

THE WORLD TOMORROW

Herbert W. Armstrong brings you the Plain Truth about today's world news and the prophecies of The World Tomorrow

Prayer

And greetings friends! This is Herbert W. Armstrong with the Good News of the World Tomorrow!

Is there anything to prayer? Did you ever stop to think about that? Is it just a superstition? Is prayer just something to, well let's just say in plain language, just sort of kid people along and give them a sort of self-hypnosis to think that they have benefited in some way but no one is there listening.

I think I may have told you the story at some time about the young lady who was rather skeptical, a young girl perhaps eighteen or twenty, who was a little bit skeptical. Her grandmother really believed in prayer. Her grandmother spent a lot of time in prayer and it seemed rather silly to this girl.

She said, "Grandma, why do you do that for?" She said, "Does that ever do any good?" And she said, "How do you know there's anyone there listening when you pray? What kind of proof have you? You can't see God. How do you know there is any God listening when you pray?"

"Well," her grandmother says, "you sent a telegram to a former friend of yours you hadn't seen for a long time the other day, didn't you?"

She said, "Yes."

"Well, how do you know there was anyone there to read your telegram when you sent the message?"

"Why," she says, "I got an answer back from her. I know that she was there because she answered. I got another telegram right back."

"Well," the grandmother said, "I know there's someone over there or up there or somewhere listening to my prayers because I get the answer back. I get what I ask."

That's how she knew.

My friends, how many of you ever get the answer? And if you don't, why? Do you know the reason? Do you know why you don't get the answer? Is God real? Are you just kidding yourself when you pray? Or is it a practical thing? Can you get the answer?

You know that's something that unless a man really believes he can never see it and it's never going to be proved to him by any kind of argument or any kind of proof that I know anything about except experience itself. I don't know of any other way. But I do know that there are perhaps a good many of you listening to me now who have had the experience and who have had the answer. I don't know whether you could ever prove it to anyone else or prove it to a skeptic? I guess God just didn't intend that sort of thing to be proved to a skeptic anyway. I guess He intends that they can do just as they please anyway and if they want to doubt, if they want to be skeptical, that's their right and privilege -- it's their loss. They themselves are cheating themselves out of it.

There are just a few things before I go on through this to see what was the teaching of Jesus and we've come to the place where He's giving a little teaching about prayer. I want to mention one or two things first and then we're going right on here in the sixth chapter of Matthew. Get your Bible while I'm speaking. Open it to the sixth chapter of Matthew. And while you're at it, why don't you get pen and an envelope or a piece of paper and write in for our booklet -- "What is Faith?" And you'll find out why most of you have never had an answer to your own prayers. What is Faith?

Now, "according to your faith be it unto you" and faith is the prerequisite and the condition to receiving an answer to prayer. It's one of the conditions, it isn't the only one, but it's a very big reason. And if you understand it in its all encompassing manner, the word faith is the whole reason.

You know the old hymn, "Trust and Obey". Well, that's about right. And we read that "whatsoever we ask [of God], we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight." So, obeying God is one of the conditions too. And God will not hear anyone who doesn't obey Him, I can assure you of that. But on the other hand, you couldn't have real faith and not obey God anyway because the real faith is living faith.

And again I want to tell you of another experience that I have heard of Madame Chiang Kai-shek.

Madame Chiang Kai-shek, so the story goes, has explained how her mother taught her about prayer. And if this did have to come from far away China, it's a pretty good example for a lot of us.

You know when most people pray they have what I heard a vaudeville artist say, oh perhaps, thirty-five or forty years ago; they're like the man that this vaudeville artist talked about that had the "gimmes", he called it. He said they all have the "gimmes" -- they say, "gimme this, gimme that, gimme something else." They're

always wanting to get something from everybody else. Well, most people when they pray, you know, they have the "gimmes." And they say to God, "Now, God please give me this and give me that and I want you to do this for me and do that for me. In other words God, I'm cracking the whip and I want you to jump when I crack. I want you to obey my will. Lord, I want you to do this for me, I want you to do that." And most people are trying to give God the orders and tell God what they want Him to do.

Now, Madame Chiang Kai-shek's mother taught her this. She said the reason people don't get answers to prayers, they're trying to get God to obey their will instead of praying meekly and humbly and asking God, "Show me thy will, O God, that I may know what You want me to do."

