

Praying
to Mary?

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Thousands of people around the world pray to the virgin Mary every day. You may be one of them. There are several problems connected with praying to Mary and one of the most significant issues is that this type of praying may very well keep you from experiencing God's fullness in your life! At the very worst is a form of idolatry which God hates.

Mary was a normal Jewish girl that God sovereignly chose to be the "handmaiden of the Lord." She was to have the most unique ministry in all history. She was faithful and obedient. These are wonderful qualities. But Mary was human, although she was a virgin, she fell under the sin curse that all mankind suffers from. Because of Adam's sin, the entire human race is born into sin and under the curse. The only sinless and righteous person who ever lived was Jesus Christ. He came to seek and save the lost. Mary was just as lost in sin as every other person who has ever lived. The Bible tells us that besides Christ, "there is none righteous, no not one." The Bible never says that Mary was exempt from the curse of sin. Mary needed a Savior as badly and as much as you and I do.

Because Mary had a unique work to do, some people assume that she would be closest to the Savior and therefore be able to "put in a good word" for us. Again there are several problems with this sort

of reasoning. The first is the salvation by works. Even Mother Teresa and the most godly people you know are not saved by their works. The Bible says that by the works of the flesh is no man justified. It is not by works of righteousness which we have done .." James tells us that good works are necessary but they are the result of living our lives in Christ they are not so that we can be saved. In other words, works confirm our salvation, they do not purchase our salvation.

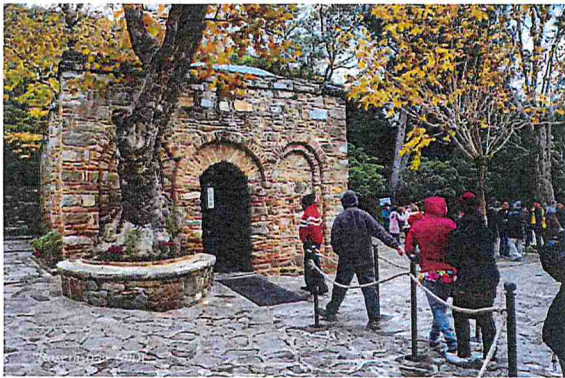
Even Mary, with all she went through had her doubts about the Lordship of Jesus Christ. At one point Jesus' family, including Mary, had come to privately take him away. Early on, the family of Jesus was not willing to acknowledge Him as the sovereign Lord. Later in His ministry we see His mother, brothers and sisters coming around and acknowledging His divinity.

Nowhere in the Bible does it say to pray to Mary. When the disciples came to Jesus and specifically asked Him to teach them to pray, Jesus said, "**when you pray, pray in this way....**" Matthew 6:9

Jesus modeled for us the disciples prayer. We sometimes call it the Lord's prayer, but the longest prayer of Jesus is actually recorded in John 18 That is more accurately "The Lords Prayer", it is a prayer for us. and in that prayer as well as the disciples prayer, there is no indication that we are to pray to anyone but God alone.

Additionally, there is not one verse in the Bible that tells us to pray to Mary. The early church did not pray to Mary. None of the disciples, apostles and missionaries of the church were ever recorded as having prayed to Mary.

In the ancient city of Ephesus, even today, there is a type of cult following for Mary. When Jesus was being crucified, He asked John to take care of Mary. John took his responsibility seriously and both John and Mary died in Ephesus. When you go there today, you can see the house where Mary lived and the place where John was buried. What is also interesting is that these sites are not far from one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, the temple of Diana. Ephesus was well known for this incredible temple to this virgin goddess of fertility. She was considered “Mother Nature” and the “Mother of God.” People came from all over the known world to worship Diana at Ephesus. Today there is a robust tourist industry and busses that will take people on a pilgrimage to worship at the shrine of Mary’s home.



When Paul was planting a church in Ephesus, he almost was killed in an uprising because he was so successful in pointing out the futility of worshiping idols, especially Diana. Unfortunately even two thousand years later, people are still traveling to Ephesus in Turkey to worship and pray at the shrine of the “Mother of God.” This is a form of idolatry and it is condemned by God in the Ten Commandments.

So what is our response to be? Clearly, we should not be praying to Mary or any other saint or person, we are to pray directly to God the Father, because Jesus Christ the Son has made a way open to us by His blood, to come directly into the throne of Grace, where we can obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

There are hundreds of verses in the Bible urging Christians to pray. Here are a few that we should keep in our hearts .

“You will make your prayer to Him, He will hear you.” Job 22:27 NIV

“Because he loves me, says the LORD, I will rescue him; I will protect him for he acknowledges my name. He will call on me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.: Psalm 91:14-16

“Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.” Jeremiah 29:12

“The Lord detests the sacrifice of the wicked, but the prayer of the upright pleases Him.” Proverbs 15:8

“The Lord is near to all who call on Him, to all who call on Him in Truth. He fulfils the desires of those who fear Him; He hears their cry and saves them.” Psalm 145:18-19

“Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear.” Isaiah 65:24

“Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.” Jeremiah 33:3

“If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.” Matthew 21:22

“...if my people, who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and I will forgive their sins and will heal their land.” II Chronicles 7:14

“But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.” Matthew 6:6

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.” Matthew 7:7-8

“Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.” Mark 11:24

“If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask Him!” Matthew 7:11

“Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” Matthew 18:18

“Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in My name, there am I with them.” Matthew 18:19-20

“So I say to you; ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.” Luke 11:9-10

“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit-fruit that will last – and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.” John 15:16

“For through Him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.” Ephesians 2:18

“Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” Heb 4:16

“You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.” John 14:14