

When God is Silent, part 2

“I don’t know why I bother praying. It doesn’t seem to do any good. I’ve been asking God for wisdom to solve an extremely difficult problem for three weeks now. Yet I’m no closer to a solution than when I started. I may as well consult a horoscope for all the good prayer does. I feel like I am only talking to the ceiling. No one is really listening. Why doesn’t God answer my prayers?”

When God is silent and doesn’t seem to answer your prayers, ask yourself the following questions:

- Have I neglected to pray? (James 4:2)
- Am I in sin? (Psalm 66:18; Proverbs 28:9)
- Am I being selfish? (James 4:3)
- Am I doubting? (Mark 11:24)
- Is my request out of God’s will? (1 John 5:14-15)

What if ...?

- I am praying
- My life is pure
- My motives are true
- I’m trusting God
- I’m in his will

...then what? Why is God silent? What does his silence mean?

When God is silent and doesn’t seem to answer your prayers, he may be trying to teach you something:

Keep praying (Luke 11:1-13)

Jesus’ disciples want to learn how to pray (1).

Jesus provides a model for prayer (2-4; Matthew 6:9-13).

Jesus uses a parable to teach some principles about prayer (5-13).

Be specific (5-6).

Ask boldly (7-8).

Be persistent (9-10).

Remember that God gives good gifts to his children (11-13).

Keep praying until you receive a clear answer. Otherwise, it’s too soon to give up and quit.

❑ **Learn to depend on God for strength (2 Corinthians 12:1-10)**

God wants to demonstrate his power through our weakness.

The amount of God's grace is in direct proportion to our lack of strength. It is "sufficient," or "enough."

Rather than change our circumstances, God wants to change our character.

Learn to depend on God for grace and strength.

❑ **God knows what is best for us (Psalm 84:11)**

God gives good gifts.

If God says, "No," either there is sin in my life or the request is not a good thing.

Trust God to know what is best for your life.

❑ **God is going to reveal something new about himself (John 11:1-29)**

Mary & Martha call for Jesus to come and heal their brother, Lazarus. Jesus delays until after Lazarus is dead and buried. Mary & Martha criticize Jesus for his lack of action (21, 32). In raising Lazarus from the grave, Jesus demonstrates that he is the resurrection and the life (25-26).

Sometimes God says, "No," so that he can teach us something new about himself.

❑ **Spiritual warfare (Job 1-2; Daniel 10:12-14)**

There is an unseen conflict between God and Satan raging in the universe (Job 1-2).

God's answer may be delayed due to a battle in the heavens (Daniel 10:12-14).

When God is silent, trust in his sovereignty. Note, however, that God may never explain his reasons.

When God is silent...

Examine your heart

Examine your request

Trust God to do what is best

Thank him for his answer

Stay faithful

When God is *Silent*

Questions to Ask

Possible Conclusions

