

WHY GOD ANSWERS US WHEN WE PRAY

Luke 18:1-8

In Psalm 27, David pleads with God to hear and answer his cry for help. David does not base his request on himself, but on God's grace and mercy. Read Psalm 27.7.

Psalm 27.7 Hear my voice when I call, LORD; be merciful to me and answer me.

Other translations read like this ... Lord, be gracious to me; take pity on me; show me favor; be compassionate on me; please hear me, listen to me and act on my behalf; answer my prayer.

1) Why do you think that God would be merciful, gracious, show pity, or favor or be compassionate toward us? Why does he hear us and answer our prayers?

This passage and verse can be an important reminder to us. God's basis for His answers to our prayers is ultimately not in us, but in Himself and His own character.

Here are several reasons why God answers us when we pray.

GOD'S LOVE. God is a wise, patient, kind, gentle, and forgiving father. He delights in his children. Because of his great love, he is always watching over us and listening to our prayers. Because of his love, he invites us to bring our cares to him, and he assures us that he really does care for us. He is never too busy or distracted or too tired to hear and answer. He doesn't refuse to answer

because of our weakness and failure. He doesn't get impatient because we have to come again and again. He is love, and he loves to exercise his power and glory to meet the needs of his struggling children.

Read 1 Peter 3.12.

2) What does this verse mean to you?

Because of his love, he invites us to bring our cares to him, and he assures us that he really does care for us.

Read 1 Peter 5:7.

3) What does this verse mean to you?

Peter tells us to throw all of our cares on him and let him carry your burdens. Jesus said we could cast all of our cares on him because he cares for us! There is nothing we are going through that we cannot cast on the Lord.

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Paul writes about the love that God has for us. Here is what he says, "Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us. And I am convinced that

nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:35-39 NLT

4) Who can separate us from the love of God?

5) What can separate us from the love of God?

6) What danger or threat presents the greatest challenge to your faith right now?

7) How do you remind yourself of what God has done in your fearful moments?

Paul lists several things that the Roman Christians thought indicated they had been separated from Christ's love.

8) What are examples today of things that can tempt Christians to think they are no longer loved by Christ?

9) Any circumstances in your life that tempt you to feel this way?

10) *In hindsight, how do you see God at work through your suffering and hardships?*

God answers our prayers because of his great love for us. He is always watching over us and listening to our prayers. Because of his love, he invites us to bring our cares to him. He is never too busy or distracted or too tired to hear and answer. He doesn't refuse to answer because of our weakness and failure. He doesn't get impatient because we come again and again. God is love, and he loves to exercise his power and glory to meet the needs of his struggling children.

A second reason that God answers our prayers is his grace.

GOD'S GRACE. Grace provides the whole structure and standing of our relationship with God. If it weren't for his forgiving grace, we would have no relationship with him at all. Our sin separates us from God and his forgiveness makes our relationship with him possible. Because of his grace, God is unwilling to rest until the work of transformation is complete. In grace he looks on us and knows that this work isn't done. Although the power of sin has been broken, God knows that the presence of sin remains. He hears our prayers because, when we pray, we confess that we still need the grace of forgiveness and deliverance, and in so doing we place ourselves in the center of what he has committed himself to complete—his work of redemption.

Read 1 John 1.9 and answer the following questions.

11) *Have you ever heard anyone say they have no sin?*

- 12) *Do you have sin? Is your sin serious?*
- 13) *Why would someone think that they have no sin or that their sin is not serious?*
- 14) *Is it enough to confess our sins once?*
- 15) *Who do we confess to (ie: who is the one forgiving us?)*
- 16) *What is confession? Does this refer to confession that leads to salvation (that gives you the relationship with God) or confession that leads to maintaining ones relationship with God. Does it matter?*

Because of his love and grace, God is unwilling to rest until the work of transformation is complete. In grace he looks on us and knows that this work isn't done. Paul writes, "I am sure that the good work God began in you will continue until he completes it on the day when Jesus Christ comes again." Philippians 1:6 ERV

- 17) *What is an area that God is continuing to work on in your life?*

We've not yet been completely formed into the likeness of his Son but one day we will be. Paul says, "For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. So all of us ... reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his image." 2 Corinthians 3:17-18 NLT

- 18) *Read 2 Corinthians 5:17 and Matthew 5:16. How does your life provide evidence that you are a “new creation” that is pointing people to God?*
- 19) *If it were possible to take a “spiritual snapshot” of your life right now, what are some ways that you would resemble the world?*
- 20) *What are some ways you might resemble Christ?*
- 21) *How can you be transformed into the image of Jesus?*

Although the power of sin has been broken, God knows that the presence of sin remains. He hears our prayers because, when we pray, we confess that we still need the grace of forgiveness and deliverance, and in so doing we place ourselves in the center of what he has committed himself to complete—his work of redemption.

A third reason God answers our prayers is his faithfulness.

GOD’S FAITHFULNESS. God doesn’t change his mind. He doesn’t ride the roller-coaster of the rise and fall of emotions. His heart isn’t a battle zone of conflicting motivations. He doesn’t get bored, exhausted, or distracted. He won’t quit what he has begun. He won’t forsake those on whom he has placed his love. He

won't harden his heart, shut down his mind, and turn his back. He won't take a break or go to sleep. He will never tell you that you have asked too much or that you have come to him too often. You never have to work to figure him out. You never have to wonder if his response to you will change. He is absolutely faithful to every promise he has made and every provision he has offered. Your hope in prayer is rooted in his faithfulness, not yours.

Read 2 Thessalonians 3:1-3. Other translations of verse 3 read... The Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen you, set you on a firm foundation, protect you, guard you, deliver you, and keep you from the attacks of the evil one.

22) *What is God's promise in this verse?*

23) *How does the evil one, the devil, attack us?*

24) *What does he use?*

25) *How is God faithful to us when we are being attacked?*

Read 1 Corinthians 1:7-9.

Paul is expressing gratitude for the believers at Corinth and their walk with God, even though they have a lot of issues to work through. The Amplified Bible reads like this...

[7] And He will also confirm you to the end [keeping you strong and free of any accusations of wrong, so that you will be]

blameless and beyond reproach in the day [of the return] of our Lord Jesus Christ. ... [8] you are not lacking in any spiritual gift [which comes from the Holy Spirit], as you eagerly wait [with confident trust] for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ [when He returns]. [9] God is faithful [He is reliable, trustworthy and ever true to His promise—He can be depended on], and through Him you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

26) *What is God's promise in these verses?*

Read Lamentations 3:22-23.

27) *What do you learn about the promises of God from these verses?*

Don't give up crying out to God with the needs and desires of your heart. If you know God through faith in Christ, then His mercy continues to be extended to you. He will answer you in His time because of His love, grace, faithfulness, kingdom, and glory