

Read the prayers of Scripture (Abraham, Moses, Hannah, David, Nehemiah, Isaiah, Job, Paul, etc.) and observe their bold requests. It's as if God proclaims: *Finally, someone asked me to do something worthy of My name!*

**They didn't stop because...**

God didn't immediately open the door, or give them justice, or provide for their needs.

### III. God is Not Annoyed by Bold Prayers

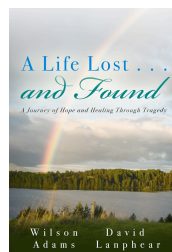
A. Verse 10 is not saying that if you pray on Sunday, you'll have an answer by Monday. You may have to pray for a month of Sundays (or a year). Keep asking. Keep praying. Don't stop—until God's will has been clearly seen.

1. Example... Some of you are here today because someone loved you enough to keep praying. Perhaps you delayed obeying the gospel. They kept praying. Perhaps you were the prodigal son or daughter in the far city. They kept praying. Regardless, someone who loved you kept asking: *Lord, I don't see them moving closer to You, but I'm not going away... I'm not getting off my knees until you knock them to theirs...*

2. I wonder if...our persistent asking helps God to help us know when we are serious about petition—?

B. I have no idea what Goliaths or Jericho walls stand in your way. But if I have learned anything from Scripture and human experience, it is this: God moves when His people pray. So pray, my Phoenix brethren. And pray BIG. And keep praying. And mean it. **Lord, teach us to pray...** Indeed. Ephesians 3:20-21...

FYI: Material for the "Where is God When I Hurt?" series is condensed from the book, *A Life Lost & Found—A Journey of Hope & Healing* by Wilson Adams & David Lanphear. If interested, see Austin Johnson.



# Where Is God When I Hurt?

## *A Journey of Hope & Healing*

A series about coping with grief  
Monte Vista, Phoenix, AZ  
Wilson Adams

### **Pray BIG!**

**(What would it be like to pray—really pray—worthy of the greatness of God?)**

Luke 11:1ff

A young man was struggling to find himself. An older brother met with him one morning each week for a year. During the "mentoring" conversation, he would ask the young man: "Andy, what are you working on BIG?" Truth was, Andy wasn't working on anything big at all. He also got to the point where he dreaded the question. Years later, and in retrospect, he realized it was a great question.

Most of us plod through the daily minutia of life, consumed with all the drama moments of the urgent, and never think BIG. We never take the time to think (really think) about what God wants from us or can do for us and those struggling around us. As a result, we fail to claim His promises and, thus, our faith stays small. Do we believe (*really believe*) that with God all things are possible?

## I. The Challenge of Jesus—Matthew 6:31-32

*You spend all your time chasing after minor things...  
Even people who do not embrace God do that...*

A. When you think about your struggles, hopes, hurts, and the goal of the gospel (connecting hurting-seeking people with the guilt-releasing power of forgiveness), what are you praying for BIG? In other words, do you pray in keeping with verse 31 or verse 33?

1. Much of what we tend to pray for will work out anyway according to God's natural order. That's not to say He doesn't care about every part of our lives. He does. That's not to say we shouldn't pray for food, clothing, and shelter. We should.

2. It is to ask a simple question: *Do you really want to spend another year coming to God with the same small requests?* This is a God who moves mountains. This is Jehovah—"The Great I AM." This is *Our God Is An Awesome God...* And we bow before Him and ask that He help us get over this nagging cold—???

3. Are your prayers concerned with life's minutia or are they faith-stretching BIG? Are they rote or does something grip your heart to the point that you become emotional as you pray with tears in your eyes as you plead, *God, if you don't; it won't!*

*God, I'm asking for Your healing hand...*

*God, I'm asking for Your help with \_\_\_\_\_...*

*God, I'm asking that the power of Your gospel touch the life of \_\_\_\_\_*

**What are you praying for beyond your ability, know-how, and vision?**

**What are you praying for that stretches your faith capacity?**

B. If the size of your prayer requests equates to the size of your God, *how big is your God?*

1. Note: this is not about approaching God per the health-wealth suggestions of the televangelists (*you pray it; God will do it*). In any prayer we bow humbly in recognition and deference to His will, not ours (Matt.26:36ff; James 4:13-15). Sometimes God answers, "No" or "Later." After all, He knows what is best for us and...FYI: He's not working *just* for us.

2. On the contrary, this is prayer so big and bold that it takes us out of our comfort zone. It's asking for help when we are helpless.

## II. "Lord, Teach Us to Pray..." Luke 11:1ff

A. It's an odd request. These were good Jewish synagogue-going men. They knew the Law. They had heard hundreds of public prayers. However, after being in the company of Jesus and watching Him pray, they observed that He prayed differently. They prayed. He **PRAYED.**

1. vv.2-4. Luke records a condensed version of Matt. 6:9-13. Obviously, the point of Jesus' teaching is not memorization or rote requests. In essence He says, *Prayer comes down to this... Thank God for His blessings, confess His greatness, and confess your dependence upon Him...* In other words: the ABCs of prayer.

2. But if you're really serious about prayer...



B. Jesus tells them a story (vv.5-8). It's an audacious request. In fact, the man in the story shouts, "Do not bother me; the door has been shut..." By this time the Twelve have heard enough stories to know someone in the story represents them and someone represents God. In the story, the one representing God is the man who doesn't wish to be bothered.

1. Truthfully, haven't you sometimes felt that way about Him? -That your prayers are bothersome? Or you have prayed, nothing happened, and you conclude that He was *asleep* to your needs?

2. Look closely at verse 8. the only reason given for the man's receiving his request is that he had the audacity to ask in the first place. The Greek word could be translated "boldness," "persistence," or "shameless." This man was not going away!

3. It is essential that we not over-analyze any parable to the point that its basic truth is lost. The point of Jesus is not so much a representation of God as much as it is a representation of *us*. We come before Him half-hearted, ask once, then throw up our hands and walk away. Jesus said,

*So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you.*

These are words of persistence. Ask and keep asking. Seek and keep seeking. Knock and keep knocking.