

**Prayer**—that form of communication with God which, for those unaware of its power, is nothing more than a fantasy. How can one believe that a being we cannot see or hear could actually answer? And not only that: if He *\*can\** answer, might He not also be too busy dealing with the problems of millions of people around the world?

Well, that became yet another challenge in my life during that period. "Lord, teach us to pray"—that very request the disciples made to Jesus became my own pressing need as well. I discovered that my faith grew strongest when I was put to the test—when I had nowhere else to turn my gaze but upward, toward the heavens!

But for how long? What should I say? What should I ask for? How can I know that He is truly listening?

It was the year 2019. After overcoming certain challenges in my life and maturing a bit more in many respects—including my faith—I made the decision to work even harder for the Lord's cause. I began to commit myself more fully to the work I had already been doing for two years: striving to capture the attention of young people and lead them to the feet of Christ.

Regarding Camila's health, we knew we had to manage her asthma and remain vigilant at all times to prevent any flare-ups.

But we were not prepared for yet another piece of bad news: Camila had begun exhibiting difficulties with her speech and language development. The doctors dismissed it as something not to be overly concerned about—suggesting that, as an only child who was perhaps a bit spoiled, she had simply developed a peculiar way of communicating. For us, however, it was deeply worrying that she struggled to pronounce words, despite the measures we had taken to accelerate her learning and improve her communication skills.

Tragically, one of the few phrases in her limited vocabulary was this: "I can't hear."  
"My ears are blocked."

I must admit that, as a musician, this was the most heartbreaking news I had ever heard. Valerie Camila presented with profound bilateral hearing loss—profound in her left ear and moderate in her right. Once again, we heard the doctors' pronouncement: "It is impossible for this girl to ever speak; she is practically deaf."

The sorrow in our home became palpable; we could not fathom when or how it had happened. We had always been vigilant, ensuring rigorous testing and constant

visits to the doctor. Could we have prevented this had it been treated in time? We could only speculate on what we might have done, but the damage was already done. "Your daughter needs a hearing aid for her left ear," was the doctor's recommendation. It had to be done immediately, yet we did not have the funds. Beyond the financial burden—which was significant for us—I could not bear the thought of seeing my daughter wearing a device in her ear, looking different from everyone else. To admit that I was angry would be an understatement—and I believed that praying in anger would help. I was not angry with God, but rather with the situation itself; I simply could not accept it, not in any way. It was as if I were demanding an immediate miracle, for I did not want others to see that vulnerability in my little girl.

We decided to continue our investigations to determine how to halt or repair the hearing damage; however, 2020 arrived, and the COVID-19 pandemic brought the entire world to a standstill—including our search for a solution for our daughter. Once again, I found myself with my back against the wall.

We decided to pause and pray. I took time to reflect and dedicated myself to studying the Bible; I went out into the streets and from house to house, devoting myself to preaching the Gospel. That year, I witnessed many miracles unfolding around me; I saw people escape death through the mercy of God! I saw how the homes of God's children remained untouched by the virus, while their neighbors—tragically—passed away, among many other things! I felt my faith growing and strengthening, little knowing the trial that lay ahead.

It was 2022. Amidst hard-won victories—yet surrounded by scarcity, social and political crisis, violence, and mounting problems within the country—Valerie once again sounded the alarm. With a stronger, more fluent vocabulary, she told us clearly: "I can't hear; my ear feels blocked." With tears in my eyes, I bowed my head and accepted the reality that my daughter would need to use a hearing aid—even if it made her look different from others. Although I found myself wondering why God had not answered my prayer after I had witnessed so many miracles, this time my response was simply to bow my head—without anger. We went to the doctor, and the news was devastating: Camila had sensorineural hearing loss—irreparable damage. Instead of just a single hearing aid, she now required two. There was no way to repair the damage short of a cochlear implant requiring surgery. Once again, I found myself in denial at the thought of her undergoing an operation; I prayed to the Lord, begging that the hearing aids would be sufficient

to manage her hearing loss. Yet, I also lacked the funds to acquire them anytime soon. Furthermore, a more in-depth examination—conducted to determine why her auditory nerves were failing—led the doctors to discover a brain lesion that turned out to be multiple sclerosis. If the previous news had been devastating, I have no words to describe how we felt in that moment upon receiving this latest blow. I had already watched a relative die from a degenerative disease—my aunt. From a very young age, she lost the ability to walk, speak, and move at all; she spent her final days confined to a bed until she finally passed away. I fell into despair; I could not bear the thought that my daughter—at only nine years old—would face the same end. I remember it was a Wednesday when we received the news—just one hour before I was due to go out into the neighborhoods to preach, as was my custom. I intended to tell my partner, "You handle it; I can't do it today." But something deep inside me whispered: "This is your work; it has to be you." I grabbed my car keys and my Bible, and headed to my destination. On the way, I spoke to the Lord and said: "I speak of Your miracles, of Your wonders, and of Your wisdom... yet my own daughter suffers. How can I speak when my own child is ill?" I said nothing more. When I arrived at the venue, I was surprised to find many more people waiting for me than usual. I didn't have a specific message prepared; I simply picked up my Bible and said, "Show me what You want me to say." When I opened it, I understood that He wanted me to speak about healing. With a lump in my throat, I preached in that home that night and prayed for the sick. I noticed the joy on people's faces as they listened to the message—even as I wept inwardly—yet, at the same time, the Word began to work its healing effect within me. Every word that left my lips returned to me with power, touching my very soul. That night, I left a little earlier than usual. As I pulled into the church parking lot, I turned off the engine and began to weep. I said nothing; I simply let out what I was feeling and gave thanks to the Lord, acknowledging that His Word is real—that He is faithful and true.