Now, actually, we should do both my friends. In the main, we should ask God to show us His will because you can't get an answer to prayer until you know it. Actually, faith and getting an answer to prayer, faith itself is merely that assurance that what God has promised He will do, that God will perform exactly as He has said He would, that God's Word is good. God is one who never breaks His word. If God ever gives His word, He keeps it.

Do you know that in the Bible there are thousands and thousands of promises. God has promised to do this for you, that for you, the other thing under different conditions. God knows as the Bible says that we are dust. God knows that we're helpless, we're human. We are not sufficient unto ourselves as some people seem to believe. That's why this world is so filled with emptiness and heartaches and headaches and pains and sufferings and poverty and everything wrong. Because people have thought they were sufficient unto themselves. They have thought they didn't need God. And they have pulled away from God. They have shut God out of the picture. God's mind is the only mind that really knows what is good for us. And the evidence of that is to just to look around the world at the squalor, the poverty, the suffering, the fears, the worries, the empty

troubled lives, the unhappiness that you see all over this world. It has come from people that have cut themselves off from God, that have decided that they didn't need God, they didn't need any help from Him. The thought that the human mind is all-sufficient to work out its own ideas. And what do we see in the world? Well, the customs, the manners, the ways that men have worked out. Doing the things that seem right to a man. Now, apparently men are not capable of knowing exactly what is right, because it has not led to the right result. God alone knows the thing that will lead to the result that is good for us and we should seek His wisdom, His knowledge, His understanding, because we need it in order that we can learn the way to happiness and to peace and to prosperity to the full, abundant life of being really happy and joyful all the time which we should be. We should be in the very bloom of health, we should be, as they say, right on top of the ball all the time just vigorous and energetic and enjoying life to the full -- that's what God intended. We could but we just don't seem to know the way. And we're too stubborn and too rebellious to follow the way when God shows us.

Now, the first thing that Madame Chiang Kai-shek's mother told her is, "You pray and ask God to show you His will."

Because do you know that God's will for you is not your discomfiture, not unhappiness or unpleasantness for you, but your happiness, your prosperity, your joy, your peace, everything that you really want down in your heart. The things that people really want -- of real peace and happiness and joy -- those are the good things that God wants you to have but the trouble is we're running right away from them, running in the opposite direction and that's why we never catch up with them. We're trying to take happiness. Happiness you can't take. Happiness you have only as you give it. Happiness comes from giving and not from taking. Not very many people know that. How many people on this earth have ever really learned that? How many really believe that? Not very many. And

those that believe it don't practice it. They still reach out and try to take it. They do the thing that seems right to them and it always boomerangs. It has a kick-back. They get a little thrill a little kick now, but they find they have injured themselves and it reacts later and they pay too big a price for what they got. It doesn't pay. It's not a good bargain.

Now, the Bible gives us instruction in how we should live to be happy. And in the Bible God realizes how helpless we are and how much we need His help. And do you know that He has promised so many things, everything that you might need is promised somewhere in the Bible. And you find where God has promised something and when you're in need and really need it, if you obey God, you can ask Him. You can look up and say now God Almighty, my Father in Heaven, you have promised. You know you can actually say to God, "I hold you to it. I expect you to keep your word. I expect you to keep your promise. You promised it. It's in the Bible, it's for me because the Bible is for me. If your commands are for me to obey your promises are for me to receive." You can say that to God. I wouldn't want to say it impudently, of course. You can say it in reverence, but you can say it full confidence. And God will never go back on His Word. But there are some other conditions you need to know that you'll read in this booklet -- "What Is Faith?" You better write in for that. I tell you if you'll write in for it there are hundreds of you that will find why you have not been getting an answer to prayer.

Well, I mentioned the other day for instance: incurable diseases. And people are raising funds for this fund, that fund and this foundation and that foundation that the doctors can go into more research for incurable diseases and things the doctors just scratch their heads they don't know anything about. But they're trying to learn something about some of these new and incurable diseases -- raising funds, millions of dollars in the hope that some day they can begin to save someone.

