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Why God Stops Answering Prayers

By Joyce C. Lock

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Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet,
and shew my people their transgression,
and the house of Jacob their sins.

Isaiah 58:1

During one particular Christmas season, I learned of a church member who had considerable financial/material need. When I inquired as to if even the Sunday School class might do anything to help, the response was that it was too late ~ that her name should have been submitted sooner. Only, the remainder of the year, none of the church helps anyone in material need. Each month, they give a few dollars to a local missions project, say they already gave, and send the needy on their way.

So, in this case, I began to look after and minister to this family on my own. Even so, neither did their heart change toward her, as she had lived in sin sometime in her past. (Never mind that she wasn't very bright and had fallen prey to one who promised to help.) She wasn't allowed to serve, even as a helper, with little ones; where she was capable.

On another occasion, while visiting with a church member that was in the process of recovering from a knee surgery, I inquired as to how we, as a church, might be able to better love her in her time of need.

Being that this was her 16th knee surgery, she had endured several previous painful mishaps as a result. In her sharing, our spirits connected, having experienced similar things; of even the same people. We were in agreement that we sometimes have to pray, "Father, forgive them," even when they don't care what they do and also to look over those more ignorant of their offences.

Though now, in humble spirit, her only request was to be able to return to church; without risking further injury while her knee was healing.

Why God Stops Answering Prayers

As it was, there was only one end pew where she could sit with her leg elevated, that would also be out of harm's way for when membership exchanged handshakes within the service. But, that seat belonged to someone else.

And, as it was, in this church, no one was allowed to take anything upon themselves without having received permission from specified "authority". Only, I thought God was The Authority. But, since it wasn't viewed that way, request would need be made to ask the other person to give up their seat ~ only until her knee had recovered.

Leadership said, "No." They were concerned about offending the other party, were not aware of the details of the unkindness that had taken place when they had tried to reserve a seat for her in the past,

and didn't seem to believe that anyone else could possibly hear from God.

But, what was even more odd was this. Ladies brought her three meals a day, every day, for the first time ever. Only her mother had come to visit, especially for that purpose. Church members were scurrying all over the place to finally show they cared. Yet, no one had inquired as to her true need.

With a few more closed doors, I lost heart for going out on church visitation as, to tell people we loved them, only to find out we didn't, well ... that caused more harm than good.

Though, if you are a church that intends to follow through, just try it. Tell your members that you have come to visit them to know what it is they truly need (whether that need be prayer, to assist in some spiritual understanding, or even to correct problems within the nursery), that you want to know how to love them. People are so stunned that everything but their true heart vanishes and you will begin to discover what it is like when God looks upon the heart.

On yet another occasion, a poverty stricken young gentleman had had all his teeth pulled out, at once; to save additional financial expense. Without insurance or the finances for further medical help (the bleeding having already lasted a few days) and, being to such an extent that he was very weak and literally afraid he was going to die, he requested I phone a specific preacher (that he respected for such a time as this) to come out to his home and pray over him. That preacher refused.

Sometime later, the same preacher responded that he never goes on a call like that unless the individual, themselves, request he come as, otherwise, his time is wasted ~ when it had only been a family member that had hoped such a situation would bring them to the Lord.

I said that he asked. But, I guess no one was listening. And, that young man has not been inside a church since, with the exception of maybe a wedding.

On still another occasion, a different gentleman, from a nearby community, asked me to ask a

Why God Stops Answering Prayers

preacher to visit him at work; being that it was long distance for him to make the call. His place of employment was open to the public and his hours were not as such to visit in the preacher's office. Neither did he have transportation to make the trip. He was very much under Satanic attack and felt desperate for someone to help.

Being that leadership refused, I went to a second church where I also knew that pastor. He refused, too. To my knowledge, this gentleman has not been back to church since. The excuse given was the same: until the person in need makes the request, such a visit is futile.

Are they dull of hearing?

Having once run across an old friend from my childhood church, he shared how he spent the last of his money to purchase a new pair of jeans (the closest thing he had to decent, to wear; which was his Sunday best), so he could attend church. They refused him at the door. He wasn't wearing a suite.

All I know to say, sometimes, is that people fail us, we fail God, but God never fails ... that such is not God's doing. But, it wasn't enough to convince him to try another church.

Once, I went to the supposed top authority with a message that I had heard from God. Yet, that message was not received. So, I requested that they make inquiry of God, that if God says to wait I will wait, but that they know I did in fact hear from God.

