

IS GOD LISTENING?

(Matthew 7:7-11)

- Introduction:
1. Prayer is one of the greatest privileges that God has given unto his children.
 2. However, we may not have the degree of faith in prayer that we should have.
 3. The reason that some do not have the faith in prayer that they should is often due to experiencing what they feel is a failure on God's part to answer.
 4. Some may be asking, "***Is God really listening?***"
 5. Let's examine Luke 1:5-11 in light of this question.

I. ZACHARIAS AND ELIZABETH

- A. They were both godly people (1:6).
- B. They were both older people (1:7).
- C. However, an angel told them that their prayers for a child had been answered (1:11-13).
- D. Zacharias was surprised, indicating that he had not recently been praying for a child (1:18).
- E. Don't you think that this couple asked many of the same questions that we ask?
 1. Don't you think that they wondered why God hadn't answered their prayers?
 2. In fact, they had probably given up on ever having a child.
- F. However, in this case, God hadn't forgotten their prayers, He had simply delayed His answer.

II. HOW TO DEAL WITH PRAYERS APPARENTLY UNANSWERED

- A. Don't Forsake God.
 1. Zacharias and Elizabeth were both probably disappointed, but they did not turn their backs on God.
 2. When Zacharias learned that they were going to have a child, he was in God's house.
 - a. He had probably long since quit praying for a son, but he had not quit going into God's house.
 3. Our supposed unanswered prayers just may be one of the ways God tests our faith (James 1:3).
- B. Remember That Our Prayers Simply May Be Delayed.
 1. God is omniscient.
 2. He knows best when we need what we need.
 3. (Matthew 6:19-34).
- C. Remember That Our Prayers Must Be In Accordance With God's Will.

1. (I John 5:14).
 2. God knows what is best for us.
 3. Would you want all the prayers that you ever prayed to be answered?
- D. Remember That We Must Be Righteous.
1. (James 5:16).
 2. God has never promised to answer the prayers of an unrighteous man.
 3. (Proverbs 28:9).
- E. Remember God's Perspective.
1. Just think of all the contradictory prayers that God receives.
 2. We must trust that what is done is best, whether I understand it or not.

- Conclusion:
1. Prayer is powerful.
 2. What Jesus said in Matthew 7:7-11 is true.
 3. However, the kind of prayer that Jesus spoke of was one prayed by a righteous man and in accordance with God's will.
 4. Don't neglect your prayer life - use it to your good and your neighbor's.