

The Secret to "Getting" from God

"Dear Televangelist,

Please stop misquoting the Bible. God is not your divine Santa Claus, and prayer is not a celestial vending machine."

*Thank you,
Lynn*

I flinch when I hear people tell us we can have God's divine blessing and prosperity by claiming God's Word. They'll quote:

- "Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours." (Mark 11:24).
- "You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it" (John 14:14).

Call it out! You need money? You need a new car? Use Jesus' name, call out His name, and it's yours by faith!

**STOP IT. SERIOUSLY.
STOP IT.**



Yes, God is our provider. We see that from the first book of the Bible. Abraham experienced the wonderful provision of God and declared "Jehovah-Jireh," which is literally "Yahweh provides" (Gen. 22:14). Throughout Scripture, we see the hand of God providing for His people.

But there's a huge difference between God providing what we need and giving us what we want.

Look at Abraham again. I'm sure what Abraham *wanted* was to stay home and enjoy watching his son grow up. Instead, God called him to sacrifice his son. Abraham didn't get what he wanted, but he got what he needed: a lesson in faith and trust. And in the process, the way God provided led to a declaration of God's glory—and **that's an important part of understanding how God provides.**

Let's go back to the oft-misquoted John 14:14. Jesus will do anything we ask *in His name*. This does not mean we use Jesus' name like an incantation, but we ask as though it is Jesus asking. And if we ask like Jesus Himself is asking, we better make sure we are asking for the same things He would ask for.

How can I possibly know what Jesus would ask?

I'm glad you asked. Look at the previous verse. "And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (John 14:13).

The prayers Jesus answers are those that bring glory to God.

Far too many of our prayers are selfish. Our human nature is drawn to the lust of the eyes, and the prosperity gospel of praying for financial or physical prosperity feeds right into that.

And God is not glorified.

It's OK to pray for the things we need. In fact, God wants us to. Even in the Model Prayer, we are to pray for our daily bread: our physical needs. But that same Model Prayer begins with a request for God's name to be honored.

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name"
(Matt. 6:9).

My prayer life changed significantly when I realized that request was first for a reason. **A prayer for God's honor is to color every other request we make.**

God is our provider. Seek His help. Seek the things He can provide. But remember that He may not provide the actual thing we initially ask for, but what He provides will be far better—and it will be for His glory.

Something better. And for His glory. I can live with that.