He agreed on all points but one and that exception is in the Bible. But, he refused to ask God if this might be that exception. Loss of membership and much adversity followed.

I once knew of a church leader that would destroy all letters received, without reading, unless they were signed. That was his policy for which he shared was as per God's instruction to him, many years ago. Only, in believing that would be God's answer for every letter, within every church, forever; he missed receiving important information that could not be signed for safety reasons.

There is an exception for every rule. So, when we put God in a box and leave off the need to further discern ~ we risk missing God's best.

As of late, I have not found anyone, anywhere, that is willing to help persecuted Christians with even the paperwork to help them get to safety ... even when sharing the exception to such rules of thought. And, in time, I have discovered the reasons given for refusal not to be true ~ not that they lie, but that people speak as though they have knowledge in areas where they are ignorant. Many freedoms we

Why God Stops Answering Prayers

take for granted are not viable options for others.

But, due to a few trying to scam via the computer, we don't trust anyone. Right?

It is not my intent to express that any of these people, above, have always been of the saintly sort, nor is this list all conclusive of the ways we turn people away.

I am sharing such things to say, what I have seen, repeatedly, is people who have had a bad experience (or fear having a bad experience) tend to place everyone else in the same basket. They are no longer judging each situation individually to determine merit. And, God's will for them may not be identical to the path He has chosen for you.

There comes a time when one's heart is ready to receive. But if our mind is closed ~ we both lose. Neither are people taking the time to ask God before making these decisions. We cannot truthfully claim to be representing God when we don't bother to ask His will.

And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

Matthew 24:12

In true sincerity, I do not recall one time ever wherein I have approached an adult (represented to be in Christian leadership) at the direct leading of God, and received the desired results.

These are God's children, too. Do you honestly believe God will not visit for this?

And they ask, "But, didn't you notice, God, that we served you to the point of affliction?" Isaiah 58:3a (par).

And God responds, "You've got to be kidding. You weren't serving me." Isaiah 58:4 (par). Then, He tells them, "You did it to yourself and I'm not listening any more," Isaiah 59:2 (par).

And, they wonder, "But, what did we do?"

And, God responds, "A little bit of everything except what I told you to do." Isaiah 59:3–15 (par).

Once you finally begin to realize that your prayers are no longer reaching heaven, perhaps then, you will know that God meant what He said.

Is not this the fast that I have chosen?

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to loose the bands of wickedness,

(no exceptions)

to undo the heavy burdens,

(no exceptions)

and to let the oppressed go free,

(no exceptions)

and that ye break every yoke?

(no exceptions)

Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry,

(no exceptions)

and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house?

(no exceptions)

when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him;

(no exceptions)

and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

(no exceptions)

Isaiah 58:6–7

When you stop pointing fingers long enough
to listen for the true needs of the heart
and thereby learn to love unconditionally,
God will start answering your prayers, again.

Isaiah 58:9 (par).

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Joyce C. Lock is a published author, poet, and columnist. In addition, she founded and maintains the e-mail ministries "Heavenly Inspirations" <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HeavenlyInspirations/> and "Share a Smile" <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/smilesaring/>. Joyce's writings encourage us in our relationship with God and each other.

WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHO, WHY...PRAYER

By Irvin L. Rozier

WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHO, WHY...PRAYER by Irvin L. Rozier

What answer can I give to those who often say
There is no God, why should I bother to pray
Storms of life come in every shape and form
A smooth sailing through life is surely not the norm

When do answers to prayers come, or do they come at all
Does God really hear my prayers when upon His name I call
I must keep on praying although no answer is in sight
My answer may come today or it may come this very night

Where should I pray, in a public or secret place
Should I be standing upright or should I fall upon my face
I've heard many prayers prayed in a pretty church
I've observed men praying from a lofty perch

Who should I pray to, Jesus is the only one
Who died on the cross, He is God's only son
I must pray with power like the holy men of old
I my time of need, I must be very bold

Why should I continue to pray, I must ask
Often my prayer time is such a difficult task
Interruptions come and doubt creeps in my head
My heart believes in Jesus, I know that He is not dead

The words of this poem were gleaned from many years
Of praying to Jesus, who has often wiped my tears
I've prayed many prayers during the past many days
I know that God hears and answers, in many ways

Without Jesus, I would have no prayers and no hope

Why God Stops Answering Prayers

Of a better day coming, I must hold on to the rope
The Word of God bids us to pray without ceasing
The prayers of God's children to Him are very pleasing

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author of My Walk with the Lord, www.selahbooks.com



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Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
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