

Lesson #7: Types of God's answers

"I sought the Lord, and He answered me." Psalm 34:4.

I used to think the answers were yes, no, and maybe. I was wrong. God has 5 kinds of answers that all are a version of YES.

"Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear." Isaiah 65.24.

Yes, immediately. God can start answering a request before you pray it. Think of prayers God has answered for you and think of how some of them had been in process decades or more before you prayed them. The example of Abraham's servant going out to find a wife for his son Isaac is a perfect example of an answered prayer before the prayer was even finished. Gen 24:12-15.

Yes, in due time. Sometimes we think the answer is no if the Lord doesn't answer us. Maybe He doesn't answer us for 50 years. But the answer was not No. It was yes. It was just not the right time. Think how long the Old Testament people waited for the Messiah. The answer was not no, it was yes. It just took 15+ centuries for the time for the "yes" to be right.

Yes, so you'll learn from it. People ask for things that are not good for them. God will sometimes say yes, simply to teach us a lesson. Think of the people of Israel who asked for a king even after God warned them against it. "When that day comes, you will cry out for relief from the king you have chosen, but the Lord will not answer you in that day." 1 Sam 8:18.

No, because your hearts not right. In this case, the answer is yes but the Lord is waiting on you. "When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures." James 4:3. God is not saying no forever, He's waiting on you to repent and turn to Him before He gives you what you asked for. He's waiting on you to grow up and be ready for what He wants to give you.

No, I've got a better plan. This is when God actually says yes but gives us far more than we actually asked for. It's not a no, it's a super-sized yes. God gave us a free upgrade. "Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us." Eph. 3:20.

Many times the reason we never got a yes is because we simply failed to ask. James 4:2.

Sample Prayer:

Father, forgive me. My sinful self always seems to default to thinking that You are not listening. And even if You were, You'd say no. I trust You Lord. You know me better than I know myself. You have said You do not withhold good things from those who love You. Thank you for even allowing me to ask You and create trust in my heart that You will always act for my good. May I learn to trust You even more and pray with greater faith knowing You want to be glorified through my answered prayers.
In Jesus name, Amen.