

Waiting for Answers to Prayer

[Psalms 33:20-22](#)

Psalm 33:20-22 (NASB)

²⁰ “Our soul waits for the LORD; He is our help and our shield.

²¹ For our heart rejoices in Him, Because we trust in His holy name.

²² Let Your lovingkindness, O LORD, be upon us, According as we have hoped in You.”

Scripture makes it clear that our heavenly Father hears and answers prayer. Yet, though we pray for the Lord to act right away, we’ve all known times when we’ve had to wait. What are some reasons for the delay?

The Father sees when our attention is misdirected. Our relationship with Him should have priority over any earthly matter ([Mark 12:30](#)), yet minds and prayers can become so fixed upon a need that our gaze shifts away from God.

Mark 12:30 (NASB)

³⁰ “AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.”

Then He may delay answering until we refocus on Him. In other situations, He waits because the timing isn’t right for granting our request. Perhaps certain events must happen first, or people’s thinking needs to be changed.

There are also seasons when the Lord wants to stretch and grow our faith. One of the ways He accomplishes that is by having us watch for His response. In these times of waiting, the Holy Spirit will work to mature us and bring forth righteous fruit ([Galatians 5:22-23](#)).

Galatians 5:22-23 (NASB)

²² “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.”

Other reasons are a wrong motive for our request ([James 4:3](#)) and the practice of habitual sin.

James 4:3 (NASB)

³ “You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend *it* on your pleasures.”

We all fall short when it comes to God’s standard of holiness, but some of us persist in a lifestyle of disobedience. The Lord may delay His answer, so He can prompt us to confess our sin and turn back to Him.

Waiting on the Lord isn’t easy—faith and trust are needed ([Hebrews 11:1](#)).

Hebrews 11:1 (NASB)

¹ “Now faith is the assurance of *things* hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”

Talmid Shorts 06/29/18

Dr. Eddie Ildefonso

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If His answer is delayed, check that your focus is on Him, your motive for asking is God-honoring, and you aren't practicing habitual sin. Then believe that His response will be for your good and His glory.