

TESTING GOD

God says in the Bible that he will not tolerate people who see his evidence that he works and deny it. The threat does not make it a sin to test God - it only makes it a sin to be never happy with what evidence he gives. So it is not testing God if the Christian wants evidence that the Bible is true but it is testing if the Christian has witnessed the miracles and wants more.

God says he hates such and they will never get his salvation: "Do not harden your hearts as at Meribah, as on the day of Massah in the desert. There your ancestors tested me; they tried me though they had seen my works. Forty years I loathed that generation; I said: "This people's heart goes astray; they do not know my ways. Therefore I swore in my anger: They shall never enter my rest."

If God is that resentful maybe he deserves testing! One thing the text does imply is that people who assume the evidence given in the Bible is either myth or legend are being condemned. God would not mind a person checking out the story while being open to taking the story as true. But myth and legend liberal Christians read their own ideas into the text. They see myth and legend even where the story claims to be literally true.

Religion says you cannot test God by praying to see if anything happens. Is it correct to suggest that if prayer was successful then religion would be okay with testing God? Yes. If you look around and see no evidence that prayer works you might indulge your desire to delude yourself that it does by bleating, "It is a sin to test God." That is the cart before the horse. It is feelings without regard for evidence.

Prayer is communication with God. It is union with God and believers say it is two way. God unites with you when you pray and you unite with him.

Prayer is not necessarily vocal it can just be an attitude you carry around in your heart. It can just be an intention that you don't put into words.

Petitionary prayer, prayer that asks for something, either influences God or it does not. All prayer is intended to be petitionary for even when you don't ask for a favour but just want to be with God you must necessarily intend that he help you be really with him.

Christians and Jews and Muslims say you should not put God to the test. You should not pray in order to see if what you ask for will happen. For example, you cannot plant two geraniums and ask God to make one grow well and the other grow a bit and then die away to check if there is a God. But surely there has to be circumstances in which this test would be legitimate despite the fact that the Bible and these cults forbid it totally. You have a right to know if there is a God and if the evidence for him is good. The reason testing is forbidden is that it will soon become apparent that praying makes no difference to geraniums. Or anything else for that matter! Testing God when you already have evidence would be wrong and he would be right to ignore you but when it is right and still nothing happens then it should be clear to you that there is no God.

Think about the following reasoning advocated by many sceptics today, "God supposedly wants a relationship with us. He says he will help us and has the power to do so. If that is so, he would prefer to reveal himself by letting us test him rather than expecting us to listen to popes and bible bashers and apparitionists and miracle mongers and religious feelings/desires."

Research that says that testing God to see if prayer works seems to say it does. There are many projects that give the opposite impression. But the research that seems to have successfully shown the power of prayer does not verify this alleged power. It verifies the power of testing God if it verifies anything. To attempt to use the research to get people to believe in prayer will fail. If you do your own tests they will probably not work. Christians complain that the testing process gives a degrading view of God. If so then the prayers can only go to the Devil. God doesn't want them.

Christianity teaches that praying to pass an exam when you have done no work is a sin. They say it is magic and treating God badly. But praying to pass an exam when you have done the work is still magic. It is asking God that you will not be having a bad day on the day of the exam, that your concentration will be good, that you will understand the questions, that the questions will reflect what you have learned, that your pens will work and that your script will not be lost before it is marked. People have passed exams they did no work for. It is bizarre to say that asking God to get you through an exam you did no work for is magic and asking him to help you think clearly on the day of the exam is not.

Believers want sufferers to believe their suffering is for a reason when prayer does nothing to allay this suffering. Sufferers are supposed to think that the pain that is more real to them than God should exist to please this being who is less real to them. God knows he will benefit from their pain but they are not as sure so this is a totally selfish one-sided arrangement on the part of God. Believers pray principally that sufferers will learn from their pain. That is self-righteous – it amounts to wanting God to make them suffer so that they will be as holy and superior as themselves while they don't suffer themselves. The false belief that prayer is caring may help some sick people for feeling cared for is good medicine but prayer is not caring.

Prayer is meant to proceed from trust in God so the essence of prayer is, "Thy will be done O God and I submit to you for you are never wrong". How could saying, "Your will be done," for another person be praying for that person? It's ridiculous for that is not the same as the person submitting to the divine will. Praying for one another though Jesus practiced it and commanded it is a superstition. It is offensive to pray for anybody else for it is trying to do for them what they ought to be doing for themselves, namely telling God that he alone counts. If prayer helps sick people then God has nothing to do with it and it is black magic or psychic power which he forbids. Prayer for others tries to make a fool of God.

There would absolutely be no harm in praying to God to give you a miraculous dream that seems so real and happy and that seems to last for a week right now but which really only lasts a few minutes for God can distort time as we know from physics. But he won't do it even when he could wipe your memory of this event afterwards to let you go on as nothing has happened like he wipes it all the time anyway. It is evil to pray to him. He does not want you to be happy. He does not exist if he is all-good. Jesus' promise that prayer could make a mountain move when it is said in faith is false.

God can't even pass a harmless test.

Does praying for sick people to see if they get better imply that you think God is a being within the natural universe? Some say yes because it implies God is stupid and can be manipulated. The test then will not work if God is nothing like anything in the universe and the universe depends on him while he is the self-existing one who needs nothing to exist but himself. It should work though against gods such as the Mormon god or Zeus.

Is the test bad because it seeks only to test God's power not his kindness? What if God knew it was kinder not to cure the person? The answer is that the test is about testing both. And if somebody is suffering, it is very very serious. You don't have the right to speculate that God is letting it happen if it is just happening and that is that. Your attitude itself is a test for you are consecrating your evil faith to God.

Religion says that prayer is answered at times in the way you ask and that indicates the existence of God. Prayers that are not answered are in fact answered in the sense that you will see that you got something better or as good as what you asked for. The only prayer then that is ALWAYS answered in the way you ask is to see that prayer is always answered. Is this bringing God down to a human level and size and down to our reach? Yes for you are assuming that your being a Pollyanna who lets yourself see only the good is an act of God. It is your act. And it is childish. So it seems that religion has a crafty test for God. It will not let you test God to see if he will help you cope with your bully boss tomorrow for it is an unbearable situation but it will let you set up your prayers in such a way that you will never see if they fail or do not work. That is twisted.

Prayer is twisted.

The WEB

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