

This Is the Answer if You Feel Like God Isn't Listening to Your Prayers

About nine years ago, my life unraveled. Most of my prayers were "answered" in a way exactly opposite what I had prayed.

Needless to say, I was so upset and disappointed with God. I felt abandoned; I honestly did not know what to ask God for anymore. I would not kneel and talk with Him. I remember saying to God, "I am too angry to pray." So I would sit on the side of my bed as the tears rolled down my face and ask God to just stay with me.

Some days, my dark room was so blurry from my tears. God answered me. He stayed, restored and transformed me in ways to this day I still cannot fathom.

A salient lesson learned: Silent times are often God's means of preparation for something greater. You have probably encountered some of the same things I have. When God is silent, we are frequently tempted to rely on our own thoughts and solutions or ask family and friends for guidance. But how do we know these thoughts and ideas are from God? Another powerful lesson learned: The time to begin recognizing God's voice is not at the point of hardship or desperation, but during a consistent, lifelong relationship of intimate conversation that I was determined to rebuild.

God showed me through my beloved mother's examples of unyielding faith and strength, and subsequently her death, that when Jesus has you, you cannot mess up your prayer life no matter how you come to Him or no matter how much you are not ready to listen. Sometimes the problem is not God's silence but our inability to hear. I believe, at times, God was shouting and I still would not hear Him.

Learning to develop a prayer habit despite your circumstances will keep us “in view of God’s mercy,” where true transformation takes place (Rom. 12:1, NIV).

Prayer is one of the most powerful experiences in all of life, but it was also one of my greatest struggles. When my mother was diagnosed with leukemia, which, in a very short time, led to her death, I felt like God was giving me the silent treatment. Have you ever experienced that feeling?

During this season of my life, I started to feel disconnected from God, not knowing what to pray. I stopped praying when an answer did not come or doubting that God would do anything. Every time I got on my knees, Satan did everything in his power to stop me from connecting with God because he knew that my prayers, despite how I was feeling about God’s decisions, were dangers to his agenda.

Are you alert to Satan’s attempts to delay or distract you? Do you persevere even though God does not answer your prayer immediately?

Daniel’s prayer life was unwavering in the face of hardship. God saw him and delivered him from the mouth of lions—(Dan. 6:10-23). And Hannah prayed passionately to the Lord and He remembered her—(1 Sam. 1:1-20). Did I pour my heart out to God, believing that He was able to accomplish the impossible?

Praying through our suffering equips us to know God’s character more intimately, to put others before ourselves, and to find purpose in challenging and painful seasons in our lives.

God’s silence is not forever. God is fully aware of our trials and tribulations. He knows the constant voices that pull on our attention. He still wants to hear from us anyway.

He tells us how, the Bible says in Matthew 6:6 (NASB1995), “But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your

door and pray to your Father who is in secret.” Being consistent in our prayer lives will undoubtedly fill our souls, but it requires us to clear out the distractions and focus on God. One of the habits I developed was reading biblical quotes about restoration, hope, joy and abundance before I got out of bed in the morning to pray.

I was determined to do this every morning; I prayed this simple act of obedience would further increase my prayer life with God.

In God’s perfect time, the answer will come. And if you faithfully and patiently wait for Him, you will discover that your relationship with Him has deepened through the experience. I learned to stay with Him through silence, not rely on His movement to encourage me but simply to bask in His presence. If you will make this a habit in your life, anger and disappointment will disappear. And in their places, you will have increased faith, hope, strength and the most satisfying relationship of your life.

Ask God to “stay with me” and keep praying. Do not stop communicating with the Lord, even in your darkest hour. Keep asking, seeking and knocking (Matt. 7:7-11), but don’t let it end there. Sit quietly with Him and listen (Ps. 46:10). The extraordinary miracle isn’t what prayer changes but whom.

Here are a few tips to try that helped me increase my prayer life:

- **Keep a prayer card in your wallet** – Before my grandmother passed away nine years ago, she gave me a prayer card that she carried in her pocketbook since 1969. In a quiet moment, it reminds me how blessed I truly am and that God always stays with me.
- **Be intentional about praying out loud** – I get distracted when it’s quiet. I find when I talk out loud, I am more deliberate and focused in my prayer.

- **Journal your prayers** – When I was diagnosed with breast cancer, one of my best friends brought me a “pink journal.” I would take it to my doctors’ appointments and catalog my wins, and I would write in it every night what I was thankful for and thank God for my continued healing.
- **Pray with someone** – You can Zoom, FaceTime or telephone to pray with a person. This was comforting for me because I knew someone else was there listening. We encouraged each other to keep listening to God’s voice.

Above all, remember to love God, be kind to yourself and love people. {eo}

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