



CONSCIOUS AND INTENTIONAL MINISTRY: MINISTRY TO ME

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Thessalonians 5:23

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TEXT: 2 CORINTHIANS 12:1-10

TITLE: DOES PRAYER CHANGE THINGS?

INTRODUCTION

- A. Quote: "Prayer Changes Things" _____
1. Donald Barnhouse, "Prayer Changes Nothing"
 2. Charles Swindol, "Prayer Changes Me"
 3. Martin Childs, Jr., "Prayer Positions Me For Agreement With God's Will"
- B. How I view prayer reveals how I view God _____
1. "Prayer Changes Things": God is a cosmic vending machine. God is a holy bellhop. God is a spiritual genie in the lamp
 2. "Prayer Positions Me For Agreement With God's Will" God is in control of my life; already has a will and plan for my life, and is waiting for me to come to Him in agreement regarding His will and plan for my life so that I may receive it
- C. "Prayer changes things" reinforces the belief, "God answers prayer, 'Yes, no and wait.'" _____

AN AMAZING / AGONIZING EXPERIENCE

- A. Amazing Experience: 14 years earlier, Paul was taken to the 3rd Heaven (Paradise) _____
1. Perhaps, it at his Damascus Road experience
 2. Paul encountered Jesus – Defending his Apostolic Authority
 - a. **1 Corinthians 9:1**, ¹ *Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?*
 - b. **Galatians 1:12**, ¹² *For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.*
- B. Paul could have boasted regarding this experience _____
1. Imagine the potential Effect on his ministry...
 2. Imagine the potential Effect on the Kingdom of God...
- C. Agonizing Experience: Paul was given a thorn in his flesh _____

PAUL PRAYED. THINGS DID NOT CHANGE

- A. Paul prayed the 1st time – Things did not change... _____
- B. God's response, "My grace is sufficient for you, My strength is perfected in weakness" _____
- C. Paul prayed the 2nd time – Things did not change... _____
- D. God's response, "My grace is sufficient for you, My strength is perfected in weakness" _____
- E. Paul prayed the 3rd time – Things did not change... _____
- F. God's response, "My grace is sufficient for you, My strength is perfected in weakness" _____
- G. Why things may not change: _____
1. God gave Paul the thorn in his flesh. God is in control
 2. We can boast in our weakness and not our strength
 3. So we will understand that God may not change things, but will strengthen us in those things (God's grace is sufficient – God's grace is all I need)
 4. As we are strengthened to endure the present things, God is preparing us to take pleasure in future things we will endure – knowing, **"For when I am weak, then I am strong."**