

What Faith and Answered Prayer Really Look Like

Acts 12:5 - 19

- I. **It is possible to pray earnestly and not recognize the answer even when it is knocking at your door.**
 - A. Fear and unbelief make us blind to God's answers to prayer. Believing that God is good all the time is very helpful to opening the door of blessing (Psalm 27:4-6, 13-14; Romans 8:31-35).
 - B. God speaks far more than we think. Noticing the fingerprints of God in small and big ways keeps us from missing answered prayer.
 - C. The busyness and clutter of life can make us dull to the working of God in the fabric of everyday life.

- II. **Peter's friends prayed blessing to their front door and then did not let it (him) in.**
 - A. You are part of the answer to many of your prayer requests (James 1:5-8)
 - B. After praying you may also need to unlock the door, turn the doorknob, and take a faith walk with God (Revelation 3:20).
 - C. Are you humble enough to open the door of blessing in your life? (E.g., Salvation, Naaman the Syrian—II Kings 5:8-15).
 - D. Your relationship with others effects the answers to your prayers (Isaiah 58:3-9; Luke 6:37-38).
 - E. "Without faith it is impossible to please God" (Hebrews 11:6) and impossible to open the door of blessing over your life. No amount of religious activity is a substitute for risk (faith) (Hebrews 11:17-19).

- III. **Opening the door to answers the Philippians way (Philippians 4:4-9)**
 - A. Rejoicing—worshipping and singing (Philippians 4:4)
 - B. Gentleness—personal relationships (Philippians 4:5)
 - C. Prayer and petition with thanksgiving (Philippians 4:6)
 - D. A guarded, peaceful heart and mind (Philippians 4:7-9)

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