

Prayer is Discovering and Surrendering to God's Plan

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Many misuse prayer with unsundered hearts, trying to pray into existence their plan(s) and preferences, or using prayer as a wishing well to eliminate their problems.

Proverbs 16:9 NASB

9 The mind of man plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps.

Proverbs 19:21 NASB

21 Many plans are in a man's heart, But the counsel of the LORD will stand.

Though the circumstances of our lives are probably not as dramatic and unusual as Joseph's life, our inability to discern and comprehend what, where, when and how God is orchestrating our life is the same.

Genesis 37:9-11 NASB

9 Now he had still another dream, and related it to his brothers, and said, "Lo, I have had still another dream; and behold, the sun and the moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me."

10 He related it to his father and to his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have had? Shall I and your mother and your brothers actually come to bow ourselves down before you to the ground?"

11 His brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the saying in mind.

Genesis 39:1-5 NASB

1 Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an Egyptian officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the bodyguard, bought him from the Ishmaelites, who had taken him down there.

2 The LORD was with Joseph, so he became a successful man. And he was in the house of his master, the Egyptian.

3 Now his master saw that the LORD was with him and how the LORD caused all that he did to prosper in his hand.

4 So Joseph found favor in his sight and became his personal servant; and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he owned he put in his charge.

5 It came about that from the time he made him overseer in his house and over all that he owned, the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house on account of Joseph; thus the LORD'S blessing was upon all that he owned, in the house and in the field.

Prayer is discovering God's plan and methods, which were sovereignly designed and implemented before time began. By the Holy Spirit, prayer opens the eyes of our understanding to see God's invisible plan at work behind the visible.

Psalm 139:16 NASB

16 Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Your book were all written the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was not one of them.

John 5:19 NASB

19 Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.

John 16:13 NASB

13 But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

Proverbs 16:3 NASB

3 Commit your works to the LORD And your plans will be established.

The ultimate purpose in prayer is our absolute surrender to God's sovereign plan. God will many times, through our prayers, change the circumstances, but the ultimate purpose in prayer is to change us (often through those very circumstances we're trying to pray away).

"If God doesn't want something for me, I shouldn't want it either." – Philip Yancey

1 John 3:22 NASB

22 and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.

1 John 5:14-15 NASB

14 This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.

15 And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.

John 15:7 NASB

7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.