

The Surprising Reason Why God Gets Upset

I don't know exactly how many nerves I have. But I do know when my kids are on my last one.

Usually, when they get on my nerves, it's because they are bickering, tattling on each other for things that don't really matter, or leaving behind some mess that they should have picked up because I've told them a thousand times to pick up after themselves, and why am I the only one who can SEE these messes, anyway?

Sometimes, I'm sorry to say, they get on my nerves not because of anything they've done, really, but because I'm tired or stressed, and they ask for the wrong thing at the wrong time. Or they fail to grasp something I think they should already know, and I'm so. out. of. patience.

Turns out God's children get on His nerves, too. They try His patience.

Wait, what? Isn't God infinitely patient?

Of course He is. He always maintains perfect control, even when we try Him.

Yes, you and I can get on His nerves.

But it may not be for the reason you would think.

It's not because we and God just don't click, because we make too many mistakes, or because He's tired of dealing with us. (None of these things is true, by the way!) Nor is it because we ask Him for too much.

Actually, it's because sometimes we ask Him for too little.

There was a time long ago when Ahaz was king over Judah. God told Ahaz to ask Him for a sign to confirm what was going to happen.

"Ask Me for any sign," God said. "Anything you want. Nothing is too big."

"Nope," Ahaz said. "I'm not going to test You."

Then Isaiah the prophet steps in. "Hey!" he said. "Isn't it enough that you already get on mankind's nerves? Are you going to try God's patience too???"

Notice that what Ahaz was getting rebuked for was not for worshiping a foreign god or committing murder or adultery. Ahaz was rebuked because God offered him everything, and he asked for nothing.

God offered him the opportunity of a lifetime, and he got all what he probably thought was properly humble and refused the opportunity.

God tells us over and over in Scripture that He wants to pour out spiritual blessings upon us. Maybe sometimes He even has some material blessings in mind.

But we don't ask.

"Do what is right," God says, "and see if I won't pour out so many blessings upon you that you won't be able to hold them all!" (See Malachi 3:10.)

"But I'm afraid to ask for big things," we say. "I might make God mad. Or I might get rejected."

So we ask too small. And in so doing, we try the patience of the God Who longs to shower us with blessings.

We ask for everyone to get along at Christmas, for improved finances, or for our cold to go away quickly.

It's right and good to ask for all these things. But what about the truly big things? Things like transformation of our character, or the ability to hear and recognize God's voice, or the opportunity and courage to bear bold witness for Christ?

Or intimacy with God? The ability to trust Him more? The willingness to serve without earthly reward?

As C.S. Lewis said, "It would seem that Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased."

Ask big. Make God's heart glad.

Malachi 3:10—Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it." (NIV)

Isaiah 7:10-13—Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, "Ask the LORD your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights." But Ahaz said, "I will not ask; I will not put the LORD to the test." Then Isaiah said, "Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of men? Will you try the patience of my God also?" (NIV)

*Adapted from **Megan Breedlove's** blog, *Manna for Moms*. Megan is the author of *Well Done, Good and Faithful Mommy* and *Manna for Moms: God's Provision for Your Hair-Raising, Miracle-Filled Mothering Adventure* (Regal Books.) She is also a stay-at-home mom with 5 children.*