

**DOES PRAYING REALLY DO ANY GOOD?**  
**LUKE 18:1-5 / 9-29-19 / A.M.**

**I. DOES GOD REALLY ANSWER OUR PRAYERS?**

- A. Some think because God is omniscient, that is all knowing, He doesn't respond to our prayers because He's already got everything worked out.
- B. The Bible, however, urges us to pray—James 5:16.

**II. SECOND, DOES PRAYER CHANGE GOD'S MIND?**

- A. The Biblical evidence seems to say yes and no.
  - 1. On one hand the Bible declares that God never changes His mind—Num 23:19, Malachi 3:6 and James 1:17.
  - 2. On the other hand the Bible also contains instances where God does seem to change His mind—Exo. 32:9-14 and Jonah 3:10.
  - 3. Jesus knew more about prayer than any other person and he prayed for God to change His mind about the cross but God didn't—Matt. 26:39.
- B. The explanation for these, seemingly contradictory instances may be explained by what has been called God's Perfect Will and God's Permissive Will.
  - 1. Gods Perfect Will are those things that God has decreed that cannot change.
    - a. Creation is an example.
    - b. Jesus' crucifixion is another example—Rev. 13:8 and 1 Peter 1:18-20.
    - c. Jesus' Second Coming is yet another example—Rev. 22:20, Acts 1:10-11.
  - 2. God's Permissive Will, however, are those things that God may willing change.
    - a. The existence of sin is an example.
    - b. Although God didn't invent sin He sometimes uses it for His own purpose—Gen. 50:20.

**III. THIRD, WE NEED TO KNOW THE PURPOSE OF PRAYING MAY BE TO CHANGE US, NOT GOD.**

- A. Instead of thinking prayer changes God, it may be more accurate to say it changes us instead---Luke 18:1-5.
- B. Although the judge in this parable drastically changed his attitude toward this woman, this is not the point of the story. Jesus isn't saying God is like this judge. It's just the opposite.

**III. THIRD, PRAYER HELPS US TRUST GOD MORE.**

- A. Since we cannot manipulate God, we must trust him to do what's right even if it's not what we want him to do-Genesis 18:25.
- B. When we trust God with our prayers keep two things in mind.
  - 1. Sometimes God gives us what we really need, not what we ask for or want.
  - 2. Sometimes, though, God gives us something better than we ask for.