

General Topics :: Is it possible

Is it possible - posted by rainydaygirl, on: 2009/6/11 11:11

Is it possible to be praying for others and have the wrong heart motivation behind it and not even realize it? Is it possible to ask for prayer for someone and have it be for selfish reasons on your own part? Something came up the other day and I was going to share it here and ask for prayer but felt strongly that I should not. The more I began seeking God about it, the more I began to question the "why" behind my reasons for posting and praying. Can someone be seeking God for all the wrong reasons, even on another persons behalf??

rdg

Re: Is it possible - posted by White_Stone (), on: 2009/6/11 11:50

Something to consider:

Quote:
 -----Luke 8:38 Now the man out of whom the devils were departed besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying, 39 Return to thine own house, and show how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him.

This man was miraculously saved but lived his life thereafter without the benefit of the Internet or any of the myriad of books available to those of us living in the time.

What I mean is, if all the answers were necessary for salvation, Jesus would have given more instructions to the saved man. It seems we are making things more complicated than they need to be.

Just something to think about,
 Kind regards,
 white stone

Re: - posted by rainydaygirl, on: 2009/6/11 15:09

white stone

Not sure I follow what you were trying to share? Sorry I am not trying to be dense, just not sure of your meaning. I don't think I made my post clear as I wanted to, sorry about that. I think the Lord is showing me that I have had some selfish and sinful attitudes that He is trying to show me, open my eyes to? I guess what I was trying to ask is it possible to pray for the wrong reasons, to have a selfish sinful attitude when we are praying for people. I will try to give an example, I know someone who is not saved and I have been praying for them to be saved. This person wants nothing to do with the Lord at all, very hostile. I have really struggled with this and another sister asked me why I wanted so much to see this person saved, Was it for their benefit or my own? They shared with me that the only true motivation of wanting to see someone saved is for Jesus, not them or us. So that has been on my heart.

rdg

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2009/6/11 17:58

rdg,
 My reply will likely echo white stones'....

Quote:
 -----I guess what I was trying to ask is it possible to pray for the wrong reasons, to have a selfish sinful attitude when we are praying for people.

If prayer to you is merely a ritual or a rite you may have reason to be concerned. But if you pray from a heart that is in tu

ne with the God's will never fear. Scriptures teach us the Spirit will assist us in our prayers. (Romans 8:26)

To wish for someone to come to the LORD may appear selfish to another - is a male whom you would like to marry, e.g., but cannot because he is a non-Christian - but is it really? You must lay another person's soul at the feet of Jesus and leave it there. You may have lots of reasons why you want to see another person come to the LORD but I believe it to be crass to judge that motive. Let God do that and if He does, listen to Him. He is always righteous.

(Someone has suggested that a mother's motive for wanting her children be saved so the family can enjoy heaven together is a symptom of 'Cat theology'. I suggest some of this philosophy is rooted in young men's ideals who have no clue how a mother thinks, or loves her children and therefore not worthy of much consideration. Jesus also had a maternal love for his people. Matthew 23:37.)

Make sense?

ginnyrose

Re: - posted by rainydaygirl, on: 2009/6/11 19:10

I think I should clear up that the sister who first brought this to my attention was not doing so to judge my motives, but rather she was asking a question to get me to look deeper at my own heart and ask why this was so important to me. After spending time in prayer and seeking the Lord I believe He is showing me that I have been so caught up in how this person going to hell would effect them, how it would make me feel, that I was losing sight of the bigger picture. I have not even given thought that it is this person's sin that nailed my beloved Jesus to the cross in the first place. Jesus suffered and died in order to give us life. Above all else He deserves the reward of His suffering. The motivation of my heart should be to see Jesus name glorified and lifted up. The motivation for my actions even in my prayer life must be about Him. All that I do must be in line with what He has for me. If I am praying for another for fleshly reasons and motivations then it is not of Him, it has no value. I see now that I have had a selfish and sinful attitude in this. Christ first, then everything else.

thank you for taking the time to consider this with me today.

rdg

Re: - posted by ccchhhrrriiiss (), on: 2009/6/11 19:38

Hi sister rainydaygirl...

Quote:

----- Is it possible to be praying for others and have the wrong heart motivation behind it and not even realize it? Is it possible to ask for prayer for someone and have it be for selfish reasons on your own part?

Yes, I do think that it is possible to pray with the wrong motives. Jesus taught His disciples how to correctly pray. Prayer, someone once said, is the simplest form of communication with God. I used to find it strange that God wants us to pray for our needs - because God knows what we need before we even ask (Matthew 6:8). Yet there is something entirely powerful between speaking with God. It is a display of faith...to speak (verbally or mentally) with God who you cannot see.

Prayer, like many forms of our faith, can be perverted.

People can often utter prayer for the things that they want...which is almost the same as those who covet...but thinking that it is alright because we voice it to God. This seems to be one of the fundamental problems with the more extreme "prosperity" teachings. They literally desire the things of this world...and then voice that desire to God.

Some people use "prayer request" to voice gossip. I have heard this referred to as "sanctified" gossip. People use their requests to voice the rumors that they have heard. This can be voiced like this: "Please pray for brother or sister so-in-son, because..." However, it can also be (and IS often) uttered with a form of sincerity...but the essence is still the same. It is a form of greed. We should trust that God knows what we need better than we do. Otherwise, we would become like the Israelites who were hoarding manna into their tents; after a while, it will begin to rot.

