

Rick Warren: 4 Biblical Ways God Answers Your Prayers

“You fathers—if your children ask for a fish, do you give them a snake instead? Or if they ask for an egg, do you give them a scorpion? Of course not! So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him” (Luke 11:11-13, NLT).

God always answers every single prayer—just not always the way you want—and He does it in one of four ways.

When the request is not right, God says, “No.” Just like parents say no to their kids for a hundred good reasons, God doesn’t owe you an explanation every time he says no to your request.

When the timing is not right, God says, “Slow.” There’s a big difference between a delay and a denial. “No” and “not yet” are not the same thing, and learning and accepting the difference shows spiritual maturity.

When the request and timing are right, but you’re not right, God says, “Grow.” He wants to do something in your life before He answers your prayer because you’re not yet ready to handle the answer.

When the request is right and the timing’s right and you’re right, then God says, “Go.” God often gives us the green light to our prayers—and it’s a reason to celebrate!

Luke 11:11-13 (NLT) says, “You fathers—if your children ask for a fish, do you give them a snake instead? Or if they ask for an egg, do you give them a scorpion? Of course not! So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.”

God is never going to give you anything that is hurtful or bad for you. After all, if even imperfect parents know how to give good gifts to their kids, won't God, who is good and perfect, do even more for you? He is ready to answer your prayer—in his own perfect time and way.

Talk It Over

- How can you tell the difference between a delay and a denial? Should you respond to those answers differently? Why or why not?
- Think of a time when God answered your prayer with "Grow." In what ways did you grow, and what did you learn while you were waiting on God to answer your prayer?
- How do you think God wants you to respond when he says, "Go"?

Give hope, prayer, and encouragement below. Post a comment & talk about it. {eo}

Rick Warren is the founding pastor of Saddleback Church. His book, *The Purpose Driven Church*, was named one of the 100 Christian books that changed the 20th century. He is also founder of , a global internet community for pastors.

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