



Devotional Thoughts :: Prayer does not change things.

Prayer does not change things. - posted by BonnieJane (), on: 2012/7/4 9:07

The paragraph below was posted by a person dear to my heart but is deceived and being deceived by the Health, Wealth and Happiness teachings she has immersed herself in. I want some discussion on this twisted definition of prayer. The first verse that came to my mind was; James 5:16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.
Thank you

Prayer does not change things. God changes things. My prayers don't earn God's movement. I do not pray and read my bible to earn something from God, I pray and read my Bible to learn and know what He has already made mine. i.e righteousness, peace, healing, provision...prayer plays a role only to keep me sensitive to His voice but it doesn't earn anything that has already been made mine.

Re: Prayer does not change things. - posted by enid, on: 2012/7/4 9:20

It would be good, if we were to remember, that God owes us nothing. We were created for Him.

Revelation 4:11, "You are worthy O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power. For You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created."

We bow to Him for who He is, whether or not He answers our prayers.

And yet, He does answer our prayers, for He has said He will, and does.

We need to, according to 1 John 5:14-15, ask according to His will, what God wants.

I often think, if God hears and sees blasphemy, lies, deception etc, then He certainly hears the prayers of His people.

The answer is on the way.

God bless.

Re: Prayer does not change things., on: 2012/7/4 9:23

I find this statement about prayer troubling. It is misguided. Two examples come to mind out of the Old Testament. There is the example of Moses interceding before God not to wipe out the Israelites. The scriptures say God changed his mind. The other example is God looking for someone to stand in the gap to hold back his judgement. Tragically not one could be found. These two examples and others tell me God does respond to our prayers. Prayer does change things.

Bearmaster.

Re: Prayer does not change things. - posted by kjcword, on: 2012/7/4 10:10

This reminds me of something that we talked about just this past Sunday. Our pastor mentioned that one of the leaders of the Azuza Street revival had said that his greatest fear for the American Church is that we would become a people who praised the One they will not pray to.

That statement just really convicted me to the core. And, as one who was delivered from a "word of faith" movement, it is sad to see the lack of focus on prayer.

Re: - posted by lylewise, on: 2012/7/4 10:41

Prayer most definitely changes things.....Us. When those who search the scriptures search to seek what they can amass by God's grace, they search in vain. Our promise is Christ and if He is not enough, one will find himself in the world trying to satisfy the Spirit with the flesh. A hopeless endeavor. There was a great lesson in the manna, but oh how it was rejected.

Re: Prayer does not change things. - posted by learn (), on: 2012/7/4 10:56

I believe that God puts into our hearts what He wants us to do and we pour it out in prayer. God uses prayer as a means of getting us to be in alignment with Him and to change us into His image.

Re: Prayer does not change things., on: 2012/7/4 13:34

Quote:
----- Prayer does not change things. God changes things. My prayers don't earn God's movement. I do not pray and read my bible to earn something from God, I pray and read my Bible to learn and know what He has already made mine. i.e righteousness, peace, healing, provision...prayer plays a role only to keep me sensitive to His voice but it doesn't earn anything that has already been made mine.

I've read this over and over and I find nothing wrong with it.

I know exactly where she is coming at.

Notice how she words her words, "prayer plays a role only to keep me sensitive to His voice". She does pray but not to gain by earning. An admirable approach.

These are not words from a Word of Faith stance, they pray to earn, she prays to be sensitive to the voice of God. There is a difference.

If that is deception, then I welcome that deception.

Re: - posted by Trekker, on: 2012/7/4 13:41

QUOTE: "I often think, if God hears and sees blasphemy, lies, deception etc, then He certainly hears the prayers of His people."==ENID

I like this. Comforting. But...just the same, if the prayers are heard but nothing received, does it make a diff? And when I say "received" I am NOT referring to THINGS.

Anyway, thank you for that word ENID.

Re: - posted by Trekker, on: 2012/7/4 13:43

QUOTE: " There is the example of Moses interceding before God not to wipe out the Israelites. The scriptures say God changed his mind. The other example is God looking for someone to stand in the gap to hold back his judgement. Tragically not one could be found. These two examples and others tell me God does respond to our prayers. Prayer does change things."==BEARMASTER

Good point. Also, Hezekiah prayed and God gave him 15 more years!

Re: , on: 2012/7/4 14:09

What about the things that God does anyway? There are countless times that I have watched the Almighty do things on my behalf and I never asked for any of it. He knew that I needed something and He just did it without a thought from me.

I pray because I don't want to lose that sensitive connection that could be easily kinked when I am drawn away of my own lust and enticed.

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2012/7/4 16:42

Of course, making a value judgment about prayer is like making a value judgment about talking. There are far too many variables.

The title of this thread may better be put as this: "Some prayers change nothing". As it is, I am concerned that it may be disturbing - or convey a message we would not wish to.

Still - it gets us thinking - and we already have some great thoughts here. Ex: Prayer changes US.

Yes it is that way for me! As I pour out my ragged thoughts before God, he helps me see more clearly... and much more. Effective prayer is relationship happening.

Diane

Re: - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2012/7/4 18:09

Quote:
-----Of course, making a value judgment about prayer is like making a value judgment about talking. There are far too many variables.

So true, it was TA Sparks who wrote that there were five main aspects to prayer; communion, submission, petition, co-operation and conflict. There are other aspects as well, one simple statement cannot cover the whole.

