

When We Say “Yes”, and God Says “No”

2 Samuel 12:15-23

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Opening Quotes:

“You are God’s child; he wants you to have everything. All you have to do is name it and claim it.”

“God redeemed mankind! Now authority has been restored to us through Jesus Christ, and when we ask God, He can move! That is why it seems He can do *nothing* unless someone asks Him to.”

“God has to heed your petitions.”

“You can have what you say.”

Transition: These are quotes from some of today’s leading televangelists. They propagate these myths to many, and unfortunately, many believe them.

Introduction:

Illustration: In college I had a friend who told me one day that he was going to get a new car. I said that was great but I thought he did not have any money. Therefore, I asked him how he could afford it. My friend responded, “I can not afford it, but I told God that I wanted one.”

Question: Is this how prayer works? We tell God what we want Him to do for us and He is committed to provided? Make no mistake God always answers the prayers of the saints, but sometimes He answer is no.

Transition: Let us look at the life of David in 2 Samuel chapter 12 verses 15-23. Here we will see four elements of prayer from King David.

Reading: 2 Samuel 12:15-23

Background:

David had committed sin by sleeping with Uriah's wife, had the Uriah killed and then David took Bathsheba as his own wife. This sin displeased the Lord (11:27). God judged David for his sin. The middle of verse fifteen says, "*and the Lord struck the child that Uriah's wife bore to David, and it became ill.*"

Illustration: I can remember seeing my son, Timothy, after he was born in the ICU. He was premature and needed to stay in the ICU for a week. They have trouble getting an IV in him and had to do some surgery. I could not sleep. I sat in the hospital waiting room praying for the health of my son and my wife. I can understand how David must have felt seeing his infant son suffering.

Transition: Look at David's first reaction in verse 16, "David therefore *pleaded with God*".

Four Elements of Prayer:

The situation compelled David come to the Lord in prayer and fasting. Please notice that David's prayer was the first, not last, reaction. It was a priority.

1. Prayer should be a priority.

David does not sit with wife and comfort her or talk to his friends about his feelings. He went to the Lord into the throne room of God to plead his case for mercy. David did not talk to the doctors and wait for the test results, he got down on his knees and cried out to God, "Have mercy on me oh Lord, let my child live."

Application: We need to make prayer a priority all the time not just when situations arise. So many Christians spend so much time discussing their problems with others that they never have time to go before the King of kings and Lord of lords to plead their case to the One who can answer.

Question: Do we really believe God can answer our prayers? or maybe it is that we already know God's answer and do not like it so we do not pray.

Transition: Notice another element of David's prayer, not only was it a priority, but it was with diligence.

2. Prayer should be with diligence.

Look again at verse 16. (*Read verses 16-17.*)

David fasted and prayed on the ground all night, so much so that the elders of the house could not convince him to eat. David did not want interruptions with the Lord. David's prayer was a focused event.

Question: How often do we talk to the Lord all night long, let alone day and night for seven days?

Application: Some of us might pray for half an hour at night without falling asleep. We need to pray with diligence. There is something to be said about prayer and fasting. There are times when we need to be completely focused on God in prayer without any interruptions.

David's prayer was one of priority and diligence, but he had already known the answer. Read with me verses 1-14 on this same chapter. (*Read verses 1-14.*)

David repented of his sin and the Lord spared his life. Now David was pleading the case of his son. David knew God's statement, but there are occasions when God's actions are conditional. God sometimes seeks to get a reaction out of us.

Illustration: An example would be, when Jonah went to Nineveh. God said He would destroy the city. The people repented and God's action was mercy.

David was seeking that same mercy. This is an important point. David was attempting to change God's actions not His will. Too often people enter the throne room of God and try to change His will to match their will.

Application: Prayer is to align our will with God's not God's will with ours.

God's will is the standard. We should pray to better understand God's will for us. The more we fight God's will the more we will get answers that we do not like. We need to learn to submit to God's will.

Transition: David made prayer a priority and did so with diligence in this case for seven days. (*Read verses 18-19.*)

God answers he prayer.