The medical tests to evaluate Valerie had to continue—for seven days straight that week. In the early hours of the morning, I would pray over my little girl's body, pleading with the Lord for a miracle. I learned what it truly means to enter into prayer—not merely to ask for things, but to give thanks for what He has already done. I had always played music and sung at church, but I had never before sung in such intimacy with the Lord. Once again, the Lord was working "collateral miracles" in my life—and I didn't even realize it!

It's a curious story: my wife was pregnant, and we simply couldn't choose a name for our second daughter; no matter how hard we searched, we couldn't find the right one. Then, in late 2022, came the definitive test—the one that would help us understand what could be done regarding Valerie's health situation. Doctors in Colombia, Argentina, and Venezuela were trying to coordinate with one another so they could act as quickly as possible, given the medical complications within the country at the time; however, we eventually managed to find someone in Venezuela—an expert in the field.

We scheduled the appointment, brought along the test results, and discussed all of Valerie's medical episodes. Upon reviewing the records, the doctor concluded that it was almost certainly multiple sclerosis, and that the brain lesion was quite prominent; however, she wanted to observe visible symptoms firsthand before issuing a formal diagnosis.

She proceeded to perform a simple physical examination—one that would provide the definitive answer. We had seen our daughter lose her balance countless times; we had watched her eyes dart uncontrollably from side to side without stopping. Simple tasks—like standing on one foot—had been impossible for her. But then came the surprise: she successfully performed everything the doctor asked of her—from hopping on one foot around the room to rising from the floor without using her hands—tasks she had *\*never\** been able to do when *\*we\** asked her to. The doctor's words were: "Are you Christians? You must be holding fast to God, because what you are seeing here is a miracle." It was awe-inspiring to hear those words from a physician—to hear a doctor acknowledge the power of God. It simply defied medical explanation that a brain lesion of that magnitude would allow our daughter to walk and move as she did. Ten years later, I recalled the words of that earlier pediatrician: "You must be grateful to God!" And now, I was watching that little bundle of energy skipping all over the room! So, I praise God for what He has done. It wasn't just me, after all; there were many knees bowed in prayer, crying out to Heaven on behalf of our daughter! And the Lord answered—not exactly as *\*I\** had wanted, but according to His own holy will! Perhaps her vision isn't perfect, but she can walk, move, speak, and see! I never cease asking the Lord to help us resolve her hearing issue—she wants to play the piano—but we remain at peace, trusting in His provision, for He knows all things and will act in His own time!

As for our second daughter: along with that good news came the name we had been waiting for! Evangeline—a name that means "good news." It is curious: my wife was pregnant, yet we simply could not choose a name for our second daughter; no matter how hard we searched, we couldn't find the right one. Then, in late 2022, came the definitive round of testing to determine what could be done regarding Valerie's health situation. Doctors in Colombia, Argentina, and Venezuela were trying to coordinate with one another so they could act as quickly as possible—a necessity given the medical complications within the country at the time—but ultimately, we were able to find someone in Venezuela who was an expert in the field.

We kept the appointment, brought the test results, and discussed all of Valerie's medical episodes. Upon reviewing the case, the doctor initially assumed she was dealing with multiple sclerosis and noted that the brain lesion appeared quite prominent; however, she wanted to observe visible symptoms before issuing a formal diagnosis.

She proceeded to perform a simple physical examination—one that would provide the definitive answer. We had seen our daughter lose her balance many times; we had watched her eyes dart uncontrollably from side to side without stopping. Simple tasks—such as standing on one foot—had been impossible for her. Yet, to our astonishment, she successfully performed everything the doctor asked of her—from hopping on one foot around the room to rising from the floor without using her hands—tasks she had never been able to accomplish when \*we\* asked her to do them. The doctor's words were: "Are you Christians? You must be holding fast to God, because what you are seeing here is a miracle." It was awe-inspiring to hear those words from a physician—to hear a doctor acknowledge the power of God. It simply defied medical logic that a brain lesion of that magnitude would allow our daughter to walk and move as she did. Ten years later, I recalled the words of that earlier pediatrician: "You must be grateful to God!" And now, I was watching that little bundle of energy hop all over the room! So I praise God for what He has done; it was not just me—there were many knees bowed in prayer, crying out to Heaven on behalf of our daughter! And the Lord answered—not as I had wanted, but according to His holy will! Perhaps her hearing is not the best, but she can walk, move, speak, and see!

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