

How Do You Respond When Heaven Seems Silent?

Are you believing God for something big—a healing, a loved one's salvation, a marriage restored or the fulfillment of a promise? There are many things we pray and believe God for on life's path and when the answer is delayed or the situation doesn't change it is easy to give in to disappointment.

Disappointment is hard, but the process of working through the delay can teach us valuable lessons and develop our character. A child given everything on demand can become arrogant, ungrateful, disrespectful, and selfish. On the other hand, a child who learns to wait and persevere is often humble, grateful, respectful and compassionate. Perseverance is a key in our being useful and fruitful for God (2 Pet. 1:6-10).

One of the most amazing truths about God is that He empowers us to persevere in what He is calling us to do. The Bible gives us example after example of people who waited to see the fulfillment of promises God made to them. Abraham waited 25 years for Isaac to be born. Moses led the Israelites through the desert for forty years before they entered the promised land. David was anointed to be king as a youth, yet he didn't have access to the throne until years later. Mary, the mother of Jesus, waited more than 30 years to see her Son fulfill His destiny as the Messiah. All of these persevered through disappointment and all grew in character.

There is no doubt that persevering through obstacles allows us to develop patience. When we are disappointed, we can either learn patience or spend our days frustrated and angry. I think it's interesting that the love chapter in 1 Corinthians 13 starts with, "Love is patient." Patience is also a fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22.

Disappointment is an emotion, and emotions are neither right nor wrong. However, disappointment that is stuffed down and left to fester can tempt us to sin. Disappointment, if unresolved, can lead us to doubt God.

If we are aware of how doubt can take root in our hearts, we can dig it out before it has a chance to grow. In his teaching, "Tools for Healing Past Disappointments" Bill Johnson makes this statement: "I believe that one of the greatest conflicts to the flow of miracles in an individual life is unresolved pain in the heart from disappointment."

Bill goes on to describe how he handles disappointment. He says he gets alone with God and attempts to get "gut-level honest with no religious pretense." He may tell God that he feels betrayed or that God didn't back him up. The next thing he says to do is vitally important:

"But here's the deal: you do not have the right to walk into the throne room, dump your garbage and then leave. If you're going to engage in that kind of encounter with the Lord: bring it, be honest and dump it, but stand there and wait for the Lord to respond."

Prayer is two-way communication. We should not initiate a conversation with God unless we have the time to listen for His response. Give Him a chance to comfort you. Desiring God's will also draws us into His heart. Pressing into God may not bring the answers we want, but it does bring security and hope.

Don't Forget:

- Regaining hope after disappointment usually involves a process of suffering leading to perseverance, perseverance leading to character and character leading to hope.
- Sometimes God calls us to press through and fight for answers, and other times He calls us to rest and wait

for answers. There are times when God's answers are instantaneous, and we neither have to press in nor wait. We can know which action to take by asking Him.

- When disappointment begins to cause us to doubt God's goodness, we must be honest with God about our feelings and then *wait for His response*. We may not get to know *why* but we can get to know *Him* (see Jer. 9:24; John 17:3).
- Praying above our circumstances (by declaring the truth of God's Word) in addition to praying about our circumstances (sharing how we are feeling) can help us regain hope.
- Disappointment is not a sin, but it can tempt us to sin. We can either draw close to the heart of God in the midst of our disappointment, or we can distance ourselves from God. The choice is ours.

✖ Adapted from *When Heaven Seems Silent* by **Mark & Tammy Endres**, copyright 2014, published by Charisma House. *Everyone experiences disappointments and trials from time to time. In this book the authors share their journey and the lessons learned through their personal trials, disappointments and fulfillment in Christ regardless of circumstances. To order your copy click here.*

Prayer Power for the Week of November 3, 2014

This week be honest with God about your feelings and allow Him to bring you what you need: comfort, hope or confirmation. Pray declaring God's truth over your situation and draw close to the heart of God in the midst of whatever you may be facing. Exercise your faith and tell Him that you choose to trust Him. Continue to pray for worldwide revival, the expansion of God's kingdom and more laborers for His harvest field. Remember Israel and the persecuted church. Pray that our spiritual, civil and government leaders would seek God for wisdom and counsel. Pray for God's will to prevail in the upcoming elections. Ask the Lord to direct your steps as you

seek to be a blessing in this season (John 17:3).