

Why God might delay the answer to your prayers

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**Why God might delay the answer to your prayers**

**By Terry Dashner**

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Why Does God Delay the Answers to Our Prayers?

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Have you ever had a pressing need in your life and prayed with all your might that God would answer you quickly? Have you ever been disappointed when the answer failed to materialize? If your answer to these questions is yes then you might be interested in what I'm going to share with you.

God is a gracious God who longs to fellowship with us. He has created us for His glory (Isa.43:7), and He delights in blessing us. He wants to bless us so that He can demonstrate His magnificent glory to the entire world. With that said, it is important to know that God wants us to pray. Also, He wants to answer our prayers. So this begs the questions: If God wants us to pray, wants us to have answers, then why doesn't He answer all our prayers?

What I'm about to share with you did not come from a text book. I'm going to share with you what I've learned about answered prayers from years of praying, petitioning, interceding, and living (sometimes struggling) through the Christian walk.

One thing I've learned is that God does answer prayers but not always immediately or in the way I think they should be answered. Let me illustrate this. There is an ancient parable taught in some countries that underscores the importance of children obeying their parents.

The story is told of a father and son who journey to the woods one day. After some time in the forest the father decides to sit down for a rest. The boy, on the other hand, is not ready to rest and decides to climb a large tree. Going higher and higher, from limb to limb the boy suddenly stops climbing and turns towards his father who is resting below. Just as the boy calls out to his father, the father jumps to his feet and tells his son to come down immediately. The boy disheartened, but nonetheless obedient, moves down the tree quickly.

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When the boy asks his father why he had been ordered down, his father points to a large branch just above the perch where he had been only moments before. There on the branch and within striking distance of the boy's earlier perch, was a large viper coiled around a large branch. If the boy had climbed higher and had disturbed the snake, he could have been fatally wounded by its venom.

What this parable teaches is relative to our relationship with our heavenly Father. From our position in life, sometimes it's difficult to see what lies ahead. But from the Father's advantage point, He sees everything. Oftentimes He will test our obedience by telling us to "wait" or telling us "no." We might think He is insensitive to our feelings or putting on us too much to bear at the time; however, later with His loving grace He reveals to us His wisdom in His answer.

I've learned through these times not to question God or to doubt His trustworthiness. He is always

looking out for my good just like the father in the ancient parable. He might not answer me the way I think He should, but I'm usually made aware later of His infinite wisdom in doing what He did or the way He did it. Glory!

I've also learned from years of praying (for things) that God is more concerned about me fellowshiping with Him than He is about giving me "things." Someone once said that it's okay to have "things" just don't let "things" have you. That's the point of God delaying or denying me "things." I'll try to explain it better this way. Yes, I'm like you and want nice things. In Matthew's Gospel (Matt.6:33) it talks about the desire of my Heavenly Father to give me many things; however, before He will give me things, He will first make sure that I'm mature enough to handle the things. For example, although my son wanted to drive my car when he was 12, I didn't throw the keys to him and say, "Sure son, take her for a spin." Of course he had to grow to maturity and procure a drivers license before I would let him drive.

I'm satisfied that many times I ask for things that are not ready for me yet. The test is: Will I use the requested thing or things for God's Glory and not my own? For example, if He were to give me a million dollars before I knew the value and purpose of faithful stewardship, would I use the money to glorify Him or His Kingdom? I'm sad to say, probably not. God has good reason for holding back some of the things I ask for. The reason: I need more work and maturity in that area which can only be accomplished by sustained fellowship with Him.

Moreover there is something else involved in God's purpose for delaying or denying the answers to my prayers. This is probably the most important lesson I've learned in relation to my prayer life. God wants to enrich my life with His grace. Grace is good. Grace is everything to the Christian. You wouldn't have anything of God without accepting His grace. His grace is unmerited and inexhaustible. When the Apostle Paul prayed to have his "thorn in the flesh" removed from him because it afflicted him, God told him, "No." God told Paul that He would not remove the messenger of Satan but instead would give Paul grace sufficient to endure. Why did God act this way? The text answers the reason why by saying that God's strength is made perfect in weakness.

There is something you should know about God's grace. His grace is inexhaustible and will be poured out on us throughout eternity. So vast is the depth of God's goodness that it will take an eternity to

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empty it. Since there is no end to eternity, there is no end to grace. We read this in Ephesians 2: 7–8: "That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: "(KJV)

The scripture tells us that even in the ages to come God will be pouring out the riches of His grace to his people. Praise God!

In Hebrews 4:16 it tells us that God gives us "helping" grace in time of need. What is "helping" grace? It is enabling grace. Everyday we should pray that God would give us enabling grace to live for His Glory. When we pray for God to remove a burden that seems beyond our ability to carry, we should ask for grace to enable us. The Bible says in ICor.10:13 that God will not labor us with more than we can handle but will provide a way to escape. Be advised though. The escape might not appear to us overnight. God might delay the open door of escape so that we might experience His enabling grace longer.

One last word on extended grace, it comes in various measures. That's right. In Acts chapter four, the

Apostles were given "great grace." In II Cor. 8:7: "Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also."(KJV) In James 4:6 it says that God gives, "...more grace..." It is possible for God to give grace in measure that is great, greater, and greatest.

II Corinthians 9:8: "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work :"( KJV)

I like the phrase, "...all grace abound toward you;" Abounding grace is the highest level of grace bestowed upon you in this life. You receive God's saving grace to get born again. You can petition God for sustaining grace to wage spiritual warfare. You can implore God for enabling grace to live daily for Christ in victory. But when God pours out abounding grace, you are in "the zone." You are flowing in the overflow of God's goodness. You are submerged in His brilliant Glory. You are empowered in His anointing. Abounding grace keeps on giving and giving and giving.

So these are some of the things I've learned in regards to prayer. God doesn't always answer me right away or in a way that I think is best. But, He has His reasons why He delays my answer. When it's in my best interest, He gives me grace to endure. I think He does this because He wants to make me the best that I can be in Him—steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. So the next time you are tempted to wonder why your prayer isn't answered, you might consider the wonders of His marvelous grace in which you find yourself standing. He's got your best interest in mind. He's got your back! Go ahead. Praise Him.

Keep the faith and by all means stay the course through prayer.

Pastor Terry Dashner

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family.

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

**By Irvin L. Rozier**

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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  
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](http://www.selahbooks.com)



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