I have heard people who literally pray for something that they know or think might be against God's will. I knew a girl in

high school who literally prayed for a guy that she wanted to date. Unfortunately for her, this guy was courting another girl. I also knew another girl in high school who would pray for a guy that she wanted to date even though he wasn't a Christian (and had no desire to be). Yet both of these girls continued to pray that God would lead these young men into her arms. We should pray about everything...but we shouldn't suppose that God will change His mind about things that are already clear in His Word.

I have also seen people pray about things that they were already doing. I know a young lady who my wife and I counseled about a secret relationship that she was involved in. This teenager was in a relationship with a somewhat older man (her youth pastor...who was eight or nine years older) and had become somewhat physical. She admitted that she didn't pray about beginning the relationship. We were encouraging her to end the relationship since it wasn't approved of either of her parents and none of her siblings. This young lady listened to what we said and stated that she wanted to pray about whether or not the relationship should continue. I told her that this was sort of like asking her parents for permission for something that she was already doing. I told her that she shouldn't ask God for permission for something that she is already doing.

James wrote about the motives of our prayers. Consider these words in James 4:1-3...

Quote:

KJV

- 1 From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?
- 2 Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.
- 3 Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

NIV

1 What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? 2 You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. 3 When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

So, yes, there can be a wrong motive in our prayers. We shouldn't pray for those things that are meant for purely selfish reasons. Of course, we can pray for food, shelter, a job, and even for God to lead us into the right relationship. Yet we should pray with the desire that God's will and purpose will be accomplished in our lives. We can even bring up the things that we aren't so sure about – as long as we are still open to God's answer.

Of course, Satan doesn't want us praying. He doesn't want the saints to be joined in prayer for anything. Don't let the fear of not praying correctly keep you from praying. Prayer is pure and simple.

I remember the night that I came to Christ. I lay in my bunk at the summer camp...amazed that I could actually know and communicate with God. I had poured my life out to Him...in a field...alone. The realization that I knew the Creator of the Universe was overwhelming! The next day, I remember that this realization was still there. When we arrived home, I went up to my bedroom to pray. It dawned on me that I didn't know how to pray. I remember feeling so sad! I lay upon my bed with a pillow over my face as I wept. Suddenly, I was overwhelmed with, what I later understood to be the Spirit of the Lord, the understanding that I should just "talk" to God. I began to pour out my innermost feelings, longings and thoughts to God as I talked into that pillow. Before I knew it, hours had past!

Prayer is still the highlight of my day. I realize that I don't have to go to my room, lay upon my bed and place a pillow over my head (although I do that sometimes). I don't have to be on my knees (although I do that sometimes). I can pray when I walk, when I shower, when I drive, when I am at school or work. I can talk to God no matter where I am. Still, I long to be alone...away from everything...and lay out my life before the Lord like a drink offering.

I apologize for getting off topic. Please don't be too concerned about prayer. God certainly knows your heart! He also knows your needs...and the needs of those for whom you would pray. There is nothing wrong with bringing a need before other believers to agree in prayer. After all, we should remember our brothers and sisters. However, we should check our motives when we pray in public. Would our request embarrass someone if it named names (although I am not saying that we cannot do as much)? Is there any hint that it is gossip? Is there any hint of selfishness in our requests? If our motives are pure – we should boldly bring up such requests to others in the Body of Christ!

:)

By the way, I agree with what sister Ginny posted about prayer. I think that it goes along with the idea of "praying amiss."

" Please be encouraged to pray...always. God knows your motives...and the purity in them. Don't be discouraged to ask for public prayer when you know that your motives are pure.

Re: Is it possible - Chambers on Intercession - posted by JoanM, on: 2009/6/11 19:55

Did you see this post on Sermonindex when you asked your question?

VITAL INTERCESSION by Oswald Chambers

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit." Ephesians 6:18

As we go on in intercession we may find that our obedience to God is going to cost other people more than we thought. The danger then is to begin to intercede in sympathy with those whom God was gradually lifting to a totally different sphere in answer to our prayers. Whenever we step back from identification with God's interest in others into sympathy with them, the vital connection with God has gone, we have put our sympathy, our consideration for them in the way, and this is a deliberate rebuke to God.

It is impossible to intercede vitally unless we are perfectly sure of God, and the greatest dissipator of our relationship to God is personal sympathy and personal prejudice. Identification is the key to intercession, and whenever we stop being identified with God, it is by sympathy, not by sin. It is not likely that sin will interfere with our relationship to God, but sympathy will, sympathy with ourselves or with others which makes us say - "I will not allow that thing to happen." Instantly we are out of vital connection with God.

Intercession leaves you neither time nor inclination to pray for your own "sad sweet self." The thought of yourself is not kept out, because it is not there to keep out; you are completely and entirely identified with God's interests in other lives.

Sorry it took me so long to point this out.

Re: - posted by rainydaygirl, on: 2009/6/11 20:07

No I had not seen this post that you mentioned, but thank you for pointing it out to me. This question came about because of something that I was asked and has been on my heart. Ultimately I think this has been something that the Lord has been opening my eyes to in my life.

Thanks Chris also for sharing. I do think it is vital important to go to the Lord with a pure heart and willingness to say in all things, "Your will be done, not mine"

thanks everyone
rdg