

HOW TO HEAR FROM GOD?

↳ LEARNING HOW TO PRAY | 2

INTRO | WHAT IS PRAYER?

- Prayer is our means of communication with God. It's how we talk to him and share what is on our hearts.
- Prayer deepens our relationship with God and ultimately reflects our desire to know Christ and become more like him.
- Our prayers should be honest and authentic reflections of our hearts.
- Our prayers aren't gossip sessions. Venting can be present in our prayers, but don't let your prayers only be filled with personal problems and emotions.
- Our prayers should not come from a selfish motive/heart.
- Our prayers should be aligned with God's will.

THE PURPOSE OF PRAYER IS TO:



- SHAPE OUR HEARTS.
- GUIDE OUR ACTIONS.
- REFLECT HIS WAYS.

QUESTIONS WE WILL BE ANSWERING



A1 | WHY DOESN'T GOD ANSWER SOME OF MY PRAYERS?

A2 | HOW DO I KNOW IF MY PRAYERS ARE ALIGNED WITH GOD'S WILL?

B1 | WHAT SHOULD MY RESPONSE BE WHEN GOD DOESN'T ANSWER MY PRAYER(S)?

B2 | WHAT SHOULD MY RESPONSE BE WHEN I CAN'T HEAR FROM GOD?

A1 | WHY DOESN'T GOD ANSWER SOME OF MY PRAYERS?



WHERE IS YOUR HEART AT?



ARE YOU LIVING IN DISOBEDIENCE?

SIN CREATES A BARRIER BETWEEN US AND GOD, HINDERING OUR PRAYERS - DISOBEDIENCE CREATES DISTANCE.

- **Isaiah 59:2 (ESV):** “but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.”

- **Psalm 66:18 (ESV):** “If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.”
- **Proverbs 28:9 (NIV):** “If anyone turns a deaf ear to my instruction, even their prayers are detestable.”

REPENTENCE

- Repentance is the action of turning away from sin and turning towards God through acknowledgment of your sin and the humbling of yourself.
- Repentance is intentional, it’s more than a lofty sorry.
- Repentance is a commitment to live in obedience to God.



WRONG TIMING or WRONG MOTIVES

- **Romans 8:28 (NIV):** “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”
- **Job (Job 1-42):** Job experienced immense suffering and loss, yet remained faithful to God and never ceased to pray. In return, God blessed Job abundantly for his steadfastness.
- **Abraham and Sarah (Genesis 17-21):** It would be roughly 25 years from the time God promised Isaac to the time he was born.
- **David (Psalm 57):** It would be roughly 15 years from the time David would be anointed as king, and later king of all Israel. During this time, Saul was in pursuit of David to kill him.
- **Elizabeth and Zechariah (Luke 1):** Elizabeth and Zechariah would be around 75 years old when they had their first child, John the Baptist. It took many, many years of prayer for God to finally answer.



WRONG MOTIVES

- **James 4:3 (NIV):** “You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.”
- **James 1:6-8 (NLT):** “But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with a divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. Such people should not expect to receive anything from the LORD. Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do.”

PRAYERS DRIVEN BY SELFISH OR IMPURE MOTIVES AREN'T PRAYERS THAT ARE ALIGNED WITH GOD, THUS THEY WILL NOT BE ANSWERED BY GOD.

A2 | HOW DO I KNOW IF MY PRAYER IS ALIGNED WITH GOD'S WILL?

- **Compare your prayer with Scripture** - Does your prayer contradict Scripture? Does your prayer reflect Jesus or the world?
- **Examine your motives** - Is your prayer driven by hate, greed, selfishness, lust, etc.? Or is your prayer driven by love, joy, peace, patience, etc?
- **Look for confirmation through circumstances** - Has God used circumstances or the people around you to confirm his will?
- **Be honorable in your prayers** - Are your prayers respectable to God?

B1 | WHAT SHOULD MY RESPONSE BE WHEN GOD DOESN'T ANSWER MY PRAYER?



TRUST AND HAVE FAITH THAT GOD KNOWS BEST, HE IS IN CONTROL, AND HIS TIMING IS PERFECT.



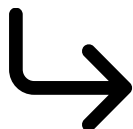
DON'T BECOME BITTER OR ANGRY WITH GOD WHEN YOUR PRAYER ISN'T ANSWERED.

- **Isaiah 55:8-9 (ESV):** “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”
- **Psalms 102:17 (ESV):** “He regards the prayer of the destitute and does not despise their prayer.”



LEAN INTO GOD AND SEEK HIS WILL.

WHAT IS GOD TRYING TO TEACH YOU THROUGH YOUR UNANSWERED PRAYER?



MOMENTS OF TESTING PRODUCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH.

GOD WANTS US TO RELY ON HIM THROUGH OUR TRIALS.

- **2 Corinthians 12:8-9 (ESV):** “Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’”
- **James 1:2-3 (AMP):** “Consider it nothing but joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you fall into various trials. Be assured that the testing on your faith [through experience] produces endurance [leading to spiritual maturity, and inner peace].”



TESTING REFINES OUR FAITH. FAITH OPENS OUR HEARTS TO HEAR FROM GOD. HEARING FROM GOD PROVIDES THE STRENGTH AND CLARITY NEEDED TO ENDURE TESTING. TOGETHER, THEY CREATE A CYCLE OF GROWTH, DRAWING US CLOSER TO GOD AND DEEPENING OUR TRUST IN HIS PLAN.

B2 | WHAT SHOULD MY RESPONSE BE WHEN I CAN'T HEAR FROM GOD?



REPENT.
GET RID OF DISTRACTIONS.
TRUST IN GOD'S PLAN.
HAVE FAITH IN HIS PROMISES.
PRAY INTENTIONALLY.
SEEK GOD'S WILL THROUGH HIS WORD.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Has anything stood out to you personally or challenged you from our sermon series “how to hear from God”?
- What does prayer mean to you, and why is it important?

Questions About Unanswered Prayers

- Have you ever felt like God didn’t answer your prayer? How did that make you feel?
- Why do you think God sometimes says “no” or “wait” to our prayers?
- Can unanswered prayers still have a purpose in our lives? If so, what might that purpose be?
- How can we trust God when we don’t get the answers we’re hoping for?
- What does the Bible teach us about waiting on God in prayer?

Questions About Testing Through Prayer

- Why do you think God allows our faith to be tested through challenges?
- How can prayer help us when we’re going through trials or hard times?
- What do you think it means to trust God even when things don’t make sense?

Personal

- What can you do to strengthen your prayer life?
- How can you remind yourself to keep trusting God when prayers seem unanswered?
- What’s one situation in your life where you can pray for God’s guidance and trust His timing?