

None of Your Prayers Will Ever Change God's Mind

I am very pleased to tell you this. God will not answer your prayers, because He cannot change His mind no matter how sincerely or righteously or often you pray. Does this mean that prayers do no good and are not to be answered? No!! God forbid! Prayers are the redeemed Christian's most powerful weapon against all in this world, both seen and unseen.

Scripture makes it abundantly clear that both worshipping prayer and petitioning prayer are vital components to every redeemed Christian's life. Jesus Himself set the example for this. Scripture described Him praying to the Father regarding all things that He said or did. Those who become born-again Christians are given that same privilege along with an assurance that their prayers will be heard and answered.

Well then, how can our prayers have no effect on His decisions regarding our concerns? I didn't say that. I simply said that prayers won't change His mind. By now, the biblically knowledgeable Christians may have recognized what I am "getting" at. In this case, my mission here is to re-remind them of this fact because it's one of those things that seem to "slip away" when we read so often in Scripture of God having changed His mind, such as in His dealings with Abraham and Moses. For those who find the title of this study disturbing and contrary to their belief, I pray that what follows will be both edifying and comforting.

The answer to all questions or doubts regarding what the title of this study claims, is found in just one word that describes an attribute of God. It is "omniscience". Omniscience simply means that God knows everything!! It means that there is nothing that God doesn't know, absolutely nothing. That includes all things past, present and future, to the minutest detail. It doesn't take much exposure to the Bible, or to discussion with biblically knowledgeable believers in Christ to hear of God's omniscience and to understand what it means. Nevertheless, there remains an intuitive, or perhaps subconscious doubt that results in our placing some form of limit to that absolutely limitless knowledge of God. This is especially true of His foreknowledge of things that

have not yet happened. As creatures of His creation, He gave us great abilities to examine and understand the present. He also gave us the power to remember, that is to continue to know things of the past. However, He limited our powers of foresight to a very short elementary level. Perhaps that is why it is so difficult for us to understand how He knows exactly what we will do before we do it.

The much used analogy of the “parade” will have to suffice as we try to understand this. If we accept the premise that life is like a passing parade, and that we are each spectators, perhaps it will help us to understand how this thing works. To begin with, we must accept the fact that the whole parade of life as it passes by was assembled by God and extends from the beginning of creation to the end of the millennium and beyond. That shouldn’t be difficult if we believe that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God. Otherwise how would we ever have known anything about our origin, and about the distant future? Those who don’t believe that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God, have bigger problems than this issue of understanding how prayer works! As spectators of this passing parade, we see clearly what is passing by at the present time, and also have a pretty good recollection of some portions of have already passed by our particular vantage point on the sidewalk adjacent to the “street” along which the parade is passing. Straining as hard as we can, that portion of the parade that has not yet reached our position or field of vision remains obscure and essentially unknowable.

However, as we have been told, God can be both inside or outside of time and space. Symbolically, we might perceive that He is looking down from His “helicopter” where He is able to see the entire parade. I won’t delve into them here, but it is the awesome accuracy of the already fulfilled prediction, that first led me to believe in the Word and then to Christ Jesus as their fulfillment, and as the principal theme of the entire Book.

Now, if we can fully recognize what omniscience means as it pertains to God, if we can fully apprehend it, and incorporate it into our moment-by-moment appreciation of our incredible God, we can understand how it is impossible for Him to change His mind. If it was possible, then He would not be omniscient.

In claiming the omniscience of God, Scripture reveals to us that He knows everything, and that there is nothing that He doesn't know. Obviously, everything means that nothing is excluded. Therefore, it applies to the future as well as to the present and the past. When He created the heavens and the earth, there had been no past, because time was a part of what He created. Time did not exist until He spoke it into existence when He said the words in Genesis 1:1 "*In the beginning...*" Thus time had its beginning simultaneously with the utterance of those words by our Creator. We cannot speak of any past before time was created because the word connotes the necessity of there having been a time element before time was created. The answer to this dilemma is that God existed in an eternal now.

