

## PRAYER

Many a thoughtful Christian when considering the providence of God will often wonder what role does prayer play in a Christians life?

Scriptures teach that God's plan is definite and fixed and not subject to revision. God actively controls human history ...

Acts 17:26

*and He made from one [man] every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined [their] appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation,*

... and God actively controls individual lives ...

1 Samuel 2:6-7

*"The LORD kills and makes alive; He brings down to Sheol and raises up. "The LORD makes poor and rich; He brings low, He also exalts.*

### So Why Pray?

Some may reason that if God is going to do whatever He wills to do, what's the point of prayer? Whatever is going to happen will happen no matter what, right?

Well, let's examine the Word of God concerning prayer.

### God Commands Us To Pray

James 5:16

*Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.*

God commands us to pray and teaches us that prayer has value ... that's enough reason for me, but we'll continue anyway. One may still reason in their mind, why? Why does God command prayer if He reigns sovereign?

Prayer is the *means* by which God accomplishes His will. Prayer does not change what God has purposed to do. That's why prayer should be uttered, for without it, the desired result will not come to pass.

We see then that prayer is *not* a means of self stimulation ... a method of creating a positive mental attitude within ourselves to accomplish or do the thing we want done. Rather, we see something much more significant with prayer.

## **Prayer Creates Within Ourselves A Right Attitude In Respect To God's Will.**

Prayer is not a matter of us trying to get God to do our will, but prayer is a means by which we demonstrate our concern that God's will be done. As Jesus taught us what we should pray...

Matthew 6:10-11

*'Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread.*

We seek God's will to be done before we ask for our needs. The believer who prays should know that our wise, good and powerful God will not necessarily give us the things we ask for or want, but will give us the things we need as it pleases Him.

## **We Are To Be Persistent In Prayer**

Luke 11:9-10

*"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. "For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened.*

Persistence in prayer makes it apparent that our petition is important to us as it is to God. All prayers are answered by God in accordance to His sovereign will. That means everything we ask for is not always given. Paul prayed three time for his thorn in the flesh to be removed and Jesus three times to the Father to remove the cup of death by crucifixion. In both cases God in His infinite wisdom granted the more needful thing.

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

*And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.*

## **Types of Prayer in the New Testament**

Petitionary: We are seeking something for ourselves

Intercessory: We are seeking something for others

Confidentory: We are confiding with God on intimate personal issues

General: All other forms of prayer including corporate prayer.