

Pattern of Seven: The Flow Toward “Pray Without Ceasing”

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The type of prayer that Jesus engaged in Himself and taught His disciples has not changed in its reach to us. Before He began to lay out the flow toward “pray without ceasing”, He prefaced His teaching with two rules in the natural that hold spiritual implications. Matthew 6:5-6 and 6:7-8:

ONE - “WHEN you pray, do not be like those who only pretend to be holy. They love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners. They want to be seen by other people. What I’m about to tell you is true. They have received their complete reward. ⁶ When you pray, go into your room. Close the door and pray to your Father, who can’t be seen. Your Father will reward you, because he sees what you do secretly.” (vs 5-6 NIRV)

TWO - “Don’t recite the same prayer over and over as the heathen do, who think prayers are answered only by repeating them again and again..., your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask Him!” (vs 7-8 TLB)

“WHEN” We Pray

Jesus’ use of the first word “WHEN” was simple. It is we who complicate what He introduced as complete. It is from the Greek word *hotan* which means “whenever, on whatever occasion, as long as, as soon as.” Jesus never wrapped the lesson of prayer in religious garb, tied it to a specific place, or to be seen as the purpose.

Our Lord’s untainted gift to them and us as He spoke of prayer was to discard the cloaks of self-righteousness, dismantle with a “go into your room” all theatrical inclinations, and step onto the holy ground of private communion between our heart and the heart of the Father. He knew the more trying the times and urgent the needs, the more what He had left to all of us had power to release the substance needed in all areas of life.

Just as Jesus took Himself apart to pray to His Father in secret, so may we. As we do, there will come a time when we realize **there has been a cultivation of unbroken communication going on**. Jesus designed the flow that became the source of Apostle Paul’s encouragement in I Thessalonians 5:17 to “pray without ceasing.” Unlike the hypocrites² Jesus spoke of who love to appear to pray, it may not appear a child of God is praying.

“WHEN” we pray – as a true child of God and not a counterfeit who embraces nothing of God’s Kingdom – it won’t matter where we are. Alone, going about a busy day, or in the middle of a crowd, we can step into our personal holy ground of communion with Father God. If we truly seek His presence, He will be found waiting in the secret place. It’s the abiding shelter of *Psalms 91* made real, and “teach us to pray” our unshakable ground.

Why We Pray

Remember, Jesus knew what His disciples then and each of us now would face. He was keen that His followers learn to pray in this way He knew would take them through troubling times. **There was nothing about the prayer He modeled meant to impress or inform God.** Instead, *prayer is the language of dependence¹ on God*. Since Adam and Eve, the evil one has seen to it humanity works overtime to maintain their independence. We’re living in our time of that not going so well. Even more reason Jesus left us a perfect pattern for prayer.

While not precluding prayer gatherings and prayer partners, there is a development of a precious private relationship with the Lord in those who put into practice **prayer in the secret place**. The Father’s promise is that He sees us in secret as we freely pour out our soul to Him. He hears us and promises to give us His *treasures of darkness and hidden riches of secret places*— so that we may know - *personally called by name - that He is God*.³ What is not known to others is that we are praying. **What is manifest is that He is answering.**

Matthew 6:9-13 – The Prayer of the Lord Jesus

Every Bible translation has its interpretation of “The Lord’s Prayer” in the Matthew passage. As I spent time in Brother Ed’s booklet on this topic, *his personal rendering* based on the Original Greek reached into my heart and mind. The more I sat with it, the more it drew me on to this point in God’s perfect timing. Here then, is the wording, *true and strong in its original intent and meaning* -

*Therefore, after this manner pray...
Our Father in the Heavens:*

*Let Your Name be sanctified
...NOW, in this very moment!*

*Let Your Kingdom come
...NOW, into this present situation!*

*Let Your will come into being
...NOW, in this present moment on earth,
as it already is in the heavens.*

*Give us what is needed for our sustenance
...TODAY as you will through all our days.*

*Dismiss us from the guilt of our failures toward You,
as we also have dismissed the guilt
of those who have failed us.*

*Lead us not into trials which we
have not the grace to bear.*

*But rescue us from the evil one
because the Kingdom is Yours, and the Power,
and the Glory unto the end of the ages...AMEN*

Jesus’ Right Order to His Seven Petitions

As we look deeper into the prayer Jesus taught, it is from the understanding that all seven petitions are strong and carry equal importance. As I wrote before, Jesus prayed with every part of His being. He did not leave out, or exalt above another, any of the [seven portions of the human spirit](#) as He made His petitions.

He did, however, set forth a right order of vast importance for us. That is, the first three petitions in this prayer **relate to our Father**. The final four petitions **relate to us**. I cannot say it more clearly than Brother Ed did:

“When we bring all things relating to ourselves into right perspective with **His Holiness, His Kingdom, and His Will**, we find that the things pertaining to us will come to their right resolution – sometimes through His miracle power.”

~ Nancy

¹ Adam Clarke commentary ² stage actors behind a mask, impersonating a character different from their own ³ Isaiah 45:3