



Answers to Answers **DOUBLE**

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We all want answers.

What shall we do, where shall we go, when are we to do what, and how shall we do it?

What if there were a way we could not only get the answers we're seeking, but also get *more* than what we thought to ask?

I recently experienced something that challenged me to reconsider the part I play in seeking out the answers to my questions about life's choices.

You could describe the experience as a modern-day parable, presented in a living photograph. *Or two.*

Have you noticed how artists paint a message on canvas?

And writers express their hearts through words?

In like manner, actors present a story through drama, and photographers speak emotion through a picture, right?

Similarly, a scene captured in the midst of daily living can deliver a profound message, and the following picture is one of those scenes.

I took the picture below at a stop **light**. While it may initially appear as nothing out of the ordinary, it proved to be far from that, as the Lord used it to speak deep and timely truths. I pray as I share this testimony, the same will be done for you.



Study the photo: The car **stopped** at a **red light**. While the **light** was still red, the **green arrow** turned on, giving the driver a '**go**' to **turn right on red**. So, the car turned right, **no longer needing to wait**. *It is now turning right, despite other cars going the opposite way.* There are **trees in the direction the car is turning**. **Above the vehicle** is a sign saying, "**First**," in relation to a **bank**. The car's license plate says **ANSWRS 2**.

What initially caught my attention when I snapped this shot was the car's license plate, **ANSWRS 2**. Little did I know that later, after viewing this photo, the entire picture would, as the saying goes, speak a thousand words.

Follow along as I attempt to interpret this scene like a living parable,
a timely word for you and me:

We are the vehicle, **traveling on the roads** of life. The **traffic light** represents God's guidance, His voice, His **signal to stop or go**.

Sometimes He says stop, sometimes He says go, and
*sometimes He says **go even when it looks like we should still stop**.*
We obey His Spirit, even when it seems **everyone else is going the other direction**.
When we do, we naturally travel in the **path of life and fruitfulness** (trees).

The **bank** is symbolic of the Lord, the One to whom we go for provision, and from whom we receive all we need. While human-established banks fall short, God does not, for He is full of **treasures, riches and gifts** that pay back abundantly for all who **invest** in Him. *Without fail*. He is good for His word, and we are wise to take heed to wise counsel. He is **above** us, gently guiding and directing us.

Every good **gift** and every perfect **gift** is from **above**, and comes down from the Father of **lights**,
with whom there is no variation or shadow of **turning**. James 1:17

When we **seek the Lord first above** all else, we hear Him clearly.
When we hear Him clearly,
we are able to accurately determine when to **stop or go**,
and which **direction** to take.

But seek **first** the kingdom of God and His righteousness,
and all these things shall be added to you.
Matthew 6:33

What are "all these things" added to us when we seek **first** God's kingdom and righteousness? The prior verses in Matthew 6 tell us: *all the things we worry about.*

Are you worried about how to feed and clothe yourself or your family?
How shall you spend or save your money? What about the coming global digital currency?

Are you concerned about how to care for an elderly loved one?
How do you balance daily tasks with newly added responsibilities?

Are you anxious about how to provide for your child's future or education?
Will they go to college? Which one? Will I like their spouse? Will they make wise choices? How big will their mistakes in life be?

The temptation to worry about *anything* is huge, but we must resist giving in to worry,
for it is sin, and sin clouds our thoughts and deafens our discernment.

When we make an intentional choice to not worry and instead seek **first** the kingdom of God and His righteousness, we walk in the **light** of Christ and therefore think straight. We get **answers to our** questions. Yes, when we do this, understanding comes. Answers come. In fact, they double. *Actually, God's Word reveals that answers to our questions and prayers can increase exponentially.*

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly **above**
all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,
to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations,
forever and ever. Amen.
Ephesians 3:20-21

God is able to do *exceedingly abundantly above* all we ask or think.
Why is it that we often miss this reality manifested in our lives?

Let's take the photo illustration further.
Did you notice the smeared bugs and junk covering my windshield?
Look again at the picture.
Can you even read the letters and numbers on the license plate?

How obvious is it that my car was beyond dirty when I captured this shot?
As soon as I looked at it on my phone, I was embarrassed to share it.
Immediately the Lord prompted me to humble myself though,
as He had a double message through all this.



Here
is a
closer picture
of the
car's license
plate
...and
my
filthy
windshield.

The dirt that the world, the flesh, and the devil bring,
along with the residue from our travels through life's storms--
like bird droppings, splattered bugs, and dusty gravel roads--
darken our ability to accurately perceive the truth.

The answers we seek—so often they're not evident.
The double blessings upon which we await—so often they are held back.
That is, until we get a 'vehicle wash'—
until we are willing to go out of our way and pay a little bit
(put effort towards seeking God, confessing sin, and repenting),
and get a good **soul-bath** *(cleansing through the*
blood of Jesus in intimate, honest fellowship with Him).

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to
forgive us our sins and to **cleanse** us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9

CHALLENGE

Unfortunately, when we notice our own dirt, we often fail to do something about it. Sometimes we pretend it doesn't exist. I'd been aware my car needed a **wash**, but I hadn't gotten one. As time went on, I just looked past the dust and ignored it.

Further, there are times when *we simply don't see our own dirt*. We can journey around for months or years, oblivious of how much we're in need of **cleansing**. It's like the driver's blind spot: there is an area of our vision we cannot see while driving. *Sometimes it takes another person in the car to help us catch sight of what we're missing.*

*Oh, Lord, we don't want to be ignorant of our own sin!
Open our eyes to see our blind spots
so we may surrender afresh to You.
**As we do, may we be trained to extend greater depths of mercy and compassion to others
when we observe their blind spots.***

If we abide in Jesus, His glorious Holy Spirit will **put a picture in front of us** and gently reveal the grime that He is faithful to wash away. We'll then realize He's been graciously, lovingly carrying us all along, *despite our smudged windshields.*

So, does that mean the Lord responds to our questions even if our windshield is still mucky? Yes, to some degree He does. That's His glorious kindness, grace, and mercy. If He didn't, we'd all be in trouble. His Word repeatedly teaches that even the one who is saved still sins.

*It's the clarity of perception,
the double blessings,
and the exponential answers
that we miss,
if we're unwilling to face the grimy layers of sin in the soul.*

So, let us seek **