

God Is Not So Mysterious (Part 5)

(Understanding Miracles, Prayer, Providence, etc.)

I. Introduction:

A. Prayer is a privilege reserved for the faithful (**John 9:31** and **I Peter 3:12**).

1. The prayers of those who reject the truth are an abomination (**Proverbs 28:9**).

2. What is in the heart matters too (**Psalms 66:18**).

B. We can't just pray however or for whatever we want (**I John 5:14-15**).

1. Remember who you are praying to (**Matthew 6:9**) and how you should approach Him (**Psalms 89:7**).

2. Understand that prayer in accordance with His will means we need to know His will concerning the things we are praying about (cf. **I John 3:22**).

C. Prayer is something Christians have to be taught to do properly (**Luke 11:1**).

1. We find through proper Bible study, the majority of our prayer life should be in the giving of thanks (**Philippians 4:6-8**, **I Thessalonians 5:16-18**, and **II Thessalonians 1:3**).

2. Consider how simple things play into prayer. For example, we are to be content (**I Timothy 6:6-10**); yet most people use prayer to ask, ask, ask... Be reasonable!

II. Body: You Can Certainly Pray Incorrectly (**James 4:3**).

A. Be careful, for what was taught regarding prayer in the N.T. doesn't necessarily apply today (**Luke 11:1-4**).

1. Example: We don't pray for the kingdom to come because it has come (**Colossians 1:13** and **Hebrews 12:28**).

2. Example: The disciples then asking for their daily bread certainly was different then (**Matthew 10:7-14** and **Matthew 15:32-39**).

3. Example: Lead us not into temptation (**Acts 16:1-10**).

4. Note also that the Holy Spirit aided Christians with most things, including prayer, in the first century during times of miraculous spiritual gifts (**Romans 8:26** and **I Corinthians 14:15**). **We covered last week how miraculous spiritual gifts have ceased (**I Corinthians 12:1-13:13**)!*

5. Also, whatever Jesus taught the twelve, has to be studied carefully. Not all things apply (i.e. **Matthew 28:19**; cf. **Colossians 1:23**). We are not guided as they were (**John 14:26** and **John 16:13**).

B. As we have previously discussed, in other lessons, as you learn to pray, be sure the Scriptures you learn from are not miraculous references (**II Timothy 2:15**).

**Again, the cessation of these things were covered last week!*

1. **James 5:13-18**; cf. **Mark 6:13** and **Mark 16:15-20**

2. **Colossians 1:9-10** and **James 1:5-6**; cf. **I Corinthians 12:3-11**

3. **I Thessalonians 3:11**; cf. Again - **Acts 16:1-10**

4. **I Corinthians 10:13**; cf. **Acts 27:1-44**

5. We covered **Romans 8:28** in lesson 2. So, pray for His providence, but realize in our lives and/or others is spiritual, not carnal.

a. God's providing of physical things is by natural means [which He does provide (**Acts 14:17** and **Hebrews 6:7**)]. Thus, understand that if you're asking for such provisions that you are asking for Him to continue what He has already put in place.

b. Some things God has already given provision or instructions as solutions to help us (i.e. **I Corinthians 16:1-4**, **I Thessalonians 5:11-14**, **I Timothy 5:8**, and **II Thessalonians 3:10**).

C. As with all things (**Colossians 3:17**), are we praying for/according to our will or His (**Luke 22:42**)?

1. With all that God has already provided (**I Peter 4:11** and **II Peter 1:3-4**), what are we asking for?

2. He is not going to do something that makes Him a respecter of persons (**Acts 10:34-35** and **Romans 2:11**).

3. God give us freewill (**Romans 6:16**), so don't pray for things that would remove it.

a. i.e. He WON'T make someone hear and obey the truth (**Proverbs 1:24** and **Matthew 23:37**).

b. i.e. He WON'T make someone who is lost be restored (**Revelation 2:14-16**).

c. However, He will be longsuffering for a period of time (**II Peter 3:9**). *If you are concerned about the salvation of others, pray for that!*

4. Don't ask God to do what you're expected to do (**Philippians 2:12**).

5. Prayer, individually, can be used to ask for sins to be forgiven (**Matthew 6:12, Acts 8:22, and I John 1:9**).

III. Conclusion: Let's focus on the acceptable prayers we can offer today (**Ephesians 5:20**)!

*For more on this subject matter, please consider the following study as an addition to this series:
<http://www.wordsoftruth.net/PDFGivinganAnswerTheThingsWePrayForAnswers.pdf>