

When God Doesn't Answer Prayer Sermon Discussion Leader's Guide

Purpose of Discussion: To discuss how knowing God's good character encourages us to bring our needs to Him.

Sermon Refresher: Our understanding of God's character and our personal helplessness affects whether we will trust God through prayer in our lives.

Icebreaker: What have you heard or learned about prayer that has been helpful? What have you heard or learned about prayer that has been hurtful?

Transition: What we believe about prayer and about God's character has a daily impact on whether or not we will actually turn to God for all of our needs.

1. Read Matthew 7:7-8. "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened."

What are the specific things in your life you feel the need to bring to God in prayer?

2. Why do we struggle to bring these things to God in prayer? What prevents us from asking, seeking, and knocking?
3. What is a prayer you have prayed that hasn't been answered in the way you were hoping for?

THE **crossing** **small groups**

4. Read Matthew 7:9-11. "Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!"

What does this verse teach us about God's character?

How does this verse speak into the discomfort of unanswered prayers?

5. Read Romans 8:32. "He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?"

How does the cross teach you something about God's character that brings new perspective on your unanswered prayer?

Sharing and Prayer:

Spend time praying and thanking God for specific characteristics that show us his good character. Take time to go around and have each person pray for an unanswered prayer. As a group, pray Jehoshaphat's prayer from 2 Chronicles 20:12, "We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you."