

Tough Questions – What Happens if God Doesn't Show Up? Part 2

Man 1: So what do I do when God doesn't show up? I kind of think of it as like an unanswered prayer – that God is showing up but in a way that we don't understand usually, and giving an answer that we do not always want to hear. I think that in those times like it's very important to just have faith in God's plan and his promises like Zack said earlier and just trust in his plan for you. That's not always easy and it will take a lot of questioning God and just trying to figure out his plan for that.

Man 2: The first example that comes to mind is about a month or two ago, I was at the county fair back home and some people asked me at the end of the fair to get up and give a prayer, which was totally out of my comfort zone – something that I didn't want to do at all, and they asked me to do it a minute before they wanted it done. So I thought about some things to say and I prayed and said, "Hey God, just give me some words – I don't really know what I'm going to say." So I got up there and I stumbled through it – I couldn't think of anything to say and the microphone started buzzing so I had to move away, and I just thought went terrible. I got done and I texted one of my friends and said, "Man - why didn't God come through and help out there?" He said, "Well, it's not that you should be mad at God for not coming through – you should be thanking Him and glorifying Him for giving you the opportunity to share the Gospel with like 300-400 people. So that really hit me hard and gave me a whole new way to think about how God is working in my life.

Woman 1: Well, I think if God hadn't showed up, I think before going into a situation like that, I would have to be really strong in my faith having to know and accept that whatever happens is God's will. So if God hadn't of showed up, I feel like I would have had to know before hand that wouldn't be His will necessarily. Also, if He hadn't shown up, I would think that in my own life, He has shown up so many times that if He didn't show up once, I would have to say, "Well, hey – that was God's will." And it was His will that He wouldn't show up this time. So if one time He didn't up just to do whatever, that was His will to put me through more testing and have Him show me that He's in control. And He doesn't have to show up when I say, "God you need to show up right now." So one thing like that wouldn't "x" out thousands of times that he has intervened in my life that maybe I haven't even recognized. So He may not show up in the way that we think either. It may seem like He's not showing up, but He is showing up so I think there are lots of ways that we can look at it.

Man 3: If God didn't show up at first, I might be kind of shocked because if I was expecting Him to and He didn't, I would be like – whoa – wait – what's going on here? But then I think I'd probably to back to his promises and what He's done in the past – not only in my life but what He's spoken through scripture and what He's shown up for the Israelites so many times. I mean even the story we're hearing about today like how he showed up for Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego or how he fulfilled the prophecies – or whatever he did, like in the past He's always proven Himself to be faithful. Even in this moment, I can't see Him – I don't know where He is – He's been there in the past and He'll be there, but maybe not the way I hoped

for. So I'll be disappointed – yea – but He's there and I can count on that because that's who He is.

Man 4: What would I do if God didn't show up? I like to think that there's always the next step in life and sometimes I may not be ready to see God showing up. I think about God is a still small voice that maybe I'm not be ready to hear at that moment, but I think in hindsight, it let's me kind of see how God showed up later on. So just trusting that maybe I'm not ready to see God now, but hoping for something later.

Tim Perry: Well, there's a lot of wisdom here in those college and high school students. Many of these people you just saw were probably about the same age as Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. I admire the courage and the tenacity of their faith. And speaking as a guy who's lived a lot more years than most of these kids I just interviewed, it takes an awful lot of perseverance in our relationship with God to get through life's biggest challenges. I'd have to agree with many of them, God doesn't always show up and answer my prayer. But it doesn't mean that my faith is deficient – it doesn't mean necessarily that God is deficient – it could mean that God is doing something different in that situation.

Well, if you have any thoughts that you'd like to chime in with on this topic of "where's God when you need a prayer answered" – I'd love to hear them. Let's dialogue a little bit.

Thanks for being with me. This is Tim Perry, Pastor of Spiritual Discover at Christ Community Church.