

Prayer Week
Praying God's Revealed Will
January 8, 2012
Text - Psalm 23
Scripture Reading - Psalm 23

Do you ever feel like God is always says NO to your prayers?

- Healing
- Salvation
- Repentance
- Plans
- Provision
- Deliverance

NO's from God can be discouraging not only to our prayer lives but to our relationship with Him in general.

- NO's can cause us to question our faith and our walk with God.
- NO's can cause us to question God's love for us and even His existence.

There are lots of Biblical reasons why God says NO.

- Unrepentant sin
 - **1 Peter 3:7 (ESV)**
⁷ Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, *so that your prayers may not be hindered.*
- Selfish motives
 - **James 4:3 (ESV)**
³ *You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.*
- Lack of faith
 - **Mark 11:22-24 (ESV)**
²² And Jesus answered them, "Have faith in God. ²³ Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. ²⁴ Therefore I tell you,

whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

- Not His will
 - **Matthew 26:39 (ESV)**
³⁹ ...“My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.”

But I want to concentrate on just one of those reasons this morning. One I think we often overlook.

I think one of the main reasons we hear NO so often from God is that *we're asking Him for the wrong things.*

- Instead of asking God for the things *we know to be His will* because He's revealed them to us in His Word, we spend much of our time asking Him for things we merely *hope will be His will.*
- Two examples.
 - The Corolla
 - The 30

I'm not saying we should never pray for things that we're not certain to be God's will.

- Hezekiah - 15 years to his life (Isaiah 38)
- Elijah - No rain for 3 years 6 months (James 5)
- Jonah - Nineveh vs. Death by Fish (Jonah 2)
- Peter - Rescued from prison (Acts 12) - pleased the Jews, earnest prayer, that very night...

But if we want to hear more YESSES from God in 2012, *we need to learn His revealed will and start praying according to it.*

Let me show you what I'm talking about using Psalm 23.

- May the Lord be your Shepherd, may He bless you with all that you need.
 - **Psalms 23:1 (ESV)**
¹The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not *want.*
 - **Matthew 6:11 (ESV)**
¹¹Give us this day our daily bread,

- o **1 Timothy 6:8 (NIV)**
⁸ But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that.
- o **Matthew 6:31-33 (NIV)**
³¹ So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.
- May He make you lie down in green pastures and lead you beside quiet waters and restore your soul.
 - o **Matthew 11:28-30 (ESV)**
²⁸ Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”
 - o **Philippians 4:6-7 (ESV)**
⁶ do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
- May He guide you in paths of righteousness for His name's sake.
 - o **Matthew 7:13-14 (ESV)**
¹³ “Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. ¹⁴ For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.
- May His rod and staff comfort you so that you will fear no evil even though you walk through the valley of the shadow of death.
 - o **Psalms 23:4 (ESV)**
⁴ Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow

of death, I will fear no evil, *for you are with me*; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

o **Romans 8:31 (NIV)**

³¹ ...If God is for us, who can be against us?

o **Hebrews 13:5-6 (ESV)**

⁵ ...*"I will never leave you nor forsake you."* ⁶ So we can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?"

o **Joshua 1:9 (ESV)**

⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, *for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.*"

o Rod of protection and discipline / Staff of comfort

- May He prepare a table before you in the presence of your enemies, may He anoint your head with oil, may your cup of joy overflow continuously.
- May the Lord's goodness and mercy follow you all the days of your life and may you dwell in the house of the Lord forever.
 - o May God be enough

Example: Pray through Psalm 23 for my MS.

Let's dedicate ourselves to learning God's revealed will in 2012 and to praying according to it.