

QUESTIONS ABOUT PRAYER

Part 2

12/4/11 PM

If everything that happens in according to God's predetermined plan, why pray?

God knows what is best and what He is going to do.

So what difference does prayer make?

1. God wants us to ask.

There are seven Greek words used for prayer in the Bible.

All of them in various ways mean to ask.

a. Proseuchomai (proseu, comai)

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.

James 5:17-18 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he *prayed earnestly* that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months.¹⁸ Then he *prayed* again, and the sky poured rain and the earth produced its fruit.

b. Aiteo (aivte, w)

James 1:5 But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

Aiteo has the idea of asking strongly.

In classical Greek it had the idea of demanding

c. Deomai (de, omai)

1 Thessalonians 3:10 as we night and day keep *praying most earnestly* that we may see your face, and may complete what is lacking in your faith?

This word can have the idea of begging

d. Erotao (evrwta, w)

John 14:16 "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever;

Erotao has the idea of making a request

e. Parakaleo (parakale, w)

2 Corinthians 12:8 Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me.

To summon to one's aid, call upon for help

f. Entugchano (evntugca, nw)

Romans 8:27 and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to *the will of God*.

Romans 8:34 who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

To ask with a sense of urgency and intensity

In this case to ask for someone else

g. Hiketeria (i`kethri, a)

Hebrews 5:7 In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety.

To plead

All of the words for prayer are asking God for something in one way or another.

To ask, petition, request, beseech, intercede, entreat, etc.

God wants us to ask Him for want we want and need.

2. But why pray? If it is God's will won't it happen anyway?

a. The Bible teaches that God has predetermined everything.

All our days

Psalm 139:16 Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Your book were all written The

days that were ordained *for me*, When as yet there was not one of them.

Job 14:5 "Since his days are determined, The number of his months is with You; And his limits You have set so that he cannot pass.

Christ's crucifixion

Acts 2:23 this *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death.

Acts 4:27-28 "For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, ²⁸ to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur.

Our salvation

Ephesians 1:11 also we have obtained an inheritance, having been *predestined* according to His purpose *who works all things after the counsel of His will*

Acts 13:48 When the Gentiles heard this, they *began* rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 . . . God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.

Cf John 6:44-45, 65

Our good works

Ephesians 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

False teachers

Jude 1:4 For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace

of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

The subject of God's sovereignty and human choice is an emotional issue.

Terms like predestination and election seem unfair to many.

If God has a plan worked out in all its details, it will happen anyway, won't it.

What's the purpose of praying for loved ones, the sick, the unsaved, or for my own needs?

This is a confusing the sovereignty of God with fatalism.

b. God's sovereignty and foreknowledge have worked your prayers into His eternal plan.

Daniel 9:1-3, 16-17

Daniel knew of God's plan so he prayed in accordance with God's will.

Matthew 9:37 Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. ³⁸ "Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest."

1 Timothy 2:1-4 First of all, then, I urge that entreaties *and* prayers, petitions *and* thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, ² for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. ³ This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴ who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

God uses our prayers as a part of His plan

James 4:2 . . . You do not have because you do not ask.

God's sovereignty does not preclude human choices and actions.

Our prayers are a definite part of God's plan.

c. The same Bible that teaches about God's predestination teaches that God works through human agency to fulfill His plan.

God causes all things that happen, but He does so in such a way that He somehow upholds our ability to make willing, responsible choices that have real and eternal consequences for which we are held accountable.

It is an antinomy.

God uses our prayers.

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God uses our witness

Romans 10:14 How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?

Romans 11:33-36 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! 34 For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, OR WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR? 35 Or WHO HAS FIRST GIVEN TO HIM THAT IT MIGHT BE PAID BACK TO HIM AGAIN? 36 For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him *be* the glory forever. Amen.