

Does Prayer Accomplish Anything?

Prayer is to some degree a component of nearly every religion. But does it benefit the one who prays? The answer is that it depends on who is praying, to whom one is praying and for what one is praying. It should be clear that the writer is a Biblical Christian and, therefore, this analysis is unabashedly from that perspective. There are many religions and beliefs in the world today, and adherence to most of these include some form of prayer or other evidence of reverence to a “higher” authority, or “deity”. In many of these religions, that higher authority may or may not be the true Creator God, the author of the Holy Bible. However, the so-called Christian leadership of the current world-wide ecumenical movement, while claiming belief in the One Creator God, would have us believe that all faiths lead to heaven, as long as they are truly believed. In effect, they would have us believe that the God is able to manifest Himself in each of the many worshipped “deities.” This is blatant HERACY and contrary to biblical teaching!! But, of course, if you accept this, your path through this life will be made easier. It is the classic earthly adage that one must go along in order to get along! If that’s biblical, why didn’t Jesus go along with the establishment? He could have saved Himself a great deal of suffering!

Does prayer and worship of any of these various deities bring forth benefits to the faithful of these religions? It would seem so, otherwise why would anyone continue in these various beliefs? All religions that continue to attract worshipers must provide some amount of comfort and answered prayer or they would soon be abandoned. History, both secular and biblical, is replete with evidences of many forms of idol worship, which had to have been very attractive and rewarding. Scripture describes various forms of idol worship so enticing that even God’s people, the Israelites, repeatedly and knowingly abandoned the true God who miraculously saved them out of Egypt and fed them for 40 years in the desert. The power of the idols was such that even though the people retained the God of Abraham as their main God, there were long periods when they also

worshipped the idols acquired from neighboring tribes. Even many of the temple priests, the ordained descendants of Aaron, kept figures of idols for secret “after hours” worship.

In order to offer an opinion regarding the topic question, it may simplify things if we divide those who pray into two different categories. For purposes of this discussion, we will put all those who worship and pray in accordance with all belief systems other than biblical Christianity, into one category, and those who worship Jesus and pray in strict accordance with the Holy Bible, into the other category. This category of belief is as the Bible states, that Christ Jesus was born of a virgin, lived, died on the cross, was buried and rose again on the third day. In having done so, He made possible the forgiveness of sins, and thus Jesus is our Lord and Savior, and only through faith in Him and Only in Him are souls saved to eternal life. That, as stated, is Christian doctrine given to us through the Holy Bible, which was authored by God in its entirety. Furthermore, God’s Word commands in Deuteronomy 4:1 not to alter His Word, and Revelation 21:19 tells us that anyone who adds to or takes away from the Book will have his or her name removed from the Book of Life. That means they are not saved but are condemned to hell. From this overly brief description of Christianity, it is evident why it must be a faith completely separate from all other beliefs, even in the manner and effectiveness of prayer.

With these two categories identified as sources of prayer, we can now discuss the effectiveness of prayer. As noted above, there must be something beneficial in every one of these religious beliefs or they would not attract followers to prayer. Now we might pose a secondary question in order to help answer the first. What kinds of benefits, if any, are derived from prayers, first with reference to all non-Christian faiths? In order to answer this question, we must understand that from a Biblical perspective, these are all false religions, originated and propagated by false teachers. Scripture also makes it very clear that Satan is a real personage and by the permissive will of the Creator God, Satan rules the world and is the father of all lies and all false religions as set forth by the false teachers. Our Creator God has permitted this because He has given man his own sovereign will, or freedom of choice, which God will not violate. Man must come to

Him through Jesus willingly, through his own choice. What choice would man have if God had not allowed Satan to formulate these alternative beliefs? In the Holy Scripture, God has provided ample evidence to convince anyone genuinely seeking the truth, to believe in Jesus as Lord God and Savior. To any who are seeking Him, God will provide as much of the Light of Truth as is asked for with sincerity. The initial basic evidence of the existence of the Creator God is all around; it is all of creation itself. Beyond that, if one will simply and sincerely ask for further evidence, it will be given.

There is a spiritual head behind every false religion. The fallen angels and evil spirits are Satan's army who officiate in this capacity, as well as the behind-the-scene influences of every government and worldly organizations on earth. They each have substantial, though limited, directive and spiritual powers. It is through these powers that they are able to not only corrupt governments but also to answer prayers and grant benefits to the adherent of the false religions. His or her mission is to keep every believer of a false religion or any other type of false precept, satisfied that theirs is a sacred beneficial belief system. There is no end to Satan's innovative powers. He will formulate and place one of his agents over whatever new belief that will comfort and satisfy any and all groups, circumstances, persuasion, desires, or preferences, so long as none can lead to a true Christian faith. His favorite creation must surely be a religious system which so closely resembles genuine Christianity that only the very elect can recognize it as false. This is amply evident by the great variety of religions and pseudo Christian cults that have risen to popularity over the past century. Again, given that there are satanic powers behind every one of these belief systems, these powers are eager and capable of answering prayer requests to the extent they are able. Some answers appear quite impressive and beneficial from a world perspective regarding wealth and fulfillment of carnal desires. These spirits even follow closely the lives of their victims, and when a loved one dies they can even mimic the departed one's voice and convey some very convincing "messages from the dead" that seem quite authentic. This power appears to manifest in the séances and other necromancy types of sorceries. Through these evil spirits, there is often even the promise of some form of eternal life. Of course, these spirits all know Jesus and the True Way to eternal life, and they know that their promises are lies, but that

