

Philippians 4:6- “do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”

“That is an answer to prayer” is a common phrase among followers of Jesus. It’s a great statement because it gives God the honor for providing for some issue in our lives. My wife and I just made this statement this week when discussing an issue within our home.

But what happens when our prayers are not answered the way we want them?

I remember as a 6-year-old boy praying and asking God for my own TV. Later that week my dad bought a new one for the family and put the old one in the basement for my brother and I to use. I thought it was a miracle. I also remember thinking to myself: “What do I want to ask God for next?” I must have felt God was now my personal genie in a bottle. I quickly learned God does not work that way.

So many times, in my life I have prayed and asked God to heal, to provide, to comfort, to protect, to speak, guide and much more and have not got the answers that I was petitioning for. These are the hard issues of prayer especially when we ask for healing, and it does not happen how we requested.

But how do we handle life when our prayers aren’t answered? Do we question if God heard us? Do we question His goodness or care? These are the questions all of us face in those times.

I think many times we are very black and white in our prayers. We make requests and then wait for our request to materialize. But what if we changed our approach and our thinking. What if we presented our need to God as the Bible says, but then we put no expectation on it-we just simply surrendered and trusted? I can tell you this is not easy.

We want our God to answer our way right away but forget the spiritual laws of creation and the fallen world we live in. Jesus came to redeem us back to the father and send his Holy Spirit to lead us into that redemption. Because of this we hold fast to the promise that all earthly needs will vanish one day, and every part of our spirits will be made whole lacking nothing.

In the meantime, we are here on earth with many needs and many requests. While this may be painful and frustrating, let’s work to keep an eternal perspective on all our issues and needs. Our prayers are always heard, and our God always responds. He sent his Spirit to be near us and lead us in our darkest times and that is the greatest answer to prayer there is.

Let's keep our eyes and hearts fixed on this reality but never relent in boldly going before our God with our requests and be thankful he hears us, sees us and responds to us every time!

I love you and God loves you!

Pastor Eric