And how many people do you find where the money of the family, their lifesavings and everything it's all gone on doctor and hospital bills? Where if they had known that God had promised to heal them and He's promised and you can hold Him to His promise provided you observe His conditions which most of you haven't been doing and provided you understand how and when God has promised and that He hasn't really promised how or when and provided you'll trust Him until He does and know what faith really is and living faith and know what it is, you could have saved all that money many of you that have spent all that you had on the doctors.

Like the woman that came and touched the hem of Jesus' garment. She had been going for ten or eleven years to the doctors and she'd spent all she had on them and was not any better but rather grown worse. But when she just the hem of Jesus' garment in faith believing she was healed. Jesus turned around. He didn't say that your touching my garment healed you. He didn't say, that there was anything mysterious or hocus-pocus or any superstition about it. He said, "Daughter... thy faith hath made thee whole." And He usually said, "Go, and sin no more." Oh, what would it be worth if you just knew that you could save all that money and just go to God and be healed. What a wonderful thing it is.

I don't mean that we don't need doctors because I tell you, we're always breaking nature's laws and we do need doctors to tell us how we ought to live and how to obey the rules of health and what to eat and how to avoid doing the things that are wrong and very often when we're sick we actually doing something that brought it on, we're continuing and we need to quit doing it in other words we're breaking the physical laws of our body. It's the transgression of laws God set in motion, physical laws that operate in the body but just like the spiritual laws that you've broken that is sin as we call it, the transgression of God's Spiritual Law -- the condition to being forgiven and given the Holy Spirit and the promise of life eternal and salvation, the condition is that you repent which means you quit

breaking the laws of God. Now, then the same thing applies if you're going to have the forgiveness of the physical sin, the physical disturbance in your body that has brought on the sickness or the penalty that you're paying and suffering, the sickness, the disease whatever it may be. It's only the penalty of transgressed laws. Now, the idea is Jesus paid that penalty in your stead. Jesus who had a perfect body who had never violated a single law of health in all of His life. You know He did a lot of walking outdoors too. That's something most of us don't do, we do a lot of automobile riding outdoors but not very much walking.

VOICEOVER:

Herbert W. Armstrong will return in a moment, but first, this offer concerning literature of related interest.

Our crowded courts represent a legal system feeling the crush of its own weight. This system cannot prevent the breaking of laws. Since order in society begins in the mind of the individual, broken laws are symptomatic of broken character. Self discipline needs to be learned in the home and maintained throughout life. The late J. Edgar Hoover once said that, "A child who has been taught to respect the laws of God will have little difficulty respecting the laws of man." God's Law is founded on ten basic principles, the Ten Commandments, simple, direct and effective, the way to true justice.

For a clear explanation of these principles, request "The Ten Commandments". This free booklet shows how all ten of these time-tested principles can benefit you. Be sure to request "The Ten Commandments". Your copy is free of charge.

HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG:

Well, anyway, Jesus observed the laws of health, all of them. He ate the right food. He got enough fresh air, enough sunshine, deep breathing. He walked. He observed the laws of cleanliness. He got

enough sleep. And yet it didn't seem to take away from His health when He prayed all night once to God. And another time when He got up long before it was daylight, it must of been two or three in the morning and went out and prayed to God alone. And you know whenever He asked God for anything, He got it; His prayers were always answered, weren't they? He had complete power. But He said, "of myself I can do nothing". The Father that dwelled in Him did the Works. It was the power of God's Spirit. It was God doing it because Jesus was so close to His Father by prayer, He was so alert, His mind was so keen because He was in good health in every way and He had knowledge, He had everything He needed.

Well, listen, Jesus gave that perfect human body over to men to lash with stripes, with chunks of iron in them that broke His body open and His body was broken for you and for me before He went to the cross, before He took your sins and mine spiritually speaking that we might have salvation and the gift of eternal life, that we could be reconciled to God so we could receive from God the living God and the living Christ life eternal, before He went to the cross to pay the penalty of our sins, He submitted His perfect body to be beaten with stripes that we might be healed when we are sick. And how many of us are doing despite to everything He did by letting Him to have done that for nothing? Listen, when you do not go to God for healing when you're sick, you are just permitting Jesus to have done that for nothing. He did that in order that you could be healed. He suffered that you could be healed. Did He do it all in vain? Did He do it for nothing?

