

## Spiritually Speaking...with James Washington Blessed 2

Written by James Washington  
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If you're like me, prayer is a subject that keeps popping up because sometimes out of sheer habit, I keep doing it. Intellectually I understand its purpose and its benefit. But sometimes I get lost in the reality of who and under what circumstances I'm moved to sincerely pray. It's then that I want my prayers answered on my time for my reasons, forgetting or not wanting to remember all things happen for a reason; God's reason to be precise.

This past Sunday the minister reminded me that God's plan happens on God's time and our job is to be open and ready for His answer to our prayers. Simply put, he said, delay is not denial. God answers all prayer in His time, in His way, with His power and for His purpose. That's it and we have to deal with it. But as Christians when you think about it, God's time, His will and power for His purpose is not so bad. As a matter of spiritual fact, we should prefer it that way even when we have the audacity to think we know what's best for us. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts (higher) than yours." Isaiah 55:8-9.

First of all God answers all prayer in one of three ways: 1.) Yes, 2.) No, or 3.) Not now. The question is never can God answer. The real question is does your faith acknowledge that you know He can? One of the hardest things to reconcile is that there are times that God puts you in helpless impossible situations in order to let you know it's all about Him. "Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but he was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness." These words... were written not for him alone, but also for us to whom God will credit righteousness for us who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead." Romans 4: 20-24. The more you read about and try to really

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comprehend prayer the more you come away knowing how pure this communication should be between you and God. There is no disbelief for a child who believes in Santa Claus because his parents told him to. God keeps telling us to believe in him. Can you? Do you really? "Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it and it will be yours." Mark 11:24. Each and every time it comes down to that belief thing. Prayer always calls your faith into question.

I sometimes pray for the faith that accesses the power of God. This is not ego on my part but humility to ask that I might be a vessel empty enough of me to be filled with the Holy Spirit. I believe God's grace will flow more freely and through me, His will will be done. Wouldn't you like to know that kind of power up close and personal in your own life? Think again about why that mustard seed example was given in the first place. "Then the disciples came to Jesus and asked, 'Why couldn't we drive it out?'" Matthew 17: 19. They couldn't do something they thought they should have been able to. "He replied, 'Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, move from here to there, and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.'" Matthew 17:20-21. Unfortunately faith is tested each and every day. Most times I think we merely look at it as "life happens" and try to move on, get past it at least until life serves up the tragically impossible. Prayer comes to mind first when unwavering faith is called for. As I catch myself praying out of habit sometimes, I'm reminded it's more about God and less about my circumstance. Put it in God's hands and let it go. Believe me. I know personally that's so much harder than it sounds. But my God said in His time, in His will, by His way and because of His power, it will be done. I'm just trying to take those words to the bank.

May God bless and keep you always.{jcomments on}