

Answered Prayers

Just the act of praying is not proof that we are in the right relationship with God and that our prayers will be answered. Of the approximate 650 prayers said to be recorded in the Bible, excluding those in the Psalms, about 450 prayers are answered. Answered prayers are one of our proofs that God exists and that He cares for those who are in the right relationship with Him.

It is clear from the four gospels that Jesus prayed often and He expects us to be praying people also. His disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray (Luke 11:1). When Jesus learned that Lazarus had died, He said *I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe* (John 11:15). Later, Jesus said in His prayer at Lazarus' tomb, *And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I say this, that they may believe that you sent Me* (John 11:42). Answered prayers helped those in Jesus' day to believe and answered prayers in our day help us believe. Although the answers to our prayers are no longer answered by the miraculous intervention by God, nevertheless they are answered through God's providence.

Granted, not all of our prayers are answered, and for this we should be thankful. Many of us, if not most, can recall times we prayed for things that we later were thankful God did not answer. The most important of all the unanswered prayers to us is Jesus' prayer to God in the Garden of Gethsemane that He would not be crucified (Matthew 26:39). For this unanswered prayer we are eternally thankful.

We are told to *Rejoice always, Pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you* (I Thessalonians 5:16-18). Take a moment and remember the prayers God has answered for you. Be thankful you are in the right relationship with Him and that He answers your prayers. Also, thank our heavenly Father who knows how *to give good things to those who ask Him* (Matthew 7:11b).

For the elders,
Don Denton