We like to say that He continues to exist outside of time and space. Because the Triune Godhead is Spirit, the space aspect of this description is readily understood. In claiming that He knows everything and that nothing is excluded from His knowledge, we must accept the fact that He, at the moment of creation knew you would be reading this, and every other minute detail of your life, including the thoughts and actions you will experience years from now. He has known since creation, every prayer you ever have, or ever will utter. As previously noted, every infinitesimal details of everything that has ever occurred since creation to the end of the earth and beyond was already known to Him at that very instant of creation. However, He neither planned nor does He in any way directly orchestrate your thoughts or actions. They come from your God-ordained free will or volition. This would violate the free will with which He blessed us. Nevertheless, He did, at the beginning, and continues to incorporate into your life various conditions, circumstances and human agencies through whom you are offered opportunities to know Him to serve Him and to be redeemed. Perhaps, this study is one of them.

Finally, to the issue of prayers changing God's mind. It should become obvious, and readily understood, that this is all true due to His omniscience. That is by His having already known about every prayer you would ever conceive, even before He "got things

going”, He knew what your needs would be and what you would ask for. These were at that very moment incorporated in His plan for you as one of those who would believe in Jesus. As one who could rightly call Him Father because of your faith and commitment to our Lord and Savior, and because you prayed seriously, with reverence and singleness of mind, your prayers would have a powerful influence on what He spoke into existence. You see, your prayers didn’t change His mind, because at the moment of creation your prayers had already been factored in, in precisely the way He chose to address them. Had you not prayed those prayers, then the outcome in your life would have been different. It would have been different in ways less beneficial to your life. If we can attribute to Him such human emotions as gladness and appreciation, I am sure that some such feelings may have existed in His most precious loving heart when He made that assessment of your prayers.

Certainly what else He knew, as He saw the depths of depravity into which most of His creation would descend, must have caused that dear heart the godly equivalent of profound sadness and grief. Therefore, we can boldly and truthfully state of the redeemed, those who are saved to eternal life through Christ, that their past, present and future prayers have all been heard, their merits judged, and their resulting influences fully expressed in the believer’s lives! Again, this applies to all of the prayers said and not yet said, for in His omniscience, He has already heard them, even though they have yet to be even thought of. Therefore it should go without saying that prayers not offered are opportunities lost to have influenced God’s plan. It’s a strange and mysterious thing to consider and well beyond our comprehension to understand, yet it is so, because He said it is so, and that as all that we really need to know.

Notice this issue of answered prayers has been expressed in the context of redeemed Christians only. God committed Himself to answer all prayers of those whose right it is to call Him Father. Only those who are born-again by grace through faith in our Savior, and strive to be obedient to Him as Lord, have the right to call the Father God, “Father.” He is God, but He is not the Father of unsaved souls, and He has made no commitment to answer the prayers of those who are not His sons and daughters. While in some instances

He may do so, it grieves me to say that most of the prayers of non-believers, if answered, are answered by spirit entities far removed from our Creator God. They are Satan agents who have limited powers given to them by him to deceive lost souls into false beliefs and assurances.

The idol worship of olden days remains as effective as it ever was, and even more so, as Satan and his minions learn more and more about the art of deception and seduction. They hear prayers and answer them fairly quickly and often in accordance with what is prayed for, if it offers benefits to Satan's purpose of preventing salvation. The stone and wooden idols of the past, as well as the idolizing of Hollywood and the sports celebrities of today appears to be very satisfying to man's carnal desires. It is to the extent that the demons assigned to each are empowered to "help" in their worshipping. Today anything that keeps us from Jesus can be considered an idol provided by Satan to keep us dumb and happy, but absent of salvation.

I pray that something in this will encourage the reader to look more deeply and reverently into God's Holy word to discover its truths and to better understand and appreciate Him for who He is and what He would have of each of us.