

God Answers Prayer

Read Philippians 4:5-7

Many years ago, I started writing out my prayers. After I read the Bible, I write a prayer in response to what I've read. It's a practice I highly recommend!

One day I read back through some of those prayers. To my amazement, I saw a recurring pattern: I would pray about a need, often in desperation, and a short time later, that need was provided. I prayed. God answered. But by the time the answer came, I was already concentrating on another concern. Thus I sometimes didn't recognize the answer when it came. And I completely missed the pattern until I looked back.

I rediscovered what I was taught as a child in Sunday School: God answers prayer. When I trust Him enough to bring Him my concerns, He responds. But as James says, "*You do not have because you do not ask God.*" (James 4:2, NIV)

Read Philippians 4:5-7. I've found that these straightforward verses are beautifully true and abound with practical teaching about prayer.

The Lord is near (Philippians 4:5, NIV). Remember, we are never out of God's presence. Thus we can *pray continually* (1 Thessalonians 5:17), turning to Him anytime, anywhere, as to a Friend right next to us. Prayer can be our constant and natural response to need or to blessing or to just realizing that God is with us.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God (Philippians 4:6, NIV). I'm weary of the "worry cycle" in my life: small problems arise (often the same ones over and over); they start to gnaw at me; then, little by little, they consume my thoughts, chewing up my energy, my joy, and my peace. To fight this cycle, God urges us to immediately bring our concerns to Him, as soon as we're aware of them. Bring them again whenever they come to mind.

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:7, NIV). The result is one of the warmest and most practical gifts possible: God's peace. This peace is so deep, so all-encompassing that we cannot even imagine it enough to ask for it. And this peace will guard our hearts and minds, keeping them in Christ Jesus.

Hymn: [Almighty God Is Near!](#)