



REFLECTION ON PRAYER

DOES PRAYER MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

PRAYER DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE!!

In much of the world and even in the church scepticism taints prayer. We breathe in an atmosphere of doubt. Why does God let history lurch on without intervening? What good will prayer do against a nuclear threat, against terrorism and hurricanes and global climate change and a pandemic?

Yet every faith has some form of prayer. Remote tribes present offerings and then pray for everyday things such as health, food, rain, children, and victory in battles. Incas and Aztecs went so far as to sacrifice humans in order to attract the gods' attention. Five times a day modern Muslims stop whatever they are doing – driving, having a coffee break, playing football – when the summons comes to pray.

Prayer is to the sceptic a delusion, a waste of time. To the believer it represents perhaps the most important use of time.

As a Christian, I believe the latter. Even though we are often fidgeting in a chair after ten minutes.

Why, then, is prayer so problematic?

Martyn Lloyd-Jones summed up the confusion: "Of all the activities in which the Christian engages, and which are part of the Christian life, there is surely none which causes so much perplexity, and raises so many problems, as the activity which we call prayer."

Most of my struggles in the Christian life circle around the same two themes:

Why God does not act the way we want God to, and why I do not act the way God wants me to.

Prayer is the precise point where these two themes converge. If prayer stands as the place where God and human beings meet, then I must learn about prayer.

So let us use time given to us of isolation to practice the art of praying.