is the whole of their purpose, to offer false hope while preventing salvation. By “faithfully” answering prayers for carnal benefits, they achieve intense loyalty from their adherents, most of who remain with them to the “bitter” end.

In summary, it may be said with a large degree of assurance, that every non-Christian religion, belief, or faith on earth has adherents who derive some persuasive amount of benefit from their choices. If this be true, than either our Creator God answers these prayers or some other entity capable of such doings is responsible for that work. Our God is not in the business of answering prayers prayed to idols or prayers originating out of false religions. Scripture makes it clear that Satan and his agents have that power and use it in fulfilling God’s commitment to providing man with the choice to choose eternity with Him, or with Satan.

Now what about Christian prayer? Everyone who has even cracked the Book knows that God says that He does answer our prayers. Those who have read and believe His Word know that He does. In the earlier years of my short life as a believer, I felt compelled and did write two other papers on prayer, both, of course from the Christian perspective. With this in mind, I’ll try not to be more repetitive than necessary in conveying some additional observations that have since come to me. Also, if this seems to be less than what is deserving of such an important Christian blessing, I invite you to the previous writings, which can be found on the web www.christianmusings.com.

What has prompted this third paper on prayer is the relatively recent resurrection and proliferation of the false pharisaic belief that wealth is a validation of faith, and, therefore, evidence that eternal life has also been provided. How natural and human is this wishful thinking, that anyone who has obtained wealth, must have been blessed with it by the Lord as a reward for whatever has been the nature of his or her faith and works. At the time of Jesus, it had been a long established part of the Pharisaic belief and teachings that wealth was a blessing from the Lord, and along with it came the blessing of eternal life. That is why the disciples were so amazed when Jesus spoke of how

difficult it was for a rich man to enter heaven. They had been taught that only the rich were blessed enough to qualify for heaven.

Today we have the “blab it and grab it” preachers who say that if you pray for wealth God will give it to you. If He doesn’t, then you have not prayed in true faith. Sending these frauds some money is claimed to be helpful in expediting God’s delivery. These radio and TV spinners of lies are very persuasive to tens of thousands of gullible souls who haven’t the slightest understanding of God’s Word, but assume that because those charlatans call themselves pastors and quote Scripture, their messages must be valid. For several generations the public educational system has had great success in diminishing education and advancing indoctrination, with evolution as its cornerstone and Christianity as a forbidden word. As it has been with public education, so it has been also to a large degree with what is called “Christian education.” The world has entered the so-called Christian education curriculum just as effectively and pervasively as the world has managed demonized biblical Christianity. Putting all of this into a relevant perspective, it is not difficult to understand how even relatively sincere professing Christians can fall for such perverted preaching. What’s called the Christian church has also been dumbed down through lack of sound, honest, competent biblical teaching. Proverb 29:18 tells us, “...where there is no vision, the people perish.” The Hebrew word for vision also means revelation. What is the source of all truthful vision or revelation? It is the Holy Bible!! Can you not see a great deal of “perishing” going on today? Pray and prepare so that you will not be one of its victims.

Scripture assures us that God answers the prayers of those who are His own. If you are indeed one of His own, your prayers are answered whenever you pray a prayer that is in accordance with His will. It will, however, be answered in His way, and in His appointed time. He knows what is best for you, far better than you do. Therefore, His answer may not even resemble or be the exact opposite of what you prayed for, but it will be what you needed in His eyes, not necessarily in yours. Prayers to false gods are answered more quickly and in accordance with one’s desires. That’s what makes them so insidiously more attractive. It’s because Satan sees profit for his agenda by catering to one’s natural

desires; however, he will never answer a prayer in a manner, which is in one's spiritual best interest. He knows we all want instant gratification and we want it our way. His answers will generally be of that nature. This keeps His own coming back to him and farther from Jesus. If you pray and your prayers are answered as you hoped, Praise the Lord! But before you glory in your success make very certain that you have sound biblical Christian doctrine under your belt and deep in your heart, with a faith focused fully on, and only on, Christ Jesus. That is the only way to be sure that it is not that other power who is answering your prayer. If that is your true spiritual state, Father God will always answer your prayers in accordance with His will and your very best interest regardless of what you prayed for. Remember that Romans 8:28 guarantees this.