

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR PRAYERS SEEM UNANSWERED

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Today I want to share about what to do when your prayers seem unanswered, and I want to put the emphasis on the fact that your prayers “seem” to be unanswered.” The truth is that God always, always answers any pray that is prayed according to His Word in faith. In 1 John 5:14-15 it says, “And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.” That is a lot of confidence. God always answers prayer, but it doesn’t always look like it’s answered. Matthew 7:7-8 says, “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.” Those verses are saying that God does answer prayer. Yet every one of us can think of a time in our lives when we asked for something that we believed was a right thing, a good thing not totally selfish or outside of God’s will, yet we didn’t see the answer.

God’s Word says to ask, and it will be given to you; but our experience says we asked, and it wasn’t given to us. Which is true? The answer may surprise you, but the truth is that probably both are true. Most people think, “Now wait a minute, God’s Word says he will answer, and I didn’t see it happen.” John 4:24 says, “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” God operates in the spiritual realm to answer your prayer, but it takes faith on your part to manifest. Faith is what takes things from the spiritual world and moves them into the physical world. This is basically what Hebrews 11:1 says: “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” It didn’t say faith is the evidence of things that don’t exist. They do exist, but they are not in the seen physical world; but in the unseen spiritual realm. Faith reaches over into the spiritual realm and draws those things into the physical world.

It’s like a radio signal. Radio and television stations are broadcasting constantly. You can be in a room where you can’t see or hear the signals, but that doesn’t mean they aren’t there. You have to turn a radio on and tune it to the frequency you want to hear. Then the radio pulls those signals out of a realm you can’t perceive and rebroadcasts them in a realm where you can hear them with your human ear. God answers our prayers in a similar way: He gives things in the spiritual realm, and by faith we have to reach out and bring them into the physical world. The physical and spiritual worlds move parallel to each other. God moves and answers your prayer, but you may never see it manifest in the physical unless you let faith bridge the gap between the unseen spiritual realm and the physical world we live in.

For example, Daniel, a man of God, was praying and asking God to give him a revelation. For the sake of time, I’ll summarize the story. The Lord sent the angel, Gabriel, to appear to Daniel and answer his prayer. Daniel 9:22-23 says, “And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth; and I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.” Here is the point: Gabriel said that at the beginning of Daniel’s prayer, the commandment from God came for him to bring the answer. If you read how long it

took to bring the answer, it was about three minutes, a three-minute lag time between God's command and the physical manifestation.

We make a lot of suppositions that if God is really God and something is His will, it just happens like the snap of a finger; but that's not true. In this instance, God gave the command, and it took approximately three minutes for Gabriel to cover that distance. I don't have all the reasons for this, and it's really not essential. The point I'm trying to make is that from the time God gave the command, there was a lag time of approximately three minutes before it was manifest. Now if that was the longest we had to believe for an answer to prayer, most of us could probably hold on, but it's not always that way.

In Daniel 10 we find the same man praying another prayer, and this time it took three weeks for the answer to come. Many people who read this would say, "Why did God answer one of Daniel's prayers in three minutes and the next prayer in three weeks?" Daniel 10:11-12 says, "And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling. Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words." This shows that God commanded the messenger from the very first day of Daniel's prayer. It took three weeks for that answer to manifest, but God is faithful. Scripture that says He is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8).

If you put chapters 9 and 10 together, I believe God answered both prayers instantly. One took three minutes, and the other took three weeks, but God wasn't the variable. Here's the point: God answers our prayers. He does things, but there are a lot of variables that can happen between the time He answers prayers and you see the answers manifest. You have to believe; faith has to reach into the spiritual realm and bring the answer into the physical realm. So faith is one of the critical ingredients.

