

Pray First | What to Do When Praying Is Hard | GUIDE - 1 Kings 18

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[NOTES VIDEO](#)

Last we talked about how to love praying. We know it is a fight to remember to pray and keep praying, but persistence is worth it.

Jesus Often Spoke of Persistence in Prayer.

In Luke 11 we find a review of the Lord's prayer or the "model prayer". Then, Jesus teaches the disciples to pray with persistence using the Parable of the Friend in Need (Persistent Neighbor). At midnight, a man asks his neighbor for bread to feed a friend. But it's midnight, and friendship (while great) only goes so far. Jesus said friendship will probably not be enough. But, shameless persistence will get you what you need. Especially considering that Father's intentions toward you are far greater than friendship.

Luke 11:9-10 (NLT) "And so I tell you, keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened."

Here are 3 reminders to keep us praying. We will learn them from Elijah.

Trust God's Goodness

1 Kings 18:1 (NLT) Later on, in the third year of the drought, the Lord said to Elijah, "Go and present yourself to King Ahab. Tell him that I will soon send rain!"

God is Never the Problem. God wants to bless us; He loves to give good gifts. He showers us daily with blessings. Sure, difficulties will arise in life. But for most people, the day to day kindness of our Creator far outweighs the times of momentary suffering. God isn't the reason you can't see and receive the good in your life.

The Enemy LIES. Jesus told us, without qualification, that the Devil is a liar, **John 8:44**.

Consider [Adam and Eve's Temptation](#)

Genesis 3:5-6 (NLT) "God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil." 6 The woman was convinced.

Have you Been Tempted to Doubt God's Goodness? Have you been sucked into doubt because of challenging relationships, marriage difficulties, health problems, disease, money issues, etc.? Life is filled with these things and when they make us doubt God's goodness, the enemy is at work. The enemy says, "If this is happening to you, then God must not care about you."

Are you doubting God's goodness today? Why? Can you look at God's story, His pursuit of mankind, His sacrifice for mankind, and really doubt His goodness?

Fight For God's Glory

1 Kings 18:21 (NLT) Then Elijah stood in front of them and said, "How much longer will you waver, hobbling between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him! But if Baal is God, then follow him!" But the people were completely silent.

Who is your God? Is he for real, or just something you made up? That's right, people make up their own gods, and some of them call themselves Christians, but they're not. They are idolaters.

How can a Person "Know" God? A person learns God when they obey God, when they speak with Him. Prayer, worship, and fellowship will put you in touch with your Father. A person learns God when they allow the Spirit to teach them the Word. What happens when a person gets to know God as He is rather than as they wish Him to be? The mind is blown! The word AWESOME will start to mean what it actually means.

Why not Make Him Known? Here is where God-awareness meets real life. Often we are not seeing prayers answered because we are the object of our own prayers. As we follow Elijah's story, we quickly see that his purpose had little to do with Elijah. Sure, he was human, he got discouraged and he whined some, but he made a big deal about God.

Anticipate God's Answer

1 Kings 18:41 (NLT) Then Elijah said to Ahab, "Go get something to eat and drink, for I hear a mighty rainstorm coming!"

God isn't Hiding the Answers. God wants to let you in on the secrets. Just because the answer isn't in hand does not mean it's not on its way. James 5:16 tells us that Elijah was a guy like you and me. He was an ordinary guy who prayed and the rain stopped and prayed again and the rain started.

Stop Dismissing the Hand of God and Start Looking for it. We often neglect to see God at work. In fact, many miracles are stolen from us because we tell ourselves God didn't do anything. We say, "Well, it just happened. It's a coincidence." Start looking for God's work, and you will start to see it. Maybe you have had your friend on your mind all morning. Don't think bumping into them at a store is a coincidence. Maybe you have been praying for blessing and you run into someone who needs the very blessing you need. Do what you can to bless them. Or maybe you have been burdened about cancer or poverty, and you run into someone who has cancer or is destitute. Now's your chance to do some real praying.

What is Something you are Praying for Right Now? Let's do it. Let's pray first. Let's pray hard. Why not pray until we start having some stories that make people start questioning their DOUBTS? Persistence in prayer does not guarantee that we get what we asked for, but it does promise we will get something better than we could have imagined.

Talk About It...

- *What are your first thoughts regarding today's topic? Please share with the group.*
- *Review 1 Kings 18. What are some things you enjoy in this story? What are some things that raise questions?*
- *How do you know that God is Good? Share a time when you realize that God was very good toward you? Share a time that it was difficult to see that God was good.*
- *Why is it so hard for some to believe that God is Good?*
- *Where do you get your ideas about God? What do you think God is like? Why?*
- *What are some things about God that you would like other people to know? How could you let them know?*
- *Do you believe that God wants to answer your prayers? How could you begin looking for the small things that God is doing?*
- *Share a prayer request with your group and pray together for God to answer it.*
- *Is there anything in today's topic that you would be excited to share with a friend?*