The "seventh day" could refer to either the number of days David fasted and prayer night and day, or the number of days of the life of days of the

life of the child. I believe this to refer to the child being seven days old at the point of death.

David's servants were afraid to tell him that the child died. The King James Version has a better translation, "*he was vexed*". The servants were more afraid for David not themselves. They saw the dedication and diligence David put into his prayer for the child's life. They feared what David might do to himself when he finds out the child is died.

David went without food while the child was alive. Maybe they thought he was in the beginning stages of a depression. If that were the case then the news of the death of the child would spiral him further in the depression, doing more harm to himself and possibly others.

Transition: David fasting was not due to depression but do to priorities.

David's priority was to understand God's will for the life of his child. David heard his servants whispering and perceived that the child was died. After questioning his servants, they confirm the death of the child.

Transition: We have seen the priority of prayer, the diligence in prayer and now the worship of prayer.

3. Prayer should produce worship.

David did not get the answer he desired. God took the life of his son, as judgment for his sin. Notice David response was not anger at God. Nor was it depression over the loss of his son. Instead, it was true worship to the Creator for answering his prayer.

Read verse 20 with me. (*Read verse 20.*)

David prepared himself then went into the "*house of the Lord and worshipped*". David bowed down before God to present himself before a Superior Being with a sense of respect, awe, reverence, honor and homage.

Application: We should likewise never rush into worship but prepare ourselves, our hearts, our minds, our lives, our relationships.

Some people define worship as music. The Hebrew word here in verse 20 means to bow down or prostrate oneself. Worship is the respect, awe, reverence, honor, and homage paid to God showing our humility, self-abasement, need, respect, submission and adoration.

After David prepared himself, he worshipped God for answering his prayer. God is worthy of worship because He answers prayer, not because he answers prayer the way we want.

Transition: To worship God for answering our prayers with a “no” takes submission.

4. Prayer should be with submission.

David received the answer to his prayer. The answer was a clear “no”. David’s praying all night long prepared him for the answer he received. One definition of prayer is the “expression of man’s dependence upon God for all things.” Prayer is communication with God and a purpose to align our will with God’s.

Application: Our prayers should prepare us for God’s response.

Transition: Look at David’s response to God’s answer in verses 20-23. (Read verses 20-23.)

David accepted the answer. This reaction confused his servants. David did not show signs of depression nor did he harm himself. Instead, he can eat as normal and rejoice in the Lord for David now knew God’s will.

David explains the purpose of pleading with the Lord was for the life of the child. Once the child was died, David realized petitioning any more was not going to bring him back. The Lord gave his answer and David accepted it and moved on with his life.

Conclusion:

Question: What does David’s example teach us about prayer?

Prayer should be a priority, with diligence, produce worship and be submissive.

Transition: How should this message affect us?

How have we responded when God said “no” and we wanted to hear “yes”? Have we let it get us down and depressed because we have been told “no” by God? Or are we ready to worship the Lord for answering our prayer. Remember God is omniscient, He knows what is best for this church.

Challenge: Do not get down and depressed over your situation. Do not seek other churches or ministries to be involved during the transition. Do not stop giving to the ministry either time or money. As David, make prayer a priority with diligence that produces worship and is submissive to the answer.

How did this story with David end? (*Read verse 24.*)

God blessed David and Bathsheba with another son, one was the wisest man that ever lived at the time and “*the Lord love [Solomon]*”.

I knelt to pray, but not for too long.
I had too much to do.
Must hurry off and get to work,
For bills would soon be due.

And so I said a hurried prayer,
Jumped up from off my knees,
My Christian duties now were done,
My soul could be at ease.

All through the day I had no time
To speak a word of cheer;
No time to speak of Christ to friends,
They'd laugh at me I feared.

No time, no time, too much to do.
That was my constant cry;
No time to give to those in need –
At least was time to die.

And when before the Lord I came,
I stood with downcast eyes;
Within His hands He held a book –
It was the “Book of Life.”

God looked into His book and said,
“Your name I cannot find,”
“I once was going to write it down,
“But never found the time.”

Let us praise the Lord that He is faithful even when we are not.