Also you can see in verse 13 of Daniel chapter 10, "But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia." This isn't talking about a physical person but a demonic hindrance. Satan is another variable in the process. Sometimes God answers our prayers, but Satan hinders them through other people. For instance, if you're believing for finances, God isn't going to give you money personally. He's not going to counterfeit United States currency or any other currency of this world. He's not going to make money, rain it down from heaven, and put it in your pocket. Luke 6:38 says, "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give unto your bosom." God will move and answer your prayer, but it's going to come through people. Some people are bound by greed, and if they are angry with you or you're doing things to offend them, Satan can hinder the manifestation of your prayer through them. When you're praying, especially for finances, you need to recognize that other people may be a part of your financial miracle, and you may have to pray for them.

To close this lesson, let me tell you a story. A man who had tried to sell his house for two years heard me teach on this. The Lord made an application to his situation and said, "I'm not the one who is going to buy your house. You've been praying over and over asking me to sell your house, but I'm not going to buy it. I'm going to use people. There is a person I've already spoken to about buying your house, but his finances have been hindered." The Lord told the man to intercede for that person. He didn't know

who the person was, so he couldn't do it specifically. What he did was pray in tongues, let the Holy Spirit make intercession for him, and within two days the man came to him, money in hand, and bought his house. At closing, the buyer said, "Two years ago, when you put your house up for sale, I told my wife, 'That is our home, and we're going to have it.' For two years I've been trying to sell my home so I could buy yours." He then said, "The strangest thing happened. Two days ago [which we know, was the day that man started praying] all the hindrances were removed. My house closed, I got the money, and here I am buying your house." God had spoken to this man two years before, but there was a hindrance. It's the same way with you. God always answers your prayers, but they come in the spiritual form. You have to believe to get them to manifest into the physical, and sometimes you have to deal with demonic hindrances that slow them down.

God is faithful. He has never failed to answer any prayer that was based on his Word and prayed in faith. He always gives, but you may not see the manifestation, depending on other variables. I pray this will help you to build your faith and let you know that God always, always answers your prayers. If you ask, you do receive.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR PRAYERS SEEM UNANSWERED (Outline)

1 John 5:14-15 says, “And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: ¹⁵And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.” God always answers any prayer that is prayed according to His Word in faith.

Matthew 7:7-8 says, “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: ⁸For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.”

John 4:24 says, “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” There is a spiritual world and a physical world. They move parallel to each other. God moves in the spiritual realm to answer our prayer, and then it is manifest into the physical realm.

Hebrews 11:1 says, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Faith is the bridge that takes things from the spiritual world and moves them into the physical world.

Daniel 10:11 says, “And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling.”

Daniel 11:22-23 says, “And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflowed from before him, and shall be broken; yea, also the prince of the covenant. ²³And after the league made with him he shall work deceitfully: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people.” In both prayers Daniel prayed, God answered instantly.

There can be many variables causing a length of time between when God answers our prayer and the time we see them manifest.

1. We have to have faith.
2. Satan can hinder our prayers using other people.

God is faithful. He always answers your prayer. When you ask, you receive.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR PRAYERS SEEM UNANSWERED (Teacher's Guide)

1. A. According to 1 John 5:14, what is our confidence in?

In God, that He will hear us.

- B. According to 1 John 5:15, since God hears us, what is the result?

We shall have our petitions.

2. A. What does Matthew 7:7-8 say?

If we ask, we receive; if we seek, we find; and if we knock, it shall be opened.

- B. Why does it seem as if some of our prayers are not answered?

Because we don't see the results right away.

3. According to John 4:24, what is God and how must people worship Him?

God is a Spirit and must be worshiped in spirit.

NOTE: God operates in the spiritual realm and answers prayers in that realm. To get our answered prayer from the spiritual realm to the physical, it takes faith.

4. According to Hebrews 11:1, what is faith?

The substance of things hoped for.

5. According to Daniel 9:23, when did the command to the angel come forth?

At the beginning of the supplications (prayer).

6. A. According to Daniel 10:12, on what day of Daniel's prayer was the angel sent?

From the first day.

