



## **When God Delays Answering Prayer - September 2022**

***"Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life." Proverbs 13:12***

Have you ever prayed for something for so long, years even, with every piece of your heart in every single prayer that the waiting caused you to feel uncontrollable hopelessness? When paired with the sufferings that happen in this broken world we call home, that hopelessness can create a root of bitterness in our hearts that grow into doubt. That's what it means in Proverbs 13:12 when it states, "Hope deferred makes the heart sick..."

If you notice the writer of this proverb adds a joyful extension to that sentence right afterward; "but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life." This statement is necessary for this verse because of God's character, because of who He really is. This verse is specifically focusing on the hope that we have in our Lord to hear our prayers and to believe with that blind faith (2 Corinthians 5:7) that he will gladly answer them. There are countless verses in scripture that talk about the faithfulness of God, but two, in particular, come to mind when I think of Christ answering our prayers:

Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>8</sup> For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. Matthew 7:7-8

If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. John 15:7

Sometimes when I read over verses like this and think about prayers that I am still waiting for the Lord to answer, I wonder if I am doing something wrong and that's why it hasn't happened yet. These kinds of thoughts are simply playing into the Devil's hand because reality is far from it. The truth is that we serve and believe in an ever-faithful, all-loving God who knows the right moment and the right time to make our dreams come true. Yes, of course sometimes an unanswered prayer could mean "no," but if that were the case, it's wrong to think that the no is because God was punishing you or didn't love you enough to answer it in the first place. It's more likely He was protecting you from something in your future that you haven't seen yet, or maybe it's contrary to His plans for your life. Whatever the rejection of prayer would be is most definitely for your own good.

God's timing and God's plans for our life will always be a mystery. We cannot know what he has in store for us because it is not our place to know - it is our job to believe in his promises, cling to the faithfulness that His Word describes, and walk the blind path that he called us to walk. When we surrender our lives to Christ and become a believer, sometimes we forget that the life He now holds is for US TO LIVE FOR HIM. We are surrendering our own plans and our own dreams to instead take on His plans and His dreams for our lives. And we can do this, no matter how scary the unknown is, because anything the Lord plans for us will be greater than what we could ever imagine.

I could give you a list of unanswered prayers that I've begged for in silence...but even now, I still believe what may seem impossible based on the unknown "why" that He hasn't answered my prayers is very possible. And that he very much WILL answer them. Having faith in God to give us the desires of our hearts is paramount to any believer who trusts and loves our amazing Lord. Even if he has said no to you before, it doesn't mean that no is an all-ending rejection of everything which you share with Christ in secret. Like I said before, He loves you so much more than you could ever imagine. I encourage you today to ask the Lord to align the desires of your heart with His will for your life so that you can see his immeasurable blessings unfold.