
Our best possible outcome is that God's will would be done.

Matthew 6:9-13 (NLT) - Pray like this: Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. ¹⁰ May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. ¹¹ Give us today the food we need, ¹² and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us. ¹³ And don't let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one.

Philippians 2:5-11 (NLT) - You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. ⁷ Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, ⁸ he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Matthew 26:36-46 (NLT) - Then Jesus went with them to the olive grove called Gethsemane, and he said, "Sit here while I go over there to pray." ³⁷ He took Peter and Zebedee's two sons, James and John, and he became anguished and distressed. ³⁸ He told them, "My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me." ³⁹ He went on a little farther and bowed with his face to the ground, praying, "My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine." ⁴⁰ Then he returned to the disciples and found them asleep. He said to Peter, "Couldn't you watch with me even one hour? ⁴¹ Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak!" ⁴² Then Jesus left them a second time and prayed, "My Father! If this cup cannot be taken away unless I drink it, your will be done." ⁴³ When he returned to them again, he found them sleeping, for they couldn't keep their eyes open. ⁴⁴ So he went to pray a third time, saying the same things again. ⁴⁵ Then he came to the disciples and said, "Go ahead and sleep. Have your rest. But look—the time has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶ Up, let's be going. Look, my betrayer is here!"

Study Guide

This last Sunday together, we wrapped up our series on prayer by talking about the 4th step of our PRAY pattern: Yield. Submitting to God and bringing our prayers before Him as a humble offering is a good and freeing thing, but it can also be very challenging.

Sometimes we have been praying for things that are good and righteous, but just don't seem to happen. Has there ever been anything that you felt was good and righteous and you have prayed for, that God didn't answer? What was/is that like?

Sometimes we are praying for a family member's health, a person in crisis, a wide-reaching tragedy and the challenge is that it doesn't always seem like God is going to act the way we want Him to. So, what do we do with that?

Take a moment to read 2 Corinthians 12:1-10. What do you see in this scripture?

Here we have Paul confessing that he has prayed for healing again and again for himself and nothing has happened. This is a man through whom God healed many others, but in this instance it wasn't happening for him. I feel like I can hear the pain in his voice when he talks about it, but at the same time there is an incredible strength.

Paul lays out that any shortcoming he experiences makes more space for people to see God. He finds the redemptive opportunity in his own pain and it's a beautiful point to make. However, I don't think the only message here is that we all need to find beauty in our suffering, but rather that Paul's belief in God and the depth of his relationship with God has allowed him to trust God even when God didn't act how Paul wanted him to. Like many things in the Christian experience, the answer is relationship.

So, let's take a moment to yield our unanswered prayers to God. Let's acknowledge that we don't always understand, but let's push past the understanding to the relationship. Take some time to pray for the unanswered prayers but also to pray that God would make Himself real to us so that, even in the tension of unanswered prayers, we can still boldly represent Him to the world.