

Is It God's Will For Our Children To Be Called?

Many of us in the Churches of God have wrestled with this question, especially if through failed marriages or circumstances beyond our control, such as the exercise of free will and free-moral agency of our own children, we have seen our children, our seed, head off into the world without accepting God's call on their life. So some of us might start to reason in our own minds '*Well, I guess it wasn't God's will that they be called.*' Is this a proper reasoning? Or have we in the Churches of God been missing out on a real huge blessing God has for both us and our children, their very calling into the Body of Christ and the receiving of God's Holy Spirit? As many of you who know me must already realize, by the prayer-requests I've run by you about my adoptive daughters and real children, that God draw and call them, this is a subject close to my heart. After praying about them one day along these lines, I was taking a walk, and asked God "*Am I on target in my prayers for my adoptive and real children? Was what I was praying this morning for them your will? Should I keep praying about these things?*" Instantly two Scriptures popped into my mind. I've learned over the years when that happens, it's God answering. After sitting down to type this out, a third Scripture came to mind. So here goes. Now that's a good question we all should ask God from time to time, '*Am I on target in my prayers here?*' it helps you avoid a lot of wasted effort in prayer. Based upon what follows, it is my personal estimation (and I've been a baptized member within the Churches of God since 1970), we over the years have been missing a real opportunity to fill our congregations up with our very own children.

What Is God's Will Concerning Our Children?

“Malachi 2:15, “And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth.” Verses 14-17 put this in context of marriage and children. But we see in these verses the central purpose of a stable family is that God desires “godly seed,” as shown by verse 15. In other words, applied to the New

Testament churches now, this would mean God desires that our children be within the Body of Christ, indwelt by the Holy Spirit. It can mean nothing else, applied to us now.

*Is The Call Open For Our Children In A Way It Isn't
To The World In General?*

1st Corinthians 7:12-14, “But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not,” and this was as common then as now, God can call a husband or wife and not call the other, **“and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.”** By being classified as “holy” this means they are free to accept God’s call, and as a matter of fact, it is God’s will that they do so. How do we know this? Malachi 2:15 states that God desires “godly seed.” This passage does seem to indicate the call is also available to the unbelieving spouse. I don’t know, I’m not a theologian, but it does seem to indicate that. So you should be praying for the calling of your unbelieving spouses as much as you do for your children. Why? Because their calling would bring peace and spiritual unity to your family.

The Prodigal Son

Sometimes our children will go “the way of the world,” go in the wrong direction in spite of all we do to spiritually nurture them. Should we give up or stop praying for them? What did Jesus have to say about children and parents caught in this unsavory situation? One major parable comes to mind, which answers a lot of personal questions we may have about whether God intends to call our children, and that we shouldn’t give up in prayer or our efforts to see them drawn to the Lord, no matter how long it takes. Some “prodigals” don’t return for years, even decades. **Luke 15:11-24, “And he said, A certain man had two sons: and the younger of them said to his Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and**

took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.” Now I would say this was a God-induced famine. Don't you think his dad was praying that the Lord bring his son to his senses? I would have been. **“And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.”** You ever smell pig manure? It smells worse than my submarine's sanitary tank. **“And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee. And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him, and the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put *it* on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on *his* feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill *it*; and let us eat, and be merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.”** One thing unstated here, but implied, is that this dad was praying his heart out daily for this lost son, and probably was praying for that famine to bring his son to his senses and back to him.

Fourth Scripture: **Acts 2:38-39, “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost [Spirit]. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”**

Each one of you who has a child or children who have *gone into the world* know the circumstances they are in, their personal needs and wants. Each one of you can be praying for God's divine intervention in their lives that would “wake them up” or show them God's intervening hand in their

lives. This is something I do daily in my prayers, both for my adoptive daughters, and flesh & blood real children, and some of you have seen those prayer-requests I've passed out about circumstances in their lives that need praying about, things that when answered by God would show them his loving intervention in their lives, thus proving that God exists, and cares for them individually and personally. My Messianic Jewish pastor/rabbi told me I was right on the mark for praying for their salvation, that as these Scriptures show, it is Biblical and thus God's will that I do so. Now for another short article, where I show a spiritual application of the Lord's prayer that I hadn't noticed before. It fits right in with this short article.

The First Prayer-Request In The Lord's Prayer

What is one way we can and should be praying this, **Matthew 6:10, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" ?** The initial answer, God's answer (and what we can and should be praying for) is the calling of sons and daughters into God's family on earth, via the receiving of his Holy Spirit upon conversion. Those individuals, those receiving God's calling and Holy Spirit, start living according to God's will---"**thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven**"---as they grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. The calling and drawing of a people to God is the first primary way this verse is being fulfilled right now, before Jesus Christ's 2nd coming. It is bringing God's Kingdom, spiritually speaking, into individuals one at a time. They become living examples of God's Kingdom on earth spiritually, demonstrating God's laws and way of life to a dying, decaying world. We are walking, talking representatives of God's Kingdom right here on earth. So let this be the first major part of our prayers, that God start drawing a people, more people to himself through conversion. Who? Our family members who are still in the world should be our first priority. Why? God wants Godly seed, **Malachi 2:15, "And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth."** The apostle Paul continues this thought and theme in **1st Corinthians**

7:12-14, “But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away.” i.e, as the LORD said through Malachi, “let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth.” Paul continues the thought, **“And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.”** And then we have the very clear statement in **Acts 2:38-39, “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost [i.e., the Holy Spirit]. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”** This shows we should be praying for 1) **“and to our children”**, and then 2) **“all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God should call.”** So secondly, after praying for the calling of our unconverted family members, we should be praying for our close friends and business acquaintances for starters. Most people, it’s been statistically proven, come to Christ through our personal examples and witnessing, and not through literature or telecasts. We should also be praying daily for the Church’s telecasts, magazines and booklets, that God uses them to draw a people to himself. When people come to Christ, receiving the Holy Spirit through conversion, it is bringing a very important element of God’s Kingdom right down to earth within these people, right in the here and now. Jesus at his 2nd coming will bring the literal physical aspect of the Kingdom of God to earth, as well all know and have been taught. But those God calls now are the spiritual example of the Kingdom of God as it will be on earth after Jesus’ 2nd coming. So this is I’d say the first and one of the more important ways we can be praying **‘Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.’** Up until now, I don’t believe we have fully realized the significance of this first instruction about what we should be praying for. Do you want to see the church grow? Do you want to see your family members in church with you? Would you like to see the church bursting at the seams with new members? Then start to pray for this daily.

