

## DOES GOD HEAR THE PRAYER OF A SINNER?

By Roy Goodlet

Parents wish their children would come to them and ask for help. Why? Because they are parents, and if their children are hurting about something then so are the parents. Parents are made in the image of God. God and parents care for their children and want to help their children, but their children have to be willing to talk.

We don't want to think that God would ever refuse to listen to anyone's prayers. If that is the case, then what do we do with John 9:31? "We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will."

In order to comfort you and bring this text in harmony with what you want to feel, I need to ask a few questions this morning. Question #1 - The real question is not does God hear the prayer of a sinner, but "Does God answer the prayer of a sinner?" Question #2. "Isn't there a difference between an unrepentant sinner, a seeking sinner and a forgiven sinner?" Question #3. "Does an unrepentant sinner really want God to answer their prayers?"

My boys are not going to call someone else their daddy, tell that person that they love him, worship every step he takes, and then expect me to bail them out of trouble. I am a jealous father, and I want them for me and me only. Is that hard to comprehend?

Does God still love the unrepentant sinner? Sure He does, but He will not force them to love Him, but He may discipline them into loving Him. Once again, isn't that what any good parent would do? Disciplining rebellious children is a way of loving them. Giving them what they want is not.

Here's another question: Question #4 – "When we pray do we come to God as prayer beggars or as praise givers?" Are our prayers "Give me" or "Bless me"? Is it, "God give me what I want, or God bless me with what I need to glorify You?" When praying, do you give instructions or do you report for duty?

J. Edgar Hoover once said, "The spectacle of a nation praying is more awe-inspiring than the explosion of an atomic bomb. The force of prayer is greater than any possible combination of man-made or man-controlled powers, because prayer is a man's greatest means of tapping the infinite resources of God."