

5th Sunday after Pentecost, June 23, Study Guide

Does God Hear and Answer our Prayers?



Key Themes

Doubt as a Spiritual Tool: Doubt can be a motivator and a tool in our spiritual lives. It pushes us to seek deeper understanding and stronger faith.

Balancing Perspectives on Prayer: The Role of the Holy Spirit: Interceding for us when words fail, knowing our hearts and minds. God hears our deepest thoughts and desires.

Prayer as Communication: A direct line to God. Prayer is more than asking for things; it's about building a deep, intimate relationship with God.

Prayer in Practice:

- Expressing Thanks: Acknowledging God's blessings.
- Making Requests: Bringing our needs and concerns before God.
- Seeking Guidance: Asking for divine wisdom and direction.
- Quiet Time with God: Fostering a personal relationship beyond just requests.
- The Struggle of Unanswered Prayer: Feeling distant from God in times of trouble.

Common Reasons for Unanswered Prayers:

- Lack of faith (Philippians 4:6)
- Wrong motives (James 4:3)
- Lack of compassion (Proverbs 21:13)
- Disobedience (1 John 3:22)
- Misalignment with God's will (1 John 5:14)

Scripture Reading

John 15:1-8

2 Corinthians 12

Romans 8:26-27

1 John 5:14

Discussion Questions

- *John 15:1-8 Reflection:* How does staying connected to Jesus, the true vine, affect our prayer life?
- *Romans 8:26-27 Insight:* How does knowing the Holy Spirit intercedes for us shape our understanding of prayer?
- *Balancing Perspectives:* How can we reconcile the joy of answered prayers with the frustration of unanswered ones?
- *Practical Application:* What steps can we take to deepen our prayer life and maintain faith even when our prayers seem unanswered?

Reflection

- *How can we use prayer to not only seek answers but to grow closer to God?*
- *Commit to a consistent prayer time, focusing not just on requests but on seeking a deeper connection with God.*