And sometimes we think, "Well, we mustn't bother God." Well, listen, you are just letting that whole thing go by default and all in vain because you don't go to God when you're sick. Well, we could have healing, we could have so many things, if we only realized it. It would save us so much money, it would make us so much happier. We'd be in so much better health. We'd be more vigorous. We could do and accomplish so much more if only we would do it.

But we do need to observe the laws of health. We do need to repent of the transgressions physically. And my friends, I want to tell you that nearly everyone of you are violating nearly every one of the laws of health every day all the time. We don't take care of our bodies like we should. We need to look into that a little more and we need to study and we need more doctors to tell us where we are in default, where we are at fault and where we're really sinning as it is now and what we ought to do. That should be the chief function of the physicians, but as one very busy doctor told me not so many years ago, he said, "Well, we physicians are just kept so busy in treating the people that already sick and diseased that we haven't had very much time to look into the matter of the causes of sickness and disease and ways of prevention and the laws and rules of health and on diet and things of that sort." And so most doctors have just been so busy they haven't had enough time to look into that like they should. Well, I tell you my friends, if more of us would begin to go to God for healing so they wouldn't have to be so busy treating us, you know maybe they'd have a little more time to look into these things. And I don't think they'd have to give up their profession, they'd just turn it around into a more profitable and a more lucrative direction for everyone of us.

Well now, I'm going to show you what Jesus said about praying again. We just started in that yesterday. And here I am taking up most of this broadcast or we won't get much further in this present program. But here we are in Matthew six verse five. I hope you got your Bible when I mentioned, I hope you have that pen and ink, you're going to want to write in for what I'm going to tell you again at the close of the program.

Jesus said, "...when you pray, you shall not be as the hypocrites: they love to stand and pray in the synagogues...". They want to be seen by men. They want beautiful phraseology, oh, what beautiful rhetoric and people will say, "Oh, what a wonderful, beautiful prayer that was." And they do love that praise from men.

No, but He said be not like them, but He said, "Thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy inner chamber and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret. And thy Father which seeth thee in secret shall recompense thee. And in praying use not vain repetitions as the Gentiles do." In other words, don't take a prayer that someone wrote and read it over and over and over and over -- a vain repetition.

You know, if you want to say something to your own human father, what would you think if someone else had to write out what you're going to say and you'd take it and you'd go and look down and address him father because you read it says that there? And then you'd read what someone else wrote for you and you'd speak to your father that way. Now, wouldn't that be a little bit silly? Would you expect to get in the kind of communion with your own human father that you like and that you need when you have a problem to take up with him like that? And yet do you know that a lot of people only read prayers that somebody else wrote or they take a prayer and memorize it and recite over and over and over and over.

When I was a little boy, I was taught, as a little tiny boy, I can remember it yet, I must have been two or three years old, to say, "Now I lay me down to sleep..." What, how did that go? "I pray the Lord, my soul to keep..." Wasn't that it? Yeah, most of you remember it better than I do. Well, I almost hope I forgotten it because just reciting something by rote, by memory, over and over same old words, that never meant anything to me. I used to recite that so fast so I could get it over with in a hurry and turn over and get it over with and go to sleep. To me it was a superstition. If I didn't do it, God might punish me. But if I did, maybe it pleased God, but it didn't mean a thing to me. Those words, I just rattled them over so rapidly that they didn't mean a thing, they lost all meaning.

Listen, prayer should be an intimate thing where you're really talking to God. God is real. He is your heavenly Father, if you have

repented and surrendered to Him and come to Him through Jesus Christ as your Savior. Learn to talk to Him and go into your private place.

Now, here at Ambassador College, many of the students, in fact I hope all of them look on me as sort of a father. And I don't want any title father as a religious title incidentally, because one is our Father religiously as a title and He's in Heaven but we do have our human fathers. But I'm sort of a second human father to them and a counselor and one to help them and very often they come to me with their private personal problems. Well, do you know they always want to go into a private room? And I have had to provide a room here in the college that is, well, where we're so near sound proof that we know we're not heard any place else: that they can confide whatever they wish and no one else will hear it.

