

Why You Should Keep Praying When There is No Answer

“To that end be alert with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints” (Eph. 6:18b).

Why should you be persistent in your prayers, even when you don't get an answer? There are four reasons:

1. Persistent prayer focuses your attention. When you pray a prayer request over and over, it's not to remind God. He doesn't need to be reminded. It's to remind yourself who is the source of your answer and all your needs. If every prayer you ever prayed were instantly answered, two things would be true. First, prayer would become a weapon of destruction in your life. And, you'd never think about God, because He would become a vending machine. If every time you prayed, you instantly got results, all you'd think about is the blessing. God wants you to think about the blesser.

2. Persistent prayer clarifies your request. A delayed answer gives you time to clarify exactly what you want and to refine your prayers. When you pray persistently to your heavenly Father, and you say something over and over again, it separates deep longings from mere whims. It says, “God, I really care about this.”

It's not that God doesn't want to answer your prayers. He does. It's just that He wants you to be certain about what you really want.

3. Persistent prayer tests your faith. James 1:3-4 says, “knowing that the trying of your faith develops patience. But let patience perfect its work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.” The only way you can grow to spiritual maturity is to have your faith tested. One of the ways God's going to test your faith is by delaying some

answers to your prayers.

4. Persistent prayer prepares your heart for the answer. When you make a request of God, He almost always wants to answer in a bigger and better way than you've prayed. Sometimes He denies your prayer requests because you're thinking and asking too small. He wants to give you something bigger and better. But first, He has to prepare you for it. So God uses delays in answering prayer to help you grow, to help you get ready and to help prepare you for a bigger and better answer.

Remember, "Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly beyond all that we ask or imagine, according to the power that works in us" (Eph. 3:20).

Talk It Over

- What is something you've been praying about for a long time? How do you need to refine your request?
- If God is testing you right now by delaying an answer to your prayer, how can you show Him you are willing to grow and accept his will and purpose for you?
- Think of something you prayed for over the years that God never supplied. How have you seen that His denial was actually a blessing in your life? {eoa}

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