

WHEN YOU PRAY

Pastor Joseph Hovsepian

Matthew 6:5-15

“**WHEN** you Pray”, not **IF** you Pray.

God expects us to Pray.

Prayer simply is defined as talking to God. And yet prayer is misunderstood and misused by most people

Questions like:

“How God can hear my prayer, and so many others at the same time?”

“Why does God really care about me and my prayer?”

“Why does the creator of the universe bother with me?”

“How and when should I pray?”

“What is a good and acceptable prayer?”

...are only some of the questions people ask.

Now, Jesus knowing that those who followed Him and many who came to listen to Him had similar questions or were confused about prayer, gave them a sample or a model of a prayer.

He said: “When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites.” “υποκριτες” “actors”.

Hypocrite describes a person who pretends to be religious, even though is not, just like an actor who puts on a mask and pretends to be someone he or she is not.

Just remember that God knows the inner person before you say a word.

What actually Jesus is saying is that prayer should not be used as a platform to show-off, impress others or preach a sermon to others.

This prayer was not given by Jesus to be recited. It rather, is a model for us to learn how to pray. It is a prayer model that is personal and yet a prayer that includes others, family, community, etc.

Note the repeated words “our” and “us”. This prayer emphasizes God’s name, Kingdom, and will and then be the earthly needs of men.

A. “**Our Father**”

Only true believers can call God “FATHER” and really mean it.

“Everlasting Father” (Isaiah 9:6)

“A Father of the fatherless” (Psalm 68:5)

B. “**Hallowed Be Your Name**”

We should approach God with worship and adoration

- Reverence is more than being quiet in church

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- Reverence is recognizing the holiness of God
- “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of His glory.” (Isaiah 6:3)
- Reverence is faith in our Holy and Loving God
- Reverence is living carefully because God is Holy

C. **“Your Kingdom Come”**

“Your Kingdom” here, represents the full and effective reign, kingdom of God on earth and in our lives.

The disciples expected the kingdom then, they thought the world was ready for His kingdom to come, but today the world is more ready than then.

D. **“Your Will Be Done”**

We must understand and recognize that God’s will is perfect and ours is not. And so we must ask God’s will to be done in our life, and we must submit to His will and purpose.

E. **“Give Us Today Our Daily Bread”**

The concept of daily provision of bread is a perfect picture of the Old Testament example of the daily provision of the mana to the Israelites, while they were wondering in the wilderness (Exodus 16:14-15).

God will take care of our daily needs.

F. **“Forgive us our Debts, as we also have forgiven our Debtors”**

“Debts”, here refers to sins. We often ask God to forgive our sins and yet we ignore the second part of this verse, “*as we also have forgiven our debtors*”.

We must forgive to be forgiven.

G. **“And Lead us not into Temptation, but Deliver us from the evil one”**

God does not tempt men, but He will allow trials.

“When tempted, no one should say, ‘God is tempting me.’ For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone;” (James 1:13)

The request here reflects the believers desire to avoid the dangers of sin.

Are your prayers mostly about you and your circumstances? Then you must start interceding, praying about others.

Do you understand that “*Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors*”.

Means that unless you have forgiven those who have hurt you, God will not forgive your sins, which is a scary thought.

May God bless you and may His presence be felt in your time of prayer.