B. According to Daniel 10:13, how long did it take for the angel to bring the answer and why?

Twenty-one days, because "the prince of Persia" (the devil) withstood him (the angel).

NOTE: There are several variables to seeing prayer manifested. One variable is our faith. Another variable is the devil, and still another is other people and their faith. Remember—God always answers prayers that are in agreement with His Word and prayed in faith.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR PRAYERS SEEM TO BE UNANSWERED (Detailed Teacher's Guide)

Note: The following information may be read out loud (a numbered section at a time) with the person(s) being disciplined. After each numbered section is read, pause and ask the question(s) that correspond to the paragraph(s), and then discuss them.

¹We are like a spiritual transformer. Spiritual power has to be converted to physical power just as radio signals have to be converted into frequencies that are audible to our physical ears. You don't hear the actual signal broadcast by the radio station but rather a signal that has been picked up by a receiver and translated into an audible sound. For a person to say there aren't any radio signals where he is, just because he cannot hear them, is not true. They are there but are on a higher frequency than the human ear can hear. They have to be demodulated into a lower frequency that we can hear.

²This is the way our answers to prayer come. God moves in the spirit world and gives us the answer by faith, and we convert it into a physical reality through our actions. However, that does not mean that we produce the answer by our power. It is God who works the miracles, but they come through us. Without Him, we can do nothing, but He has made us joint heirs together with Christ so that He does nothing without us. Ephesians 3:20 says, "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us." We have a part to play in receiving from God. Ignorance of this concept is our greatest problem. Now you can understand much more clearly what Mark 11:24 means, which says, "What things so ever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Immediately you receive it in your spirit by faith, and it will come to pass in the physical later. It may take one minute, one day, or one year, but you cannot waiver in your belief that God has already answered your prayer. The time that it takes for God's answer to manifest in the physical realm is dependent upon many things, but it is not God who determines those things. God answers immediately. Remember, it says you must believe that you receive when you pray. God isn't asking you to believe something that isn't true. You do receive instantly in your spirit, then it manifests later in the physical realm.

¹ (a) Radio signals need to be converted into what in order for our physical ears to hear? (Frequencies).

(b) Spiritual power needs to be converted into what? The physical.

² (a) Ephesians 3:20 says, God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think according to what? The power that works in us.

(b) Explain what Mark 11:24 is saying.

³ An example of this is in Daniel 9 and 10. In chapter 9, Daniel prayed a prayer, and while he was still praying, the answer to his prayer came in the form of Gabriel, who gave him “skill and understanding” in the things he desired. That’s a quick answer to prayer! In Verse 23, Gabriel says that God sent him forth at the beginning of Daniel’s prayer. God moved instantly, but it took about three minutes for the answer to appear in the physical realm. In Daniel, chapter 10, he prayed another prayer, and the answer to this prayer took three weeks to manifest. What a difference! Most people ask, “I wonder why God answered that first prayer in three minutes, but the second prayer took three weeks to answer?” Well in Daniel 10:12, we find that God answered the second prayer instantly too. Praise God! The Lord was not the variable. In this case, it was a demonic force, “The prince of the kingdom of Persia,” that had hindered the answer to Daniel’s prayer.

⁴ Whether it is Satan, people’s wills, unbelief, or any other hindrance, it is important that you know that it is not God who is unpredictable (Psalms 102:27, Malachi 3:6). This is a fundamental truth that you must understand before you can do anything to speed up the answer to your prayer. If you pray a prayer in line with God’s Word, God will answer it immediately (1 John 5:14-15, Daniel 9 and 10). If you understand this, then you will be able to release your faith for the answer to your prayer and see it manifest more quickly in the physical realm.

³Who kept Daniel’s prayer from being manifested in the physical realm for 21 days? (Daniel 10:13)

⁴What does 1 John 5:14-15 teach us about prayer?

