

## **The Vanity of Our Words**

### **Ready:**

“Whenever you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites, because they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by people. Truly I tell you, they have their reward. But when you pray, go into your private room, shut your door, and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.” – Matthew 6:5-6

### **Set**

One of the dreams that I often hear from athletes is to have the chance to be interviewed after winning a championship – the moment when everyone is listening to you and admiring you and your team for what you just accomplished.

In these moments, you can tell where the heart and mind of the athlete being interviewed lies. The athlete often gives credit to their team and the hard work each person put in. Sometimes, you even hear them offer thanks and appreciation to God for the opportunity to play. Unfortunately, though, sometimes they give all the credit to themselves and shower themselves with honor and glory. All they want is to have people hear them speak.

This is not a new human characteristic; it’s called vanity, which we see often in sports. We also see it in Scripture when Jesus called out the religious leaders. He advises us not to use our prayers to get people to see our importance.

Don’t use prayer filled with eloquent words if you are catering to humans and not using the words to honor God. Instead, Jesus advises us to pray in private to avoid falling into the temptation of vanity. When we are alone and not surrounded by people, our prayers are only for God and not for the ears of anyone else.

There is nothing wrong with praying out loud or in a group just like there isn’t anything wrong with a postgame interview. It’s the intention behind the prayer and the interview that matters. Next time you are given a platform, make sure you check the intention behind your words.

### **Go**

- In what areas of your life do you struggle with vanity?
- Do you find it harder or easier to pray when you are alone?

### **Workout**

[Ecclesiastes 2:11](#)

Matthew 6:1-7

## **Overtime**

“God, You know all, even our intentions, every time we open our mouths. Help us control our tongue and desire to be heard in favor of genuine communion with You. Help reduce our pride and vanity and humble us before Your throne to remember that each breath and word is a gift from You. Amen.”



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