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Who Gets Their Prayers Answered?

Lamentations 3:37: *Who is there who speaks and it comes to pass, unless the Lord has commanded it?*



Many, many people pray. Are all those prayers answered or are most unheeded? Is there a prescribed formula for prayer? When should we pray? What should we pray about? Does the "universe" help seekers find? Are there right ways to pray that will get you an "in" and are there wrong ways to pray that will get you ignored? Stay with us as we tackle what promises to be a massive, important and life-changing topic!

James 5:16-18

 **Prayer and brain activity, *Science of Prayer*, CNN**

- *(Dr Newberg) Prayer activates many different parts of the brain. It affects our emotional parts of the brain, the logical parts of the brain, the parts that help us feel connected to our universe and to our God, and is therefore a buzz of activity that makes us feel energized, which is why I think it is such a powerful experience for people.*

So prayer, according to Scripture and according to science, is a deep and personal experience. It seems to indicate that we are "wired" to pray. How then should we approach this? Are all prayers appropriate?

 **You pray to you, *askteal@thespiritualcatalyst.com***

- *What are you praying to when you ask? You are praying to you. You are praying to the the source self that still exists, which is the larger, more expansive part of you. When you have an idea of God being outside of you, prayer becomes this movement of prostration. It's asking in such a way that you are giving the power over to something else, and there is the possibility that the "something else" might decide you are worthy enough to give it to you. That is not the way that real prayer works. When real prayer is done properly, you acknowledge the fact that you are the creator. You focus in such a pure way that you are allowing that god-force energy that is you to affect the fabric of your own reality.*

The Lord's Prayer is a template to teach us how to pray. Its purpose is not for us to repeat verbatim over and over again. Let's discuss what our "Prayer Priorities" should be when we review Jesus' example of prayer.

Prayer Priorities First: Glorify God, our Father - Matthew 6:9.

We are to revere Him, which is contrary to the last audio clip we heard. Romans 8:15 Isaiah 64:8: Humility is a huge part of this. Setting our attitude in this God-honoring way helps put our prayer into context.

 **I declare and decree, *Dr. Cindy Trimm***

- *I declare that the anointing of God breaks every yoke, opens every portal and assigns angels to reinforce me as I advance into new levels, new dimensions, new realms and territories. Let there be a breakthrough in the heavens. I tap into apostolic and prophetic veins. I shatter glass ceilings... I declare a breakthrough atmosphere is established... and decree that every bit of luke-warmness must be replaced with the fire and the zeal of God. Baptize me...let there be fire in my mouth as I advance in this prayer.*

What is the source for "decreeing" and "declaring?" Is that a scriptural approach to prayer? **Most sources point to the following text, spoken by one of Job's comforters: Job 22:28: (KJV) Thou shalt also **decree** <1504> a thing, and it shall be established unto thee: and the light shall shine upon thy ways.**

Decree: Strong's #1504: A primitive root; to cut down or off; (figuratively) to destroy, divide, exclude or decide:—cut down (off), decree, divide, snatch.

Should our prayers be where we "decree and declare" to God? **Jesus took a forceful approach: Matthew 17:20**



Faith as a mustard seed, *The Atheist Experience* #592

- *Let's talk about the systematic failure of prayer. If there is a God sitting around, maybe He is a little lazy and needs a reminder that things need fixing. People supposedly can pray to God and tell Him about his neglected duties. In fact, the Bible even confirms that. Matthew 17:20 (quoted). Isn't that powerful? Just a little bit of faith and prayer and anything you want will happen! I haven't heard of any mountains moving, so the conclusion is either no one in the world had faith the size of a grain of a mustard seed, or they just didn't see any mountains that needed moving. (laughing)*

Jesus' lesson here was not to have a teeny bit of faith. Contrarily, it was to have a faith that had enormous growth potential! Figuratively, your faith should be so strong it can move (figurative) mountains. Matthew 13:31-32: Also, Jesus was NOT saying God will give you whatever you want - we need to understand when his words are literal or symbolic.

Prayer Priorities Second: Prayer for the plan of God to unfold - Matthew 6:10.

God has a plan and we are to pray for it to unfold. Does my prayer make God unfold His plan any faster than He planned it to? No. But my prayer makes me aware that He has a plan and keeps me in harmony with Him. Jeremiah 23:5 Daniel 2:44: So, perspective is important when it comes to proper prayer. Matthew 18:2-4

Children's supernatural power, *Prayer at the Potter's house*, Bishop T.D. Jakes

- *(Child yelling out to the congregation) I decree and decree God, You granted your children supernatural strength and ability to fight a good fight of faith. I decree and declare they are qualified to share in Jesus' inheritance. I decree and declare they are firmly rooted, built up and established in the faith. I decree and declare they are a steward of good will. I decree and declare they are an ambassador for Christ; the light of the world.*

Decree and declare? Here is the context of the "decree command" that some use:

Job 22:1-5: There was a comforter telling Job that Job was far more evil than he really was. He advised that Job needed to repent of those things. **Another piece to the prayer puzzle - not all prayers are on the same footing!** James 4:1-3

What prompts answers to our prayers?

Belief yields answer, *askteal@thespiritualcatalyst.com*

- *The way to insure that a prayer offers you up results is to believe that it will. Everything will come according to your beliefs, and so your beliefs must shift if the prayer is to occur. The person - even in their aspect of praying to a god which exists outside of them - the person who trusts so fully that it is going to become (a reality) the minute they ask for it is the one that is going to line up with the results. That's just how it is. If you are praying for something you really believe can't happen, it can't happen. Yet again, not because the universe is not making it happen, but because you can't even put yourself in the vibrational space to receive it.*

Is it really only *belief* that brings answers? Proverbs 15:28-29: The modern day concept to "decree and declare" comes from this lesson. However, this was not a command from God, it was the advice of Eliphaz.

Once Eliphaz lectures Job on how evil he *thinks* Job must be, he then instructs Job to repent: Job 22:21-23, 27-28: ...but was this the correct advice? We will look at how God reacted to this action shortly.

Multiple streams of income, *Prayer at the Potter's house*, Bishop T.D. Jakes

- *(Child yelling out to the congregation) I decree and declare there is a hedge of protection around them! I decree and declare they will never be broke a day in their lives! I decree and declare that God will provide for them with wisdom, knowledge and understanding! I decree and declare that God will bless them with multiple streams of income at a young age! I decree and declare that God will bless them with multimillion dollar deals, invention and strategies!*

Prayer is not to *tell* God. Prayer is to open our hearts to *listen* to Him. The second part of the Lord's Prayer addresses this: *God's will be done, not our own.*



What was God's reaction to Job when he tried to decree to God? Job 38:1-4: (NRSV) (See Chapters 38, 39, 40) ¹Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind: ²Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? (Who gave you this counsel on what to do - they had no knowledge!) ³Gird up your loins like a man, I will question you, and you shall declare to me. ⁴Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding... God decrees and we listen. That was God's answer.

After being challenged by God, Job now sees the greatness of God and repents - not of evil living, but of his doubts: Job 42:1-6: Job heeded the wrong advice of his counselors.

Now God deals with Eliphaz: Job 42:7: This idea of decreeing to God by trying to admit things to God you hadn't actually done wrong and then proclaiming and announcing your changed heart with a "look at me now - I'm ready to get what's mine" attitude caused God's anger. So the text that declares we decree was in fact an example of what *not* to do! Here is the attitude of prayer to strive for - humility before God: Luke 18:9-14

What should motivate us to pray?

Prayer Priorities Third: Petition for basic needs - Matthew 6:11.

The prayer teaches us to ask for sustenance, but Jesus took it even higher. Matthew 4:4: Jesus taught us to really focus on our spiritual sustenance. It is the word of God that truly feeds us. 1 Timothy 6:8: We are to be content with simple, basic, humble means.



No such thing as not, askteal@thespiritualcatalyst.com

- *There is no vibrational anti-note in this universe. There is no such thing as "not" or "don't." Anything you are focused on will come into your experience. So in that kind of a circumstance, what you should be focused on, and in pure trust of, is the approved state - the final end state of what you're asking for as if it already is. So if you are praying for a relationship, put yourself in the space while you are praying for receiving that.*

This puts us in the center and not God.

A caller suggested: Romans 8:26 and Romans 12:12

We need to be patient in our tribulation - this does not tell us to pray for the tribulation to be removed. Prayer affords us the opportunity to give praise: Psalms 105:1-5: Wouldn't that make a great "To Do" list? Our attitude would change if we put things in the right perspective. Honor and glorify God in word, thought and deed and watch if your approach to the same exact difficulty rises to a new level. That is the power of prayer!



Study of 500 prayers, *Science of Prayer*, CNN

- *Study of 500 prayers in prayer books inside Johns Hopkins Hospital: 1/3 were prayers of thanks and gratitude; 1/3 were petitioning God in some way; 1/3 were both thanking and petitioning. The first important point to realize is there is a lot of thanks and gratitude! The second point to note was when we looked at the petitions we found they weren't asking for specific things. They were often for support, blessings and guidance in a much more general, psychologically supportive way in the requests they were making.*

It is not for us to determine the way God moves His hand, but it is for us to determine how we react to the way God moves His hand. Prayer brings us guidance: Luke 6:12-13 Prayer brings us deliverance: Hebrews 4:14-16 Prayer gives us the ability to participate in the lives of others: Luke 6:28 Philippians 1:2-6

What are the ingredients of acceptable prayer?

Here is an example of a proper declaration and decree - acceptable prayer is based in proper understanding: Psalms 2:1-7: This promise was already given in a prophecy and we shouldn't take credit for it. God's declaration and decree is that Jesus is His son. Remember, there is a difference between commanding and complying. Lamentations 3:37: We do have to ask and are told to come boldly to the throne of grace, but we must be bold in our humility.

Prayer Priorities Fourth: Being forgiven and forgiving - Matthew 6:12.



If I do not have a forgiving heart, I should not be receiving forgiveness. Isaiah 1:18: Even if we have been sinful but our heart is turning towards God, God will hear us. Ephesians 1:7: We will be accountable to be able to receive from God according to what we are willing to give to others. That's a big responsibility! **Humility as implied throughout our whole discussion is a basic key:** 1 Peter 5:6-9: We are to humble ourselves and not be humble because we are forced to be. **Living faithfully and righteously enables our prayers to be heard:** Psalms 32:1-8: David tells us that while hiding from his sins, he was self-destructing because he was not honest and humble. His guilt was only forgiven once David was willing to lay it before God and "catch up with" his own reality. God already knew of David's sins, but David had to acknowledge what he had done in order to move forward and be forgiven. **Based on humility we submit to God and resist evil:** James 4:7-10: Righteous prayers are God-focused and God-honoring and are in accordance with the will of God. There is an absolute privilege to this type of communication.

Prayer Priorities Fifth: Seeking God's overruling and protection - Matthew 6:13.

Can prayer change your life?

Peter 2:9

 **Don't believe they talk to God, *The Atheist Experience* 592**

- *Nothing fails like prayer! Nobody seems to be able to talk to God and in fact believers themselves don't really believe they can talk to God. When do you find true believers in hospitals? If they were true believers, they'd go to their minister or they'd go pray and have their disease cured!*

If the whole point of prayer was to get what I want, whenever I want it from the greatest power in the universe, then I could understand this perspective. However, prayer is there not to serve our will, but to change our life! John 17:8-9: So if we are God's, then we need to act like it. James 4:13-17: We can have intention in the context of God's will. We are not to command God but are instead to comply with His will.

 **Prayer and the limbic system, *Science of Prayer*, CNN**

- *Prayer also affects the emotional part of the brain, the part of the brain called the limbic system, because there are deeply emotional experiences for people. They have immense joy, immense love and immense compassion and it has a tremendous effect not only for them in the moment, but it exists throughout their entire lives.*

We are also supposed to pray "in faith." However, that is not "decree and declare" type prayers that are emotionally charged but actually void of spirituality.

The following text clearly represents Jesus' example of this "fifth order of business" in our Prayer Priorities, as well as introduces his clear example of the attitude of prayer: Matthew 26:37-44: So, with great trial and testing comes - through prayer - great protection and promise! 1 Corinthians 10:13: As prayer permeates our lives, we need to be sure we understand what makes prayer really work to the point where it can literally change our lives. It takes humility, studying to *show thyself approved*, and wanting to do God's will and not our own.

***So who gets their prayers answered?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions,
Think about it!***