

TEACH US TO PRAY

Week 4 Discussion Questions

When God Says No

2 Corinthians 12:1-10

Icebreaker:

Last week we looked at the Parable of the Persistent Widow, God's heart for justice, and our response of persistent prayer and action. Share how persistent prayer for justice has shaped you this week.

If you participated in any aspect of the 6:8 project weekend, share your experience and how you saw God working in you or the community.

Read this week's passage (2 Corinthians 12:1-10).

What stands out to you from the passage or sermon this week?

Recap: What is the purpose of prayer (especially considering what we've learned over the past three weeks in this series)?

In this passage, Paul contrasts two spiritual experiences—a high-high and a low-low. Paul's many spiritual and leadership experiences could lead him into a sense of pride and boasting, as if he has some kind of special status before God. In what areas of your life are you tempted to find special status or boast in your own strength?

Paul tells us that he is dealing with a "thorn in the flesh" How does Paul describe the effects of this thorn in his life.

Paul prays three times for God to take away the "thorn." What is God's answer and what does he mean when he says, "my grace is sufficient for you"?

Discuss what is meant by the statement: "There is no such thing as unanswered prayers."

When the answer to our prayers is "no" or "not yet" there is always a reason. Discuss the ways God might use our weakness or suffering to shape us to be more like him.

Share a time when you prayed for something for a while and the answer was ultimately "no." How has God shaped you through that experience?

In what ways does this passage shape your understanding of prayer and how it functions in your relationship with God?