

SINNER'S PRAYING / H. LEO BOLES

There is much misunderstanding and confusion in the religious world on the subject of prayer. **Good people have gone to both extremes in regard to the "sinner's praying." God does not hear and answer the alien sinner's prayer for forgiveness without the sinner's complying with God's will.** No one need sit down in his sins and ask God to forgive him. There is no promise of any blessing to any one who will not obey God. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear." (Ps. 66:18.) "Set thou a wicked man over him; and let an adversary stand at his right hand. When he is judged, let him come forth guilty; and let his prayer be turned into sin." (Ps. 109:6,7.) "We know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshiper of God, and do his will, him he heareth." (John 9:31.) These scriptures and others that could be quoted teach that one must not regard iniquity in his heart, or love the pleasure and practice of sin, if he expects God to hear his prayers. **God begins to hear the sinner as soon as the sinner begins to hear God. God heard Cornelius' prayer; and Saul prayed before he was baptized,** and was told to go down into the water, calling upon the name of the Lord. **As the sinner begins to turn his heart to God in obedience to God's will, he begins to pray for God to guide him in doing all that is required for his salvation and redemption. In this way and in this sense God hears prayer.** (Emp. Mine, w.d.) (Questions & Answers, Sermon Outlines & Bible Study Notes, pg. 45)