 1.8-11*
- **Potential styles vs 7-8**
 - continual babbling v7; 1 Kings 18.26-29*
 - to get God to sit up and take notice*
 - conversation with a knowing Father v8*
 - from his Son's indwelling Spirit Rom 8.14-16*

2. A Model for Proper Praying, vs9-15

- ***It's relational, not mechanical v9***
we're privileged to call God 'our Father'
through his indwelling Spirit Gal 4.4-6
he is worthy of our highest respect
a safeguard against over-familiarity
- ***It focuses on God's priorities vs9-10***
his name being honoured by all
his kingly rule increasing
his will being accomplished
in our lives on earth, as in heaven
- ***It includes our greatest needs vs11-13***
food for our bodies
forgiveness for our sins 1 John 1.8-9
fortitude – to overcome temptations

2. A Model for Proper Praying, vs9-15

- *It presupposes right relationships vs14-15
a forgiving spirit towards others*

3. A Prescription for Fasting, vs16-18

- *Jesus assumes we will fast v16
he fasted before his public ministry Mat 4.2
church leaders fasted in Antioch Acts 13.2
overseas missionaries fasted Acts 13.3
new church leaders fasted Acts 14.23*
- *Jesus expects our fasting to be a secret vs16-18
never make a show of it v16
no one else should be aware of it vs 17-18
it's strictly between us and God*