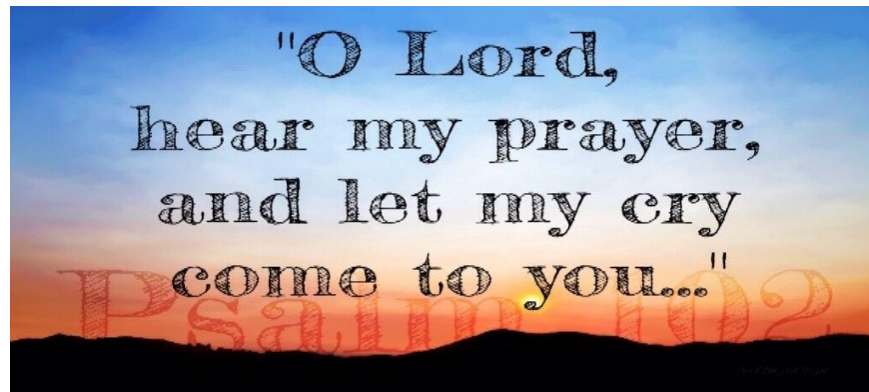


"God Has Not Answered My Prayers...Why?"

By Gerald Cumby



Unanswered prayers cause the unsaved to shake their fist at God and the Christian to feel abandoned. After all, GOD is supposed to know everything and has the ability to do anything. Where is GOD when we need HIM most?

Don't scream, don't cry, don't pout, and don't doubt! God is the same yesterday, today, and forever! Stay faithful, stay steadfast, and stay strong when prayers are not answered as to when and how we have requested them.

As a human being and a sinner on top of that, we react different ways when God does not answer our prayers which we have specifically addressed both in the flesh and in the spirit. We ask God to heal us, heal our loved ones, help us on our finances, help us find that perfect job...and bring that perfect wife/husband into our lives. On and on we request of God our needs and desires. Yet...no answer from God. No help in time of personal drought in our lives. No communication and no hugs from the God who I know knows me...and a God who I know passionately and proactively.

Incidentally, God answered me fully and completely (even perfectly) when He brought my wife into my life. I have been married to her for 61 years. What a God! What a wife!

I want to say that a person who has "confessed with their mouth the Lord Jesus, and believed in their heart that God has raised him from the dead" should be the first on the list for the Heavenly Father to quickly and completely answer an appeal, a need, and an important petition when fervently requested by this new born (born again) saint. After all, we believed when other people were and are rejecting Christianity. We believed knowing that there are those who are not nearly as faithful to God as we have been. We think, "Surely God listens to the prayers of those who are at the church every time the door is open and who pray and read His Word every day."

To summarize this lesson, all of us ought to know by now that there are some requests we make known to our God and those requests seem to be left unanswered. But, Biblical truth covers all of our questions; that is if we are willing to seek the truth, wait for the truth, and hold fast to the truth. One way or the other, we will have our prayers answered in due time (HIS time). The measure of spiritual maturity is found in the Word of God. D. L. Moody stated it like this, *"The Bible was not written for our information but for our transformation."*

The truth part of this equation is when we are transformed by the power of God, we can understand that our Lord does not change his position on the power of prayer, faith, grace, and the way one can enter into the presence of the King. "Jesus, our high priest, is the same yesterday, today, and forever." God is faithful, is no respecter of persons, and does not lie!

There are some so-called "super saints" who leave the impression that they have a deeper understanding of prayer than most Christians. They believe and sometimes even teach that if other believers understood and practiced God's Word more aggressively and had more faith in their prayers, their petitions/requests would be answered, and they should never have to experience and endure illness and live in poverty again. This attitude, my friend, is "prosperity preaching and teaching" and it does not line up with the full word of God. Taking one or two Scriptures and basing one's philosophy and theology on those few words to live by is the beginning of misunderstanding and misinterpreting God's Word. To study the Word of God and understand God's concept of holiness and Godly living, one must study the concept the Biblical writers were saying about God, life, heaven, how to live in the world, etc.

To approach the truth, we cannot ignore the fact the Jesus came from a

poor family (economically speaking) and the Apostle Paul struggled with "a thorn in the flesh" all his life. Paul prayed for God to remove the pain, but Paul's request was not answered affirmatively. God is not a cosmic genie who promises to answer our every request if we just believe strongly enough in His power.

There are qualifiers or specific attributes to prayer. Someone said that God answers prayer four ways, "Yes," "No," "Wait," and "You have got to be kidding!"

A "YES" answer will be fulfilled in God's timing. That is, unless the one who requests or makes the petition to God gets in the way and tries to force God to expedite the affirmative answer.

J. Vernon McGee, a wonderful old-time preacher/teacher of the Word who has now entered into God's glory, simply stated concerning our prayers that seem unanswered and why, "God designed and directs this universe. We're here at His disposal. He owes us nothing." Then he added, "Frankly, if you don't like the way He's running things, go off and start your own universe."

That is funny, but maybe a little harsh to those who have prayed for their loved ones' healing, and it just doesn't happen. However, the statement lets us know God's thoughts and ways are not like ours. God loves us as His children and does not punish us with harsh words or actions that would discourage us or cause unbearable pain. The Lord Jesus gave us ample evidence of His love by coming to earth and suffering and dying for our sins. He gave us proof of His power by rising from the dead. All of his miraculous and wonderful actions were cleared and enacted by God, the Father, Himself. Jesus said to the Father, "Not my will, but thine be done." The act of crucifixion of the Son of God would have never been approved by man. It was the plan of God to restore mankind to fellowship with Him in this manner. Sin was the enemy which crucified God's only Son. Humanly speaking, it was a terrible, horrible, and an inhumane plan. But together, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit acted and made it possible for sinners to be set free to enter God's Kingdom. Faith in a God who loves us is the only answer for mankind. We would not have done it that way...but because we can see the overall plan of redemption God has for mankind, we can have good reason to believe that, "All things work together for good to those that love God and are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28). We read that verse at times and say in our

spirit, "Really?" God then answers, "Yes, really!"

The Word of God states that we have an enemy who is constantly trying to destroy our faith in God. Satan is at work at all times. He works to "steal our identity, steal our happiness and joy, kill our dreams, kill our eternal plans of being with our Lord and the saints in heaven, and destroy our testimony of being "born again" and a child of the King. The Word states, He (Satan, the devil) comes to steal, kill, and destroy. He knows how to do that with conniving perfection and evil planning to break us, to discourage us, and for us to look for ways out of this mess here on earth. If we let him, he will carry us to the lowest depths of human despair.

We must remember, God wins in the end. Satan will be destroyed and God is going to rule eternally. In the meantime, we are to hold the fort, stay strong, and do as Joshua claimed, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." We need to make it a personal thing, "I will serve the Lord even when I don't see God acting on my behalf." Just remember, "If God is for us who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31).

"Obviously, if God is for us, the whole world can be against us, because man in his revolt against God not only protests against his Creator but against all the redeemed. Implicit in the apostle's statement is not just who can be against us, but who could possibly stand against us. This is, of course, a rhetorical question; the answer is obvious. No one can stand against us if God is standing with us. An aphorism that has since become something of a cliché goes like this: One person with God on his side is in a majority against all the rest of the human race." R.C. Sproul

God doesn't promise that all our prayers will be answered just as we have expressed them. He does promise, however, that He hears our prayers and, in the end, (at the final curtain), all will be made right (we win...evil loses). In the meantime, our quest for the best is not to understand or explain, but to trust and to wait. It is like the words to the song we sing in churches, at our desk at work, or in the kitchen while we are washing dishes: "It Will Be Worth It All When We See Jesus!"

It Will be Worth It All When We See Jesus!

Words by Esther K. Rusthoi (1940)

Oft times the day seems long, our trials hard to bear, We're tempted to complain, to murmur and despair;

But Christ will soon appear to catch His Bride away, All tears forever over in God's eternal day.

It will be worth it all when we see Jesus. Life's trials will seem so small when we see Christ.

One glimpse of His dear face all sorrow will erase, So bravely run the race till we see Christ.

Sometimes the sky looks dark with not a ray of light. We're tossed and driven on, no human help in sight.

But there is one in heav'n who knows our deepest care; Let Jesus solve your problem – just go to Him in prayer.

Life's day will soon be o'er, all storms forever past, We'll cross the great divide, to glory, safe at last;

And we'll all share the joys of heav'n – a harp, a home, a crown. The tempter will be banished, we'll lay our burden down.

It will be worth it all when we see Jesus. Life's trials will seem so small when we see Christ.

One glimpse of His dear face all sorrow will erase, So bravely run the race till we see Christ.

The following are Seven (7) significant Biblical reasons why God might not answer our prayers as requested:

1. UNCONFESSED SIN:

"Surely the arm of the Lord is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear." (Isa 59:1-2).

2. **AN UNFORGIVING SPIRIT:**

"And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins." (Mark 11:25).

3. **AN UNBELIEVING HEART:**

"But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does" (James 1:6-8).

4. **IMPROPER MOTIVES:**

"When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures." (James 4:3).

5. **LAZINESS:**

2 Thessalonians 3:10, *"For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat."*

There is no future for a lazy person in the kingdom, no matter how prayerful you are. There are some lazy Christians everywhere thinking that prayers will help them. So...these lazy believers spend all their time in church praying instead of going out to look for work opportunities. The truth is this, prayer is not a substitute for work. Prayer can enhance your effectiveness, prayer can give you access to the top, but hard work and commitment will keep you there. Some Christians pray to get admission to a specific

University and when they finally get there, they become too lazy to study. Laziness is a spiritual cancer to be resisted physically, mentally, and spiritually. "If you don't work you don't eat."

"Pray without ceasing" is another blessed Scripture. This does not mean we need to spend all our time on our knees when the field is white unto harvest and we need to work the fields.

6. **PRIDE:**

Psalms 138:6, *"Though the LORD be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off."*

No proud man can receive answers to His prayers. This is because, God is the one that resists the proud

1 Peter 5:5-6, *"In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because 'God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.' Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time."*

7. **IMPATIENCE:**

Hebrews 6:12, *"That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."*

Patience is an attribute of the fruit of the spirit. We need that virtue to see answers to our prayers. There is always a waiting period between when we pray and when we receive our answers. Just like every farmer must wait for harvest after sowing seeds, we must also learn to wait for our prayer(s) to be answered. Habakkuk 2:2-3,

Tells us that God's vision for us must come to pass, but we must wait for it.

Thus, we conclude with seven (7) hindrances to seeing and experiencing our prayers being answered. I know there are many other reasons for unanswered prayers; however, the above reasons give us a biblical basis where many of our prayers are left either unanswered or put on hold. Fear, irresponsibility, and hindering spirits are also some hindrances to an effective prayer life. We could go on and on. I just want the reader to understand that God is not ever the problem; we are.

It is not my desire to point out all the reasons our prayers are not answered as we would want them to be. And, it is not my desire to discourage anyone from praying in earnest about personal needs and the needs of others. Keep on praying and praying. Where we need to improve and make amends to our God, let us be willing to let His will be done. Jesus prayed this way, i.e. "Not my will but thine be done."

You and I, hopefully, have seen many prayers answered as we walk the Christian walk. The maturity of the Christian is measured by his/her steadfast faith under trying circumstances.

Matthew 21:22: *"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."*

As a believer, the place of prayer can never be overemphasized. Jesus speaking in Luke 18:1 encouraged us to pray always and not faint.

If we give our full heart to God so that our life, our actions, and our thoughts reflect the fact that God loves us, then He will lead us in showing us what we should be doing.

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." Proverbs 3:5-6 KJV.

"For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong on behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him." 2 Chronicles 16:9 KJV.

We do not serve a weak god of our imagination! We serve a God that makes things happen! Who created the Universe! Who creates things by His voice alone! What He chooses to do is not always what we want to happen, but we must remember that He knows the beginning from the end. He knows much better what the best way for us is at the present and in the future. He sees around the corner, He hears when we cry out in pain, and He protects us from the arrows of the accuser. Our future time with our God will be "more than we could ever imagine."

"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us..." Ephesians 3:20

BE A
Prayer
WARRIOR
Luke 21:36