That said, there is a part of the original statement that is bothersome to me;

"I pray and read my Bible to learn and know what He has already made mine. i.e righteousness, peace, healing, provision...prayer plays a role only to keep me sensitive to His voice but it doesn't earn anything that has already been made mine."

I wonder if Daniel had held to this philosophy whether he would have prayed his amazing prayer captured in chapter 9. The chapter starts out by saying that he understood by reading Jeremiah that the days of Israel's captivity in Babylon were accomplished. What if Daniel said to himself something like, "well God said it and so it is already mine, no need to confess, repent, and seek God for this."

In Christ,

Ron

Re: , on: 2012/7/4 21:09

I like the idea of this thread; "Prayer does not change things: God changes things."...and in the original thread, focusing it to the Word of Faith heresy, where in the mind of the obedient, Prayer definitely changes things.

The proper separation of the matter is semantic. Prayer, that you earnestly may believe is heart-felt faithful petition, may not be prayer at all, but presumption. Just because you confess it, you may not get it. You may confess prosperity, and become poor, you may confess good health, and die from a sickness.

It is the prayer of faith that God hears, yet even in that, it may not be answered. Consider the many cries of deliverance when Babylon besieged Israel. God never answered a one, no matter who prayed.

God is sovereign; He has His own ways, and whether we may pray earnestly for this or that it is He alone who chooses to answer, and there are times that He will not choose your way.

"Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.

3 Ye ask,... and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts."

So yes, prayer does not change things; God does.

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

I see prayer as petition, begging God to act and help the infant child, the weakling. We look upon Him who holds all power to act in favor upon one with none.

" And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.

And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them,

Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me."

A baby is weak, and dependent. I see this in our prayer, and it is at the heart of meekness. We trust in our weakness that the mighty one would intervene, and act upon the Earth; but in the End, as Sovereign, it is He who chooses to; we cannot and must not manipulate Him.

Job prayed daily for his children. They were all taken in a tornado. Job ;

" And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee."

20 Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,

21 And said, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

So Job did not get his way; all of his children were taken, but he worshipped God anyway. This is the Nature of prayer. Our prayers do not change things, but He does hear the righteous, and it is He that ultimately make the change.

Re: I wonder if Daniel had held to this philosophy whether he would have prayed his amazing prayer c - posted by Bonnie

Thanks Brothertom. I think you have put your finger on what bothers me about the post.

It is in Him that we live and move and have our being. A total dependence. He wants us to bring our praise and petitions to Him in Jesus Name. I conclude all my prayers with, If it is your will. I think that attitude is lacking in original post.

Re: , on: 2012/7/7 0:45

"Prayer is the most necessary action, the greatest gift, the hardest spiritual labor, as well as the simplest cry of a loving heart. The time you spend in prayer has an eternal impact on the lives of men and women throughout our world. THOUGH PRAYER OUR WORKD IS CHANGED. , closed doors are opened, resistant people are made receptive, leaders are put down and raised up, and the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ is extended."

The above statement is taken from a Voice of the Martyrs sheet urging people to pray for the persecuted church. Obviously they as well as the Moravians and the first century church would take issue with the idea that prayer does not change things. Countless intercessors down through church history would take issue with the idea that prayer does not change things.

The very fact that Jesus taught us to pray the Lord's prayer implied that prayer would change things. When he says your kingdom come your will be done. Or give us this day our daily bread we are asking God to change a circumstance. When Jesus teaches us to ask and it will be given. We are asking God to change something by meeting a need.

We are called into a relationship with God as his children. He has given us his Spirit by which we cry Abba Father. My Father says I may ask and it will be given. The closer we get to the Father's heart the more we pray his will. His desire is. Our prayers become less about ourselves and more about how God wants to redeem the world.

If a person wants to believe their prayers don't make a difference then they should not pray. They would be in sin. But they would miss the blessing of being used by God had they prayed.

I do believe my prayers make a difference and do bring change. Though only eternity will tell the fruit borne through my prayers. So I take issue with the thrust of this thread.

Posted by Bearmaster.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2012/7/7 9:52

Isn't it rather obvious that prayer (itself) does not change things, but God does? Is anyone here suggesting that prayer is some sort of incantation like "abracadabra?" When my son asks me for a sandwich, and it is lunch time, and I am able, I give him a sandwich. His ASKING did not make the sandwich magically appear out of thin air.

God WANTS us to ask Him for things, That's just the way He is.

I certainly agree that prayer DOES change US. Because prayer is, or should be, about relationship. My son asks for certain things of me because I am his father.

BonnieJane wrote:

"I conclude all my prayers with, If it is your will."

Certainly no offense to BonnieJane, but I cringe every time I hear this. I know some of you will say "but Jesus prayed that in the garden." Yes He did, but He already knew the answer, in his heart of hearts. And when He prayed the Lord's prayer he already knew that it was God's will that His will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Tagging "if it be your will" to the end of a prayer is a faith zapper. God wants us to boldly come before Him, like little children.

"Do we truly know the power of our supernatural weapon of prayer? Do we dare to use it with the authority of a faith that not only asks but commands? God baptizes us with holy boldness and divine confidence, for He is looking not for great people but for people who will dare to prove the greatness of their God. 'But the Church was earnestly praying'(Acts 12:5)" A. B. Simpson