Now, when they want to come to me for counsel and advice about a personal problem they want to come to me in a private place. Isn't that the way then that you would want to go to God, with your own private problems, with your personal troubles and problems and things that you need to take up with Him? You want to pray to Him for other people in their behalf. I don't mean against them. But you wouldn't want the other people around or anyone hearing you do it.

So, Jesus said go into this private, this secret chamber, and shut the door and avoid these vain repetitions or something that someone else wrote down for you. Then He said, "After this manner therefore pray you..." He didn't memorize this and recite it over and over and over and over like people do. He didn't say all of you recite this in unison in Church but rather the Bible says that in the Church one person must speak at a time and anything more than that is confusion, it's a Babylon and God condemns it.

I Corinthians the fourteenth chapter -- one person is to speak at a time -- and yet in churches they take this very sample prayer that Jesus gave us and all pray it and let it go at that. He didn't say pray

this prayer, but He said, "After this manner therefore pray ye..." Why can't we read what He did say? Now, this is only a sample to show us how a prayer should be phrased and He started out, "Our Father, which art in Heaven..." We should address our prayers then to the Father, not to Christ, but to the Father, but we are to ask everything we ask in the name of Jesus Christ that is we take His authority. He has given us authority to act for Him. We are now the body of Christ, the same Spirit that acted and moved in Jesus Christ is acting and moving in us now and living in us, it's the same Power. We're to take the very Power that Jesus exercised. He delegates to us power of attorney to take His name and use it. So take His name and ask the Father in His name. And whatsoever we ask the Father in His name, the Father will do in order that the Father may be glorified in the Son. And it glorifies God in His Son Jesus Christ when we do that.

Now, so we address the Father who is in Heaven, "Hallowed it be thy Name..." Oh, we are to begin by honoring God's name, not desecrating it and we're not to take it in vain by vain repetition by praying all the time... Of course Lord isn't God's name, but I've heard people just say Lord about every fourth or fifth word in a prayer. That is religious profanity. I know they don't mean it, they don't realize it. I don't think God will perhaps hold them accountable for what they don't know but certainly if we know better we should quit it.

Now, the next, "Thy kingdom come..." God's Kingdom is God's Government. God's Kingdom is God's Family. And notice the Kingdom of God is the Gospel Jesus preached. Why have they tried to do away with that teaching? Why have they had to try to do away with Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is not some intangible thing inside of you. The Kingdom of God is not some fluffy-fluff up in the sky somewhere that doesn't amount to anything. The Kingdom of God is not the Church. The Kingdom of God is not the British Empire. The Kingdom of God is something that God is

going to setup. It's the Government of God, it's the Family of God which we can be born into. But it is a reigning, governing, ruling Family and that Family is ruled by its Father -- God the Father. Oh, God help us to understand. Now, we're to pray for that Kingdom to come. It can come to you, now, but the Kingdom visibly setup on earth, will not come until the second coming of Christ.

Then the next thing, "Thy will be done..." If God's Kingdom is here. If His Kingdom has taken up in your heart, so that you'll surrender to be begotten as a citizen of it now, you will be doing His will, not your own. And then again: "as in heaven, so on earth..." It is done in Heaven.

"Give us this day our daily bread." You look to God to supply your need so then you can next now begin to ask God for the things you need after you have asked that God will help you to obey Him, help you to let Him reign and rule over you, that you live by every word of God. And you can't do that without asking Him to open the Bible to your understanding, that you can understand it, read every word of it, you're to live by every word of it.

Then you ask Him to forgive you, next, of your sins, your debts, as you have forgiven others. If you don't forgive others, God will not forgive you. But you need to daily ask God to forgive you. For you're doing many things every day that are not right. And anything that is not right is contrary to the laws of God.

And then, "Bring us not into temptation..." And the real Greek of that is: "Thou wouldst not be bringing us into temptation..." , because God tempts no man. "But deliver us from evil or the evil one." So you ask Him then to deliver you to help you to overcome and be an overcomer.

And then He continues, "If you forgive not men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will not forgive you..." If you forgive them He will but if you forgive them not, He will not forgive you.

Well, we have to break off there. I'd hope we would get a little farther. Write in for that booklet on faith.

Now, tell me first the call letters of the station to which you're listening, there's no charge.

*Please send comments, questions, problems, typo's, etc.
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