

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN GOD SAYS 'NO?'

Psalm 109:17 ... "As he loved cursing, so let it come to him; as he did not delight in blessing, so let it be far from him."

In our previous devotional we asked the question: Who do you think about when you pray? Today we will ask why God might say "no" to your prayers, and then what do you do about it? The previous discussion was formed around the issue of you being the focus of your prayers. You asking for things that would please you, instead of using your prayer time to praise and worship God.

One of the outcomes of you routinely focusing on yourself and your own needs when you pray, is that God might conclude that he cannot trust you with the blessings he wants to give you. If God has blessed you with a small house, but you beg him for a larger one, God might see in you an ungrateful heart. If God has blessed you with a farm, but you beg him for more acreage, God might see that as unthankfulness. Most times when this happens, God simply says "no." Let me be clear about that. You may not hear God say "no." But, if he does not answer you or provide what you request, that is a "no."

However, sometimes God takes more drastic action when he hears you thinking primarily about yourself when you pray; idolizing yourself instead of worshipping him. He might actually remove some of the blessings from your life to teach you to be thankful for what you have. You must remember that everything you have, including your own body and mind, is the property of God and are merely on loan to you. We call this stewardship. God entrusts us with things that we are responsible to use for his glory.

God gives you a body that he intends for you to take care of so you will be useful as his servant. If you overeat (or eat too little), smoke, consume alcohol, use drugs, or sleep too much, your body is no longer useful for God's plan. God gave you a mind that is meant to study his Word, communicate his love to others, and teach your children right from wrong. If you do not develop your mind, refuse to study, or use your mind to study pornography, you make it useless to God. God may provide you with a great job, a car, a nice farm and other blessings that many people cannot enjoy. But, if you are lazy on your job, wreck your car by driving too fast, or let your farm grow weeds instead of crops, you are abusing the blessings God entrusted to you and he might remove them from you. If God blesses you with a good business, but you cheat your employees or customers, God might cause your business to fail. If God blesses you with a leadership position in your church, but you are mean-spirited and unkind, God might cause you to fail in shame.

God says "no" to our requests when they do not align with his plan for our lives. He might remove blessings from you if you abuse them. In both cases, God is trying to teach you to find him sufficient and to be thankful for what he does for you.

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