

Our prayer vs. God's Sovereignty?

If God is Sovereign over everything, how can we justify our responsibility to pray for things to change? Is He Sovereign or not? If He is, then why do we have to pray? If He is not, are we changing His mind?

Why are we even here?

Actually, our praying to God is exactly what He has planned. The outcome, whether change in us or in the arena we are praying for, is exactly what He wants. First, we need to recognize the foundation of what we were made for.

We have been made for the glory of God, to have dominion over Creation, and to be stewards of it and its responsibilities. In this way, we are made in the Image of God, Who has Dominion over *all*, and in Stewardship of His endless resources, chose to introduce Creation. He has an overall corporate 'plan', knowing what is to be achieved - from before until after all of Creation. He has chosen to place us in the middle of it all. We glorify Him by participating in His Creation and His plan. He is being, and will be, glorified as this plan unfolds - and we have been made to be a part of it.

God wants us to pray for change

The conflict of 'why pray if God is in control?', and 'does prayer change His Mind?', are both problems only if we look at it from man's standpoint. From man's point of view in our sinful, self-centered minds, none of this can hope to be understood. But from a God point of view, everything really does fit together.

Consider this - does God want us to pray for change? Of course, because through it many things happen:

- We must humble ourselves before Him - and He is Glorified in His supremacy
- We must turn to Him as *the* Sole and Primary Provider - and He is Glorified for His provision
- The sinful issue at hand stands out against His Holy standard, His Will, and how it should be - and He is Glorified in His perfection
- We must recognize our sin, repent of it, confess it, and ask forgiveness - and He is Glorified in Saving and forgiving us
- We must approach the Throne, Sanctified again by the Blood of the Lamb if we hope to be heard - and He is Glorified in His Son
- We can call on His promises, expecting Him to answer our request - and He is Glorified for being faithful and trustworthy
- Being a prayer in faith, that it is in His Will because we are familiar with His Character and His Word, we can observe Him answering that prayer - and He is Glorified in His teaching us to know Him

- And in an answered prayer, the believer is edified while the pagan is convicted – and so and He is Glorified as He blesses those who obey and grieve those who do not. (2 Sam 22:41-2?)

Did God know these things would happen? Did He know we would pray (or not)? Do all things work together for good to those who love Him? Has He made it clear we have been placed as stewards in His Creation? Has He made it clear we are to pray? Does He answer prayer? To all of these, of course!

Is God not Sovereign? Is He not in control? Is He unaware of what lies ahead or why all issues occur? Can anyone change His Mind from what He has already intended? Was the Fall a big mistake He didn't expect, that He is now scrambling to 'fix'? To all of these, of course not!

We have been made for an incredible task

We have been enlisted in an incredible task – to participate in the Work and Will of God over Creation. It is all His Will being done, often carried out through us as His servants. We have the means and His command to be conduits, or priests, of His Work. But, we must recognize His Sovereign Provision, which makes everything possible.

He is like the Master Craftsman, allowing his child to participate in his work in a real, meaningful way. The Master wants to have an end product, the one he envisions. He also wants to involve his young child, one that he loves. Under his exceeding expertise, he sets aside parts of his work for his child to do, under his watch and always under his careful eye. The child is trusted with as much as the Master sees appropriate, and gradually, the child learns lessons of the craft. The child learns, and becomes more like the Master. The Master's vision of the end product moves closer towards completion. And now, and in the end, the Master is satisfied in his stewardship over what he possesses in himself – to see his work played out in the end product and to see the child fulfill his potential in the work the Master alone is praised for.