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR PRAYERS SEEM UNANSWERED
(Discipleship Questions)

Read 1 John 5:14-15

1. What is our confidence we have in God?
2. What do we have to ask according to?
3. Can we expect the Lord to answer our prayers if it is not according to His will?
4. Write out verse 15.

Causes of unanswered prayer:

Read Isaiah 59:1-2

5. Is the Lord's hand shortened?
6. Is His ear heavy that it cannot hear?

Read Proverbs 1:28-29

7. Verse 29 mentions two conditions that occurred for the Lord to not answer the wicked. List them.
A. _____ B. _____

Read Isaiah 1:15-17

8. In this Old Testament reading, why did God say He would hide His eyes and not hear their prayers?
9. What nine things are you commanded to do in verses 16-17?
A. _____
B. _____
C. _____
D. _____
E. _____
F. _____
G. _____
H. _____
I. _____
10. Are each of these passive or active responses to the Word of God?

Read Zechariah 7:8-13

11. In verses 9-10, you are again commanded to do the things you listed in Isaiah, chapter 1. What was their response to this command in verse 11?
12. How did they make their hearts?

Read James 1:6-7

13. How are we to ask of God?
14. What is one who doubts like?
15. What can a man who doubts expect to receive?
16. What two things characterize a man who doubts?
A. _____ B. _____

17. Read James 4:2-4

- “ You _____ and do not have. You _____ and _____ and cannot obtain. You _____ and _____. Yet you do not _____ because you do not _____.”
18. _____.
 19. Why is it that when you ask, you do not receive?
 20. What is friendship with the world?

Read Acts 8:20-23

21. Can you buy your way into the things of God?
22. How was Simon not right in the sight of God?
23. What was he to repent from to get right with God?
24. What poisoned his thoughts?
A. _____ B. _____

Read Matthew 26:41

25. What are you commanded to do in order to escape falling into temptation?
A. _____ B. _____
26. What is willing? _____ What is weak? _____

Read Matthew 7:7-8

27. "ASK and it will be
28. SEEK and you will
29. KNOCK and it will be
30. What can we expect from God if we ask?
31. What can we expect from God if we seek Him?
32. What can we expect to happen if we knock?
33. Will God give to you anything less than what He promised?

Read John 16:23-24

34. What will God give to us if we ask for anything in the name of Jesus?
35. Why would God give to us whatever we asked?

Read John 15:7

36. Where must we abide?
37. What must abide in us?
38. With those two conditions present, what is the result if we ask for the things we desire?

Read Psalm 37:3-6

39. List the things that are required of us in order to receive the desires of our hearts.
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____
 - D. _____
 - E. _____
40. What must we do for Him to bring it to pass (verse 5)?
 - A. _____
 - B. _____

Read Psalm 91:14-16

41. What will God do for you when you set your love upon Him?

42. What will He do because you have known His name?
43. What will He do when you call upon Him?
44. What comes first?
 - A. God answering your prayers first and then you trusting Him
 - B. You trusting God and then Him answering your prayers

Read 1 John 3:22

45. Why is it that our prayers would be answered according to this verse?
46. What is His commandment?

Read Isaiah 65:24

47. When will God answer your prayers?
48. When will He hear you?

Read Mark 11:22-24

49. Who are we to have faith in?
50. In what condition do our hearts and minds need to be to see the “mountain be cast into the sea”?
51. When we pray for something and believe we have already received it, what will the end result be?

REPENT
BELIEVE
ASK
RECEIVE

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR PRAYERS SEEM UNANSWERED
(Discipleship Answer Key)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. If we ask anything according to His will
He hears us | 16. Nothing |
| 2. God's will | 17. A. Double-minded
B. Unstable |
| 3. No | 18. Ask – murder – covet – fight – war – have –
ask |
| 4. And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever
we ask, we know that we have the petitions
that we desired of him. | 19. Because you ask amiss |
| 5. No | 20. Enmity with God |
| 6. No | 21. No |
| 7. Iniquities | 22. His heart was not right |
| 8. A. Hated knowledge B. Did not fear God | 23. Wickedness |
| 9. Their hands are full of blood | 24. A. bitterness
B. bound by iniquity |
| 10. A. Wash your hands
B. Make yourself clean
C. Put away evil
D. Cease from evil
E. Learn to do good
F. Seek Justice
G. Rebuke the oppressor
H. Defend the fatherless
I. Plead for the widow | 25. A. Watch
B. Pray |
| 11. Active | 26. The spirit – The flesh |
| 12. Refused to heed, shrugged shoulders, plugged
their ears | 27. Given to you |
| 13. Like flint (hard) | 28. Find |
| 14. In faith without doubting | 29. Opened to you |
| 15. A wave of the sea, driven and tossed by wind | 30. We will receive |
| | 31. We will find Him |
| | 32. He will open the door |
| | 33. No |
| | 34. Whatever we ask |

35. That our joy may be full
36. In Christ
37. His Word
38. It shall be done
39. A. Trust
B. Do good
C. Dwell
D. Feed
E. Delight
40. A. Commit
B. Trust
41. Deliver me
42. Set me on high
43. Answer me
44. B. You Trusting God
45. We have kept His commandments and done
what is pleasing things in His sight
46. To believe in Jesus and love our neighbor
47. Before I call
48. While I am still speaking
49. God
50. Without doubt
51. We will have it

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR PRAYERS SEEM UNANSWERED (Additional Information)

All of us have had experiences where it didn't look like our prayers were answered, but is that really what happened? The Bible says in Matthew 7:7, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Is that true? Well, many people say it couldn't mean what it appears to say, because they can cite experiences when they asked for something and didn't receive it. But you have to make the decision stated in Romans 3:4 to "let God be true, but every man [or in this case, every circumstance] a liar." God's Word is true. . .not our experiences.

This is one of the reasons so much doctrinal division has come about. The Word is clear in its doctrine, but when someone tries the Word and doesn't see the promised results, rather than admit that they failed, they say something like "that must have passed away with the apostles" or "it must not have been God's will," etc. God is not the one who failed to answer, but rather we are the ones who have failed to receive.

What actually happens when we ask in prayer is that God moves immediately and gives us the answer in our spirits. We are responsible for believing that answer and acting accordingly to bring the answer into the physical world. God is a Spirit (John 4:24), and He always supplies the answer to our spirit man. Through faith we then give physical substance (Hebrews 11:1) to what God has done.

We are like a spiritual transformers. Spiritual power has to be converted to physical power just as radio signals have to be converted into frequencies, audible to our physical ears. You don't hear the actual signal broadcast by the radio station but rather a signal that has been picked up by a receiver and translated into an audible sound. For a person to say that there aren't any radio signals where he is just because he cannot hear them is not true. They are there, but they are on a higher frequency than the human ear can hear.

This is the way our answers to prayer come. God moves in the spirit realm and gives us our answers by faith, and we convert them into a physical reality through our actions. That is not to say that we are the one who produce the answer by our own power; it is God who works the miracles, but they do come through us. Without Him we can do nothing, but He has made us joint heirs together with Christ so that He does nothing without us. Ephesians 3:20 says, "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us." We have a part to play in receiving from God. Ignorance of this truth has been our greatest problem.

Now you can understand much more clearly what Mark 11:24 means: “What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.” You receive in your spirit by faith immediately, and it shall come to pass in the physical later. It may be one minute, one day, or one year, but you cannot waiver in your belief that God has already answered your prayer. The time that it takes for God’s answer to manifest those things in the physical is dependent upon many things, but it is not God who determines that. God answers immediately. Remember, it says you must believe that you receive when you pray. God isn’t asking you to believe something that isn’t true. You do receive instantly in your spirit; then it is manifests in the physical realm later.

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