

IN JESUS' NAME

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Focus God is sovereign and He does not change. The enemy often twists these characteristics of God into reasons *not to* pray, when they are the two most powerful reasons *to* pray.

Open When was the first time you ever talked to God?

Read In the book of John, Jesus repeatedly taught that when we pray “in His name” our prayers would be answered. So why would we *not* pray? We often make the subconscious decision not to pray because of complacency, unbelief or discouragement. The top two reasons *to* pray are the sovereignty and immutability of God.

Sovereignty means supremacy. The word “will” means “desire.” God’s sovereignty doesn’t mean that if something is God’s will (desire) it will happen, no matter what. God created us in His image, which means that we also have a will. Many people exercise their will to choose something other than God’s will. He wants us to partner our will with His through prayer. The good that happens in our lives is because our will moves God’s will from heaven to earth. God is the supreme ruler and owner of the earth, but He has given the management of it to us. Whether or not God’s will and destiny for your life comes to pass is dependent upon whether or not you will partner with Him in prayer.

The immutability of God means that He cannot change. God can’t and won’t change His character, but He will change His mind. His unchanging character is all the more reason to pray! He is *always* compassionate, forgiving and merciful. Therefore, when we partner with Him in prayer, like Abraham and Moses did, He will relent (change His mind). He is looking for people who will join hands with Him to bring change on earth.

Talk

1. In general, what is your first response when you think about prayer? Do you look forward to it, dread it or feel something in between?
2. What do you struggle with most related to prayer: a feeling of complacency, unbelief or discouragement? Why?
3. Have you ever seen God's sovereignty and His immutability as reasons *not to pray*? In what way?
4. Before this message, what did "the sovereignty of God" mean to you? How has your understanding of it changed?
5. Read Malachi 3:6. Why is the "unchangeableness" of God's character a reason *to pray*? Why should His immutability give us great confidence in prayer?
6. Read Exodus 32:14. As seen in the stories of Abraham, Moses, Jonah and others, God will change His mind and the course of a person, city or nation in response to a person's prayers. What response does this truth prompt in your heart about people or situations in your life?

Live

1. The Bible tells us what God's will is for many areas. For example, 2 Peter 3:9 says that God doesn't want anyone to perish but for everyone to be saved. What else does the Bible say for certain about God's will for your life, marriage, finances, children, etc.?
2. God is looking for people to partner with Him, to "stand in the gap" (Ezekiel 22:30-31). In what areas of your life does God want you to "join hands with Him" in prayer to move His will from heaven to earth?

Pray

Thank God that He is Supreme Ruler and Lord of All. Thank Him that His character never changes—that He is always compassionate, forgiving and merciful. Ask Him to forgive you for complacency or unbelief in your heart, and to heal you of discouragement and disappointment. Commit to partner with Him in prayer to bring about His will in your life and on the earth.