

## **"Yes" or "Better"**

As we begin a series on prayer, we want to rock your world a bit. Not for fun but because we think that sometimes the Lord would have us, as Calvin once said, "shake off the dust of unbelief." We want you to believe in the power of prayer.

Janis Joplin once wrote a song that went like this, "O Lord won't you buy me a Mercedes Benz? My friends all drive Porsches. I must make amends. Worked hard all my lifetime, no help from my friends, so oh Lord won't you buy me a Mercedes Benz?" These are creative prayer lyrics, but they are not likely to be answered in the affirmative. Questions about prayer abound. What should I pray for? Why are my prayers not answered? How come I never have a desire to pray? These are good questions. You won't get all the answers this week. In fact, for this weekend, we just want to get you thinking about prayer.

Some people ask, "If God knows everything and will accomplish what He wants, why should we pray?" This is another good question. Have you ever thought that part of His plan requires prayer? Prayer may not be the initial cause of His actions, but because of His character, He has to respond when His people talk to Him. In other words, He doesn't have a "nobody home" sign on the door. So, and this is where your world may get rocked, He will answer one of two ways to the person who calls on Him in faith: "yes" or "better".

Those are the two options. Paul tells the Romans that God "works all things together for good to those who love God." If that is you, your prayers will be answered, "yes" or "better". The challenge is seeing that if the answer is not yes, it is better. Jesus says that He is not going to give us a stone if we ask for bread. He will do right by us. By His perfect knowledge of what is best for us, He will decide what is best. His character dictates that He loves His people, and that He does right by them for His glory.

So, as we learn about prayer, we encourage you to pray. Start with some adoration, then maybe a little confession. One of our elders says, "How about we pray for God to reveal our sin to us, so that we can run to Him?" If we pray that prayer, He will answer. Move along to some thanksgiving. We all can park there for awhile. Then, you may want to wind up with supplication or asking for what you think has value. To help guide your prayers, remember "ACTS" (adoration, confession, thanksgiving and supplication). Be encouraged that God will say "yes" or "better".

C.S. Lewis once said that he was glad God had not answered yes to many of his prayers. God had "better" in mind, and over time, Lewis could look back and see that was indeed the case.

Has your world been rocked? Good! Come along with us while explore prayer!

***This week's prayer pursuit:***

This week try praying for God's Honor