



Christian Questions

TALK RADIO WITH A PURPOSE

You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:13

Dear Larry,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You wanted to know why we pray if we do not believe in praying for healing.

Prayer is one of the greatest privileges God has afforded his children. Prayer is the vehicle by which we may commune with our Heavenly Father in order to gain spiritual strength and wisdom. In fact, prayer is not only a privilege, but a necessity, commanded as indispensable to our Christian growth.

In the Scriptures various types of prayer are brought to our attention. Foremost among these are prayers of thanksgiving and adoration (Psalm 100). Prayers for God's mercy are also appropriate. The Scriptures urge all Christians to seek Divine forgiveness for their sins through the medium of prayer. The Apostle Paul speaks of this as going "boldly unto the throne of grace," there to obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need (Hebrews 4:16).

Although some pray for health, either for themselves or others, we must ask if the Bible justifies belief that such prayers should be answered. If God does answer these prayers at all, it is because the requests were in keeping with His will. God's people should have uppermost in mind and heart the desire that God's will, not theirs, be done in all their experiences. Jesus always sought to do his Father's will. When he was facing impending death in the Garden of Gethsemane "anguish and dismay came over him and he earnestly prayed, 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass me by. Yet not as I will, but as thou wilt!'" (Matthew 26:38-39) Jesus wanted the Divine will accomplished, regardless of what it meant to him.

The followers of Jesus have the privilege of suffering and dying with him. Paul spoke of being "crucified" with him, and he also wrote, "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." (Galatians 2:20, Philippians 1:29) Since we are called upon to follow in Jesus' footsteps, we know that it is not God's will to spare us from all hardship. Thus, as with Jesus, our chief concern should be that the LORD's will be done in our mortal bodies. The LORD might favor us for a time with certain earthly blessings, such as good health, but the burden of our prayers should not be for these, but for his will to be done.

Jesus enlarged upon the above point when he told his disciples that as long as they abided in him and his words were abiding in them, they could ask in prayer for whatever they desired and it would be granted (John 15:7). To abide in Christ means that his thoughts become our thoughts, and his plans our plans. If our wills have been wholly surrendered to God, through Christ, we will have no will of our own, hence our prayers will not be requests for what we want, but only for those things which are in harmony





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with the will of God. One of the gifts that our Heavenly Father is pleased to give us is the holy Spirit (Luke 11:13). To be filled with the Spirit of God means to have his thoughts dominate our thinking, and for our lives to be conformed by those thoughts. If we truly abide in Him we will not be asking God for temporal blessings. We will only ask for blessings he has promised to give, so there will never be any question about one's prayers being answered.

Jesus gave his disciples a guideline for prayer in Matthew 6:9-13. This model prayer is best known among Christians as The Lord's Prayer. It begins by humbly honoring God's name and acknowledging his greatness. It then tells us to pray for God's plan to unfold, to petition for our basic needs, to ask for forgiveness while forgiving others who have sinned against us, and, lastly, to ask for God's protection and overruling in our lives. The prayer asks God for help, guidance, forgiveness and protection from evil influences. It is also important to note that the person petitioning God is seeking the Lord's will to be done in his life and is not seeking his own heart's desire. The petitioner must be prepared to receive an answer that may be contrary to his wishes. Additionally, he must be willing to grow and accept change in his life if God wills it. In every case, God's answers to prayers are directly dependent upon the heart attitude of the petitioner and, most importantly, God's will in relation to the circumstances. Therefore, connection and communication with God grow in proportion to the petitioner's dedication to God's will.

Why do we pray if we do not pray for physical healing? We pray because prayer is the Christian's spiritual food and lifeline to God. We receive spiritual strength and peace throughout our sacrificial walk when we connect with God through prayer.

"Therefore I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship." (Romans 12:1) "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your [spiritual] requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6-7)

We hope we have answered your question. Be sure to sign up for CQ Rewind at www.christianquestions.com. The service is free and will provide you with scriptural perspective on many questions and topics.

Sincerely,

Christian Questions Radio

