

Does saying “The sinners’ prayer” save?

Television or radio preachers sometimes invite listeners to pray something such as, “God, I am sorry I have sinned. Please forgive me and let Jesus come into my heart. I thank you for forgiving me and giving me eternal life. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen” The preacher then says, “Since you have asked Christ into your life, you are now His child, and your sins are forgiven.” The problem, however, is that the promise of forgiveness is from a man, not God. God has never promised to respond to “the sinner’s prayer.” Prayer is a privilege for God’s people. James said, “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (5:16). Peter quoted Psalm 34:15-16, saying, “For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil” (1 Peter 3:12). Solomon warned, “He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination” (Proverbs 28:9). The psalmist spoke of the dilemma of the sinner: “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me” (Psalm 66:18).

But what about the prayers of the publican and the Pharisee? While the Pharisee prayed “with himself,” the publican, “standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.” Jesus concluded, “I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted” (Luke 18:11, 13-14). This does not set the pattern for sinners coming to Christ, however, because both the Pharisee and the publican were already in a covenant relationship with God as part of His chosen people, the Jews. Both, despite their sins, had the right to pray to God. What about Joel’s prophecy? He said, “It shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall

be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call” (Joel 2:32). To “call upon the name of the Lord” means to make an appeal through obedience. Saul of Tarsus spent three days in prayer and fasting, but did not receive salvation from the Lord until he called upon the Lord through obedience. Ananias told him, “And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16). In his baptism, he called on the name of the Lord, and his sins were washed away. He would not have been saved if he had merely prayed “the sinner’s prayer” and had refused to obey the Lord’s command.

Jesus said, “If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it” (John 14:14). This is not a blanket promise to any person, but to those who follow Him and have the right to ask things in His name, by His authority. This promise is to the children of God. In the very next verse, He puts it simply, “If ye love me, keep my commandments: (John 14:15). The multitudes cried out at Pentecost, “What shall we do?” Peter did not respond, “Pray the sinner’s prayer,” but “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:37-38). We will be saved if we do what the believers of Pentecost did. Another preacher wrote this article and it is a good one read it and obey what God said to do. Love, Keith

Those serving...Next Sunday

Song Leading
Scripture Reading
Opening Prayer
Lord’s Supper

Closing Prayer
Announcements/Invitation

Don Evans
Wes Harris
Tommy Stacks
Perry Sims(P)

Jerry Shepherd, Tom Parker, Zane Whatley,
John Hughes, Trey Glenn, Tony Casselle
Chuck Mitchell
Larry Eldridge

EMPTY SEATS

Several members here have not been here lately. Take a look around. If you notice anyone missing send them a card or call them. Let them know you are thinking of them and that they are missed.

BULLETIN INFORMATION

If there is something that needs to be put in the bulletin please email Crissy at trudyblue1@yahoo.com. Please get this info to her before Thursday evening. You can also text her with info at 706-206-8514