



**unanswered
prayer
happens**

24 January 2016

Key Texts

Psalm 13:1-3

Isaiah 61:1-3

Luke 4:17-21

Romans 8:28

Hebrews 4:15

Thinking & talking through the biblical text during the week helps turn what God is saying into action steps.

We've all had unanswered prayer. It is one of the most frustrating things about prayer, as we usually pray thinking that God will answer. Some may have grown up with the saying that "God will either answer yes, no, or wait." But if we're honest, unanswered prayer is very frustrating.

We are not talking about "what are you smoking?" prayers. We're looking at honest prayers where the prayers are to heal a sick loved one, help in not losing a job or house, or getting bullied at home or school. These are the types of prayers that are frustrating when they go unanswered.

- What additional questions and comments do you have about the sermon and supporting texts?
- What are some of the factors affecting prayer?
- Why do you think that so many want a magic formula for prayer?
- Mike said "*We live in a war zone between good and evil, and we're in a fight where prayer matters, but may not always go our way.*" How does this help you understand prayer?

We are not alone in the midst of our pain. Jesus suffered as we do. Jesus understands our fears and frustrations when it comes to unanswered prayer. He is in the middle of the situation, holding our hand, and walking alongside us as we cry out in prayer. He even prays on our behalf. The God that we pray to walks beside us even if our prayer is unanswered. He's not some far off deity, but rather has a personal interest in our lives, prayer, and frustrations.

Do not give up on prayer. If we don't pray, then we lose an important weapon in this battle, and we lose hope. We pray knowing that God has plans for our lives no matter our situation. If we stop praying, then we are acting as if there is no hope of that happening.

Read Isaiah 61:1-3 and Luke 4:17-21

- What are your thoughts on unanswered prayer – both before the sermon and after?
- Did you notice any differences between the 2 passages? What might this mean?
- Reflect on the phrase "*beauty for ashes.*" What does this mean?
- What are the unanswered prayers in your life?
- In what ways did Mike's sermon help you deal with unanswered prayer?
- Do you still have unanswered questions about unanswered prayer? Express them to your small group or people that you know well.