

Sermon Based Small Group Guide for November 6, 2022 sermon:  
***"Why is this taking so long?"***

**Warm up:**

1. Waiting can be difficult. For the average child, they struggle to wait for Christmas or their next birthday (constantly wanting to be "older"...how silly that seems now!). What is something that is difficult for you to patiently wait for?
2. Is there something that you have prayed for a L-O-N-G time? If you are able, share what that request is, how long you've been praying, and why it is so important to you.

**Digging deeper:** (20-30 minutes)

1. ASK: What do you think God's attitude is toward us when we pray? Jesus wants us to "pray and never give up", but if we misunderstand the character of God, we may believe that we have to get the attention of a disinterested Deity, or convince a skeptical heavenly Father. A missionary to West Africa wrote: "I have never witnessed an orphan cry...not once. The tragic truth is, they don't cry because they don't believe there is anyone who cares if they hurt or not." What do the following scriptures say about God and his attitude toward us and about our prayers?  
Psalm 27:7-8, Isaiah 65:24, Jeremiah 33:2-3, James 1:5-7

2. ASK: Does God answer every prayer that we pray? What are the conditions He has placed on answered prayer?

Answered prayer has a few conditions. Read the following questions and then answer them with the corresponding scripture:

- Are my priorities right? Matthew 6:33
- Am I just saying words or praying from the heart? Matthew 6:7
- Is not knowing exactly what to pray a deal-breaker? Romans 8:26-27
- Is delayed answer to prayer a punishment of some kind? Luke 1:6-13
- What if unanswered prayer makes me doubt God or myself? Philippians 4:6-7

**Apply it:** (10 minutes)

Would you agree that we should talk more openly and honestly with each other about our struggles and frustrations in prayer? Perhaps we are afraid that we are "badmouthing" God if we admit that we struggle with prayer, but the truth is, we help and encourage each other when we do. And when we share answered prayers, it is not "bragging", it is glorifying to God and motivating to fellow believers.

Close by sharing requests and praying with and for each other.