

**Our Father...
(Who is God?)
Matt 6.9**

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name

Our Father...

Jesus takes prayer and puts it in the context of a family relationship.

As the true Father, God is the one who cares for us, provides for us and protects us.

Our relationship to God as our Father defines our relationships with other Christians as our brothers and sisters.

...in heaven

People in ancient times didn't really think that God lived in the sky, anymore than we love people with a muscle in our chest.

When the Bible talks about "heaven" it's talking about God's space, as opposed to our space, not God's location somewhere in our space-time universe. The question is, do God's space (heaven), and our space (earth), ever intersect? And if so, how and when?

There really are only three options.

Option 1 – Heaven and Earth are very different spaces and never touch.

Maybe a God set the universe in motion, but if he did he's left us alone to get on with it.

We're on our own, so make the best of it.

This is called Deism.

Option 2 – Heaven and Earth are the same space, just two different ways of talking about it.

God is everywhere, and everywhere is God. Or, God is everything and everything is God.

Very popular today (Oprah, The Secret)

This is called Pantheism

But it can't account for evil. There is no good or bad, only what is.

Option 3 – Heaven and Earth overlap and interlock in a number of different ways.

This is the Biblical view of reality. God created the universe, so it is separate from him, but then he stuck around to enjoy it and nurture it.

Hallowed be your name

When the Bible talks about God's "name," it's a way of talking about his character; who he is. (Psalm 9.10)

When something is "hallowed" it is treated as holy, as different from other things, set apart for a special use.

When we pray "hallowed be your name," what we're saying to God is something like, "Enable us to give you the unique place that your character and nature deserve."