

## “Praying to Change God’s Mind”

*2 Kings 20:1-11*

### Introduction

When committed believers pray, an atmosphere is created which allows God to change His mind about negative events in their lives. Hopeless situations, disappointing circumstances, or even consequences of unaddressed sin may cause a Christ follower to want God to alter an existing course or path in their life. The good news is that God can change His mind as exhibited by the story of Hezekiah.

The Bible says Hezekiah was very sick and headed toward a sure death. God told Hezekiah that he was about to die and should get his affairs in order, because death was certain and imminent. However, Hezekiah went to God in prayer asking Him to change His mind, and God did. This biblical story gives us hope even when God has spoken in His Word about a particular outcome or when common knowledge would say that a certain outcome is eminent. A part of God’s nature is that He does not change His essential character, but God can change how He applies His nature in a given scenario. From a human stand point, it may appear that God is changing his mind. God is only changing in the sense that He is relating to us based on a different part of His character.

Hezekiah wasn’t just physically sick, he had a sin problem; he had a problem with pride (2 Chr 32:24-26). When Hezekiah repented of His sin, this put him in a better position for God to extend mercy. While God can always operate in grace and lovingkindness toward people, our obedience better positions us to see that lovingkindness worked out in our lives. Our acts of undistracted focus on communication with God through prayer, and faithful commitment to living righteously, are the human intervention needed to access another side of God’s character. God is sovereign and our actions don’t guarantee specific outcomes, even the ones we desperately desire. But when we get right with God, are faithful to God, and repent of our sins, we position ourselves for God to change His mind about our circumstances. He is not obligated to do so, but that option is available.

Often, God confirms His word with signs. These signs do not determine His word, but can be viewed as validation. Hezekiah got a prophetic word from the prophet (2 Kgs 20:5). He also received a spiritual sign when the sun regressed (2 Kgs 20:8-11; Isa 38:7-8). Initiated by prayer and confirmed by signs, the healing God gave to Hezekiah was not just for Hezekiah’s healing only. The miracle of his healing became an opportunity for him to have a greater impact over the fifteen additional years that God gave him. Prayer is powerful. It can provide a scenario in which God chooses to operate differently than all initial indications. Believers must take prayer seriously to faithfully make their requests known to God and believe that God can do the impossible even when the impossible seems out of reach. God is able.

### Getting Started

1. The concept of God changing His mind is not always an easy one to understand. Based on this week’s sermon, how would you explain this idea to someone else? Take some time to share your understanding of this concept with the other members of your group.
2. Have you ever experienced God changing His mind regarding a situation in your life? Share this with your group to encourage someone else in their walk with God.

### Let’s Get Personal

1. In what area of your life would you love for God to change His mind?
  2. Have you ever asked God to change His mind? Why or why not? Have you ever been disappointed that you did ask God to change His mind and He didn’t?
  3. Is there anything in your life that needs to be adjusted, so that you are better positioned for God to change His mind about your situation?
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### Take the Next Step

1. Think about what you've learned this week about God, His character, and what it means for Him to change His mind. How have these truths impacted your view of God?
2. Based on what you've learned, what will you start or keep praying about as you wait in expectation for God to change His mind by showing you another side of His character?
3. Want to go deeper? Take a look at the following passages: Numbers 14:11-20; Jonah 3:1-10; Judges 6:36-40; Exodus 32:7-14; 2 Chronicles 32:24-26

### Renew Your Mind

*"When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do it."*

*Jonah 3:10*

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