



I frequently get mad at God (maybe more than I should?... I don't know whether there's a reasonable limit to these things). The thing is, I used to think it wasn't okay, that it meant my faith and love were weak. **Little by little, with the Holy Spirit's help, I've understood that prayer is an interior clamor, a river that flows from deep within us and that can't be contained.** This doesn't mean that our dialogue with God is an uncontrolled waterfall of emotions and feelings; but it does mean that it should be a natural riverbed in which our soul may encounter Him. It should be the encounter of two hungers, of two people who love each other; and because they do, they defer, they dialogue, they argue...

So you don't have to feel bad if you're mad at God. Consider these 5 ideas so you'll know how to handle it, and don't let it become an anger that leads you away from your Father.

Before starting I warn you that the answers correspond to the logic of a Father who loves us deeply and who wants us to enjoy His love, although we frequently think that He isn't loving us.

1. When it seems that God is neither listening to nor answering us

Before this statement, I give you a key: God always has His ears attentive to our pleas. It's us who sometimes have no idea whether He listens or not, and we doubt. Yes, we doubt, we get mad and we complain that He doesn't listen because answers don't seem to come...

More than once, I've been asked: when you pray, how do you know God is listening? How can you listen to Him? Honestly, I find it very hard to explain and I always say the same thing: if your prayer is from creature to Creator it's very hard to hear anything; on the contrary, if your prayer is from son or daughter to Father, you will surely hear something. If you are His son, for you God is not an external agent, a great and almighty

superior character. If you're a son, He is the great agent of your life, the one who moves your existence from within, who recreates you and calls you every day to live. When we understand that Christ lives in us and that through us He directs us to the Father (as His son), our prayer changes.

This is why, if you're mad because God doesn't say anything, be mad at yourself because you're forgetting who your Father is and how to direct yourself to Him.

2. When we don't want to do what He's asking

This is typical and it happens to me all the time. It's not that I don't listen to God, it's that I don't want to listen to God. Unfortunately we have selective deafness. When He demands amazing and beautiful things of us, we're all ears; but when it gets hard, suddenly we don't hear so well and we get upset because we don't like what He has to tell us.

I admit that the great majority of times it's hard to follow the Lord when the stuff He's asking has to do with the Cross. Sometimes I am, like the apostles (like everyone), filled with fear in the face of suffering and death. But it all can be understood if we look at the Cross from love's point of view. If Jesus is the agent of my life, so is He the agent of my prayer. It's about little by little letting the Holy Spirit join you to Christ and then, in prayer, experiencing what Christ experienced, you will be able to love more, to think and feel like Him. This way there won't be such an abysmal space between your own weak humanity and your desire of being with Him in the Cross.

This is why, from the logic of love, if I become one with Him, the crosses will be less and less heavy.

3. When our life is a desert

When going through trials, it's very easy to think that God has abandoned us. The thing is... it can happen that He lets me go through a desert of pain, doubts and dryness to purify my love and my faith. Saint Therese, at the end of her life, had an interior trial of faith and hope; very difficult days in which it wasn't easy for her to believe, but she said she had never before done as many acts of faith in her whole life. And if there's something I've learned, it is that when we go through hard times, we're forced to do acts of faith, to update it and permit ourselves to believe without seeing: "God, you don't give me the answers I'd want, but I want to believe in you." It's in these moments of

dryness when our faith becomes deeper, when faith turns into a decision which needs all of my freedom and trust.

Ultimately, I always choose what I want to believe, I am the one who decides to believe.

4. When we don't want to pray because it forces us to face our own darkness

Sometimes praying is painful, it confronts us with our fears, our anguishes, our miseries, our faults... and nobody likes that. But, although paradoxical, it fills us with peace to place our smallness before Jesus. It's there where we can be healed, where we can be saved. We human beings are accustomed to keeping up appearances, we have the feeling that we can do it all and that showing ourselves in need is a sign of weakness; but God convinces us, little by little, through the occurrences of our lives, that we are nothing. He permits in our lives dead-end alleys so that, by facing them, we realize that we need to be constantly created from nothingness.

Humility gives us the peace to say that I'm neither what others think of me, nor what I think of me, but what God does. Prayer is a beautiful invitation to reconcile with our humanity and let Him love and sanctify us. As Saint Therese said: "I know well that it is not my great desires that please God in my little soul, what He likes to see is the way I love my littleness and my poverty."

In your prayer, let yourself tell the Lord constantly: "the one You love is sick," and He will answer you: "walk in faith and hope that you will be healed."

5. When we are mad at Him because we don't understand why things happen

Sometimes rebelling against God obstructs our relationship with Him. There are times in which we proclaim with the prophet Jeremiah: "They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water" (Jer 2, 13), or we tell Him: "Lord, I've committed to you and you've left me with nothing."

These are hard moments in which we have lost enthusiasm and have no consolation. On these occasions it's good to do two things: open our hearts to Him, just how it is, express all of our doubts, and ask the Holy Spirit to give us the grace of answering this question: What is the challenge that's being sent to me? What is the act of faith I'm called to do? What conversion in love? When God gives us the grace of understanding this, the trial begins to make sense. So, despite the negative situation I'm going through, I have a freedom that no one can take away, the freedom of choosing to take a good out of the bad that's presented to me.

We sometimes get the impression that everything's lost, that the bad will never disappear, but there's always a plausible good. What's the good that God wants me to do?

In prayer, let's not search for ourselves so much. **Let's be purified by God. He wants us to learn how to pray in a realistic way, to have patience in Him and wait.** Let's try to free our hearts from false hopes in other people, from reality, from ourselves, from our communities... we are free when we accept our own misery and littleness, when we accept others with their limits, though they've disappointed us. Only then will God give us light in our prayer, maybe not an immense and permanent light but the light we need for each day.