

Are You Ready for God?

Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard." **—Luke 1:11-13**

Zechariah wasn't ready. Are you ready for God? Are you waiting for God to answer prayer? Are there prayers that you have long since taken off your prayer-request list because you were sure God wasn't going to answer them? There are two important principles here.

Any prayer prayed in the will of God will be answered. How do we know this? Because the Bible says so: "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us" (1 John 5:14).

The trouble is that big "if" —if we know His will. You can pray in the will of God and not know it. Zechariah and Elizabeth prayed in the will of God. They didn't know it. Because God didn't jump to answer their prayer the first time, they just assumed it wasn't God's will. Think back on your own prayer requests, maybe for the last year, maybe going back before then. Think of one prayer that hasn't been heard, as far as you know, that you have long since given up praying. What's the principle to apply? That any prayer prayed in the will of God will be answered. So what's the problem?

It turns out—how sad it is—that Zechariah wasn't ready. He wanted to argue with the angel. Do you know why he wanted to argue? Because he wasn't right spiritually, which shows that a person can be involved in the work of ministry even if his heart isn't right. When our hearts aren't right, we want to argue with God.

Are we ready for answered prayer? Zechariah's story should

give us encouragement to go back and start praying again. It's a wonderful, wonderful thing to be ready when God appears. When we're not ready, what should have been our finest hour will, instead, be under a cloud.

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