

# WHEN GOD?

## When God Is Inattentive

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One of the things that we have in common, if you're a Christian, if you're not a Christian but you believe in God, one of the things we all have in common is we've all had seasons in our lives where we ask God for something and God just wouldn't do it. In fact, the three words that I think we've all used at some point in our lives to describe God are these three words: inattentive, uncooperative and late—inattentive, uncooperative and late. Now, I'm going to ask all of us at all of our churches, all of our campuses, even if you're home alone, watching alone, seriously, I want us all to participate—so everybody get ready to participate. Even if you've never been to our church before I need you to participate. If there has ever been a time in your life where you felt like God was either inattentive, uncooperative or late, even if you're sitting at home watching by yourself, I want you to raise your hand. I want you to keep them up, keep them up. You're in your living room or you're watching and I want everyone to keep them up. Now I want you to look around. And you can put your hands down and I could just close in prayer now, because you've just learned something.

You thought it was just you, didn't you? You did, you thought it was just you. And the reason this is so difficult for us is because when we feel like God is inattentive, uncooperative or late we feel like we're the only ones. Right? And there are a couple of things that make this even worse than normal. One thing is people like me—preachers. Preachers really, really, really make you feel like you're the only one, because preachers make it look so easy. Don't we? And preachers make it sound so simple. And everybody in church shakes their hand and says amen. And then if God is inattentive, uncooperative, late for you, somebody says, *Well, you need more faith* or, *You need to pray harder* or, *You need to get rid of sin* or, *You need to do something*. In other words, the reason God is inattentive, uncooperative, or late is really your fault. And it's working out for everybody else . . . because everybody else . . . God is answering their prayers. If this describes your deal with God, there's something wrong with you. So I wanted us to all raise our hands and say that at some point in all of our lives we feel like God isn't paying attention, God won't cooperate, or perhaps God is late.

Now, the other thing that makes this difficult for us is the people around us—because there are people around us, and life just works out for them. Doesn't it? I mean they have a job, they have health insurance, their kids got into whatever school they wanted to go to—in fact, their kids behave. And you look at these people for whom life just goes well and you think, *You know what; they're not even good people. I'm a better people than they are. They're not even church people. They don't even go to church; they play golf and go to the lake, and look how smooth and wrinkle-free their lives are. And here I am trying to do the right thing and do it the right way and life isn't going that well for me.* And so it's just infuriating, and it just accentuates the fact that God is inattentive or he's uncooperative or he's late. And then you have some Christian friends and they make it even worse, because they say stupid things like this: they say, *You know, the other day I was at the mall and I was in a hurry and I just said, Lord, Lord you know how I'm in a hurry Lord. I need a good parking spot. And I'm driving down the front and*