

# Does God Answer a Sinner's Prayer?

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- I. Introduction
  - a. Does God hear a sinner's prayer?
    - i. Yes
      - 1. He hears sees and knows all things
      - 2. Pr. 15:3
    - ii. No
      - 1. Sin can close God's ears to our requests
      - 2. Pr. 15:8; Pr. 15:29
      - 3. Jn. 9:21
  - b. So God hears some prayers of a sinner and not others.
    - i. Which ones does he hear and which does He not hear?
    - ii. Is it arbitrary?
    - iii. Can we know whether our prayers will be heard?
    - iv. Which does He answer?
    - v. How can we know?
  - c. God is not the author of confusion
    - i. Nor is he a respecter of persons
    - ii. He hears and answers the prayers of all human beings on the same basis
    - iii. He tells us ahead of time whose prayers He will hear and for what purpose
- II. Key Thought: God's answer to a sinner's prayer depends on the condition of the sinner, and what the sinner is praying for.
- III. Yes
  - a. God answers the prayer of his children who have sinned – 1 John 1:8-9
  - b. God answers the prayer of the sinner, Simon – Acts 8:9-22
    - i. Simon the sorcerer
    - ii. Believes and is baptized
    - iii. Sins
    - iv. Is told to pray for forgiveness
  - c. God answers the prayer of the sinner on the cross – Luke 23:39-43
- IV. No
  - a. God does not save the sinner Saul on the basis of his prayer – Acts 9:8-11; 22:16
  - b. God did not save the sinner Cornelius on the basis of his prayer – Acts 10-11
  - c. God does not save ANYONE on the basis of a prayer –
    - i. The terms of gospel salvation involve words AND deeds
      - 1. Words
        - a. Confession
      - 2. Deeds

- a. Faith
  - b. Repentance
  - c. Baptism
- ii. The proper appeal
  - 1. If you have been convicted of a crime in our country, you may be able to have your guilty verdict overturned by making an appeal
  - 2. But there is a proper procedure for filing and appeal
    - a. Your attorney needs to file the appeal
      - i. in the proper court
      - ii. in the proper time
      - iii. in the proper way
    - b. Failure to follow the proper procedure will make a successful appeal impossible
- iii. We are sinners, condemned before God, and to have our guilty verdict overturned requires an appeal to be filed
  - 1. In the proper court
    - a. Not the court of opinion
    - b. Not the court of church leaders
    - c. Not the court of personal feelings
    - d. At the judgment seat of Christ – 2 Cor. 5:10
  - 2. In the proper time
    - a. In this life
    - b. We will face God after this life.
    - c. At that time it will be too late to make an appeal for forgiveness
    - d. There is no hope for acquittal in the next life, if we have not filed an appeal for it in this life
    - e. Today is the day of salvation – 2 Cor. 6:2
  - 3. In the proper way
    - a. 1 Pet. 3:21
    - b. There is no other appeals process
    - c. If you leave this step out, you have not made an appeal to God for a good conscience in any way that He will recognize
    - d.

## V. Conclusion

- a. Are you a child of God, or not?
  - i. If you are a child of God, He hears and answers your prayers, including requests for forgiveness, cleansing and salvation.
  - ii. If you are not a child of God, He hears your prayers, and answers them, but will not provide salvation to you in a different way than others. All are saved in the same way
- b. Have you been saved by praying the sinner's prayer?
  - i. Think back to the first time you were convinced that your burden of sin had been lifted and Jesus was truly your Savior

- ii. If your appeal for forgiveness and salvation was through a prayer, rather than through, repentance, and baptism, then you have filed an invalid appeal!
- iii. No matter how you feel now, or felt at the time, anyone who told you that you could be justified in that way only gave you a false hope
  - 1. That doesn't mean that God doesn't love you. He does
  - 2. That doesn't mean that God doesn't want you to be with Him. He does!
  - 3. That doesn't mean that the time you have spent serving Him has been wasted
  - 4. God is able to redeem any situation we may find ourselves in.
  - 5. One way in which He redeems unfortunate situations is by bringing those who are trusting in a false hope of salvation to a place where they can hear the pure gospel and find true assurance of forgiveness
  - 6. So if you are in that situation, don't rely on a prayer to get you to heaven...
- iv. While there is still time and opportunity, file a new appeal for a good conscience through the proper channel, the channel of water baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, and you will be saved
  - 1. You already know and love the Lord
  - 2. You already are willing to forsake your sins for Him and serve Him
  - 3. You are already confessing your faith in Him before men
  - 4. Now put Him on in baptism, so He can act as your Advocate before the throne of God's judgment in heaven
  - 5. Then you will need have no fear of death
  - 6. And you will have the hope of heaven.
  - 7. Why wait?