



DISCOVERING REVELATION

Secrets of Answered Prayer

It's tempting to think that answered prayer is reserved for a privileged few. But this is not what the Bible teaches:

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.” (Matthew 7:7, 8)

Notice: it doesn't say “almost everyone.” Another misconception about prayer is that only some of our prayers are answered. This is also unbiblical:

“And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.” (John 14:13, 14)

The Bible teaches that if you follow a few simple rules, you can have all of your prayers answered all of the time.

RULE #1: Pray in Jesus' name.

Jesus says, “If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.” (John 14:14)

To pray in the name of Jesus is to identify yourself by His name, to allow His character to show through in your life. God's name, after all, is His character. Jesus also said:

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.” (Matthew 7:21)

RULE #2: Pray in faith.

“But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord...” (James 1:6, 7)

To pray “in faith” signifies more than lip service. It means to live in a trusting relationship with God. We build our faith by hearing (understanding and implementing) the word of God: “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” (Romans 10:17)

RULE #3: Live an obedient life.

“And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.” (1 John 3:22)

Commandment keeping, of course, does not save anyone, because we are not saved by works. But Jesus also said, “If you love Me, keep My commandments.” (John 14:15) We keep God’s commandments, not in order to be saved, but because we *are* saved. Sin separates us from God. Remember: the Bible says that “sin is the transgression of the law.” (1 John 3:4)

Sin blocks the line of communication with heaven. Consider these passages:

“If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me...” (Psalm 66:18)

“One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination.”
(Proverbs 28:9)

RULE #4: Make things right with others.

“Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.” (Matthew 5:23, 24)

In answer to King Darius’ question of whether or not he had survived the night in the den of lions, Daniel replied, “My God sent His angel and shut the lions’ mouths...because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you.” (Daniel 6:22) Like Daniel, Christians should strive to be blameless not only with God, but also with fellow humans. Remember, Jesus said the greatest two commandments were to love God and to love your neighbor. (Matthew 22:37-39)

RULE #5: Trust God to do what’s best according to His will.

Sometimes God says “Yes” when we ask Him for something. But sometimes He says “No.” That doesn’t mean that your prayer isn’t answered. He answers all of our prayers all of the time, but not always with an affirmative answer. And sometimes the answer is “Wait.”

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” (Romans 8:28)

This verse doesn’t say that all things are good. It says that all things work together for the good. Don’t be afraid to lay before God your plans and desires, asking for His help. However, before God really opens the door He must hear you saying, “Nevertheless not my will, but Thine, be done.” (Luke 22:42) Offering that prayer means being willing to accept God’s answer for your life. Jesus prayed, “Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth...” (Luke 11:2) The Father answered that prayer with a cross, and we have eternal life because of it.