FOR WHAT, AND WHY, SHOULD A SINNER PRAY?

Sermon by Donald Townsley

INTRODUCTION

1. It seems to be a very common idea among religious people that "the alien sinner is to PRAY THROUGH TO SALVATION".

2. Many teach that all a sinner must do to be saved is "pray".
   (1) People who believe this provide the "mourner's bench" or "altar" in their services, and invite all who want to be saved to "come and pray".
   (2) Many good and honest people believe this.
   (3) Such teaching should have our careful consideration.
   (4) If the word of God teaches the sinner to pray in order to be saved, well and good.
   (5) If not, it is the doctrine of men -- Mat. 15:9

3. If a sinner is to pray, there must be some reason why, or something for which he must pray, otherwise it would be mockery.

4. The alien sinner cannot reasonably ask for something that he already possesses.

5. The sinner cannot consistently ask God to give him blessings which God has promised on certain conditions, while he refuses or neglects to meet those conditions.
   (1) God has established a law to save man from his sins -- Rom. 8:2; I Cor. 9:21; Rom. 1:16
   (2) The writer of the book of Proverbs tells us about the man who turns his ear from hearing the law: Prov. 29:9 "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even this prayer shall be abomination"

6. God does not set aside His law to answer the prayer of any sinner -- Luke 6:46; Matt. 7: 21 - 23

7. Let us press the question: "FOR WHAT CAN A SINNER REASONABLY AND CONSISTENTLY PRAY?"

I. SHOULD THE SINNER PRAY FOR LIGHT?

1. We realize that the sinner needs light.

2. Saul, when he was down praying in Damascus, needed light -- Acts 9: 10 - 11
   (1) The Lord sent a messenger to give him light -- Acts 22:16; 9:6

3. Sinners need light today, but all the light they need comes through the word of God -- Psa. 119: 105, 130

II. SHALL THE SINNER PRAY FOR GOD TO LOVE HIM?

1. God already loves him -- John 3:16; Rom. 5:8

2. The sinner needs to love God -- John 14:15

III. SHALL THE SINNER PRAY FOR GRACE?

1. Every that is saved is saved by God's grace.

2. The sinner doesn't need to pray for it, it is already offered -- Tit. 2: 11 -12

3. The sinner needs to appropriate this grace to himself by obeying the gospel -- Eph. 2: 5 - 9; Rom. 5:2
IV. SHALL THE SINNER PRAY FOR A PURE HEART?

1. The heart is purified by faith -- Acts 15: 8 - 9
2. WHEN?? -- I Pet. 1:22

V. SHALL A SINNER PRAY FOR FAITH?

1. Faith is an absolute necessity to salvation -- Heb. 11:6; John 8:24; Mk. 16:16
2. Faith does not come by prayer, but by hearing the Word of God -- Rom. 10:17; John 20: 30 - 31

VI. SHOULD A SINNER PRAY FOR RELIGION?

1. A irreligious man cou not be saved; one must be religious.
2. But, religion is not something you "get", but something you "do" -- James 1: 27; Matt. 7: 21

VII. SHALL THE SINNER PRAY FOR GOD'S SAVING POWER?

1. All who are saved will be saved by God's saving power.
2. What is that power?
   (1) The gospel -- Rom. 1:16 - 17
3. How does it save? -- II Thess. 1: 7 - 9

VIII. SHOULD A SINNER PRAY FOR GOD TO BE WILLING TO SAVE HIM?

1. God is already willing -- II Pet. 3:9; I Tim. 2:4; Acts 10: 34 - 35

IX. SHALL THE SINNER PRAY FOR UNDERSTANDING?

1. The Word "Giveth understanding to the simple" -- Psa. 119: 130
2. Eph. 5:17

X. SHALL THE SINNER PRAY TO BE MADE CLEAN?

1. The sinner is made clean through the Word -- John 15:3
2. When one obeys -- Eph. 5:26

XI. SHALL THE SINNER PRAY FOR GOD TO HAVE MERCY UPON HIM?

1. When the sinner turns to God, He will have mercy on him -- Isa. 55:7; Tit. 3:5

XII. SHOULD THE SINNER PRAY TO BE BORN AGAIN?

1. One must be born again, but how is the new birth brought about? -- John 3: 3 - 5; I Pet. 1: 22- 23; Mk. 16: 15 - 16

XIII. SHALL THE SINNER PRAY FOR GOD TO ACCEPT HIM?

1. Acts 10: 34 - 35; Psa. 11: 172

XIV. SHALL THE SINNER PRAY FOR REPENTANCE?

1. Repentance is produced by:
   (1) Being convicted of sin -- John 16: 8
   (2) Godly sorrow -- II Cor. 7:10
   (3) The goodness of God -- Rom. 2:4
   (4) Thinking on the Judgment -- Acts 17: 30 - 31
2. Repentance is not produced by prayer.

XV. SHALL THE SINNER PRAY FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT?
   1. The Spirit is given when one obeys -- I Cor. 6:19
   2. The Spirit dwells in our hearts by faith -- Eph. 3:17; Gal. 3:2; Rom. 10:17

XVI. SHALL THE SINNER PRAY FOR RECONCILIATION?
   1. "be ye reconciled to God"--II Cor. 5:20

XVII. SHALL THE SINNER PRAY FOR CONVERSION?
   1. Psa. 19:7
   2. Rom. 1:16

XVIII. SHALL A SINNER PRAY FOR SANCTIFICATION?
   1. John 17:17
   2. I Cor. 6:11

CONCLUSION
1. In view of the foregoing, can anyone suggest a single thing for which the sinner should pray?
2. The thing that the alien sinner should do is -- obey the gospel!

Grandview