

A Study of Prayer

Lesson 12: Does God Answer Prayer?

- I. Introduction
 - A. We come to our last lesson on Prayer for this Quarter
 - B. We have noticed the importance of prayer in our lives, our attitude in prayer and the proper elements of effective prayer
 - C. Some have ceased praying because they believe that God has not answered their prayers
 - D. Some do not pray because they do not understand how God answers prayer
 - E. We want to conclude our study with an examination of what the Bible says about how God answers our prayers
- II. God has promised to answer prayer
 - A. Jesus' words during His "sermon on the Mount" – Mt. 7:7
 - B. Jesus reassures His disciples – Jn. 14:13-14
 - C. John tells Christians how they receive blessings from God—I Jn. 3:22; 5:14-15
 - D. James speaks of asking for wisdom – Jas. 1:5
 - E. Some prayers are conditional – Jn. 16:4-7 Expedient that Jesus should return to heaven rather than stay with His disciples on earth
 - F. Some prayers are answered in a way that we did not ask – wisdom of God provides a different outcome that is best for us
 - G. We must have the faith in God's answer to see that His will is far superior to our desires based His omniscience
 - H. God has promised to answer our prayers - God always keeps His promises – II Cor. 1:19-20
- III. Examples of God answering prayer
 - A. Abraham for Abimelech that he and his wife might be able to bear children—Gen. 20:17
 - B. Job for his friends – Job 42:8-10
 - C. Hezekiah was "sick unto death" and he prayed – II Kings 20:1-6
 - D. Elijah prayed that it might not rain / and then prayed for rain – Jas. 5:17; I Kings 17,18
- IV. God answers our prayers sometimes by saying "Yes"
 - A. He grants what we request because it is good for us and in harmony with His will
 - B. He grants our request due to our persistence – I Sam. 8:1-9
 - C. He sometimes does not give us exactly what we asked for
 - i. Jesus prayed for the cup to be removed—God gave him the strength to bear it – Lk. 22:42-43
 - ii. Paul asked for his thorn in the flesh to be removed – God gave him the strength to live with it – II Cor. 12:7-9
- V. God sometimes says NO to our prayers – Jas. 4:2,3
- VI. God sometimes has us wait for a while for an answer to our prayers – Paul prayed that he might go to Rome- Rom. 1:10 (Two years later, his prayer was answered)—Acts 27, 28
- VII. God answers our prayers according to His infinite wisdom, not according to our limited foresight and lack of understanding.

Questions for thought:

1. What causes some to not pray or cease to pray?
2. What assurance does Jesus give us that His Father answers prayer?
3. When we consider the prayers that God answered in the OT, what did the people offering the prayers have in common?
4. What are the different responses that God gives us in answer to our prayers?
5. Name at least three principles about prayer that you have learned this quarter?
6. How has studying the importance of prayer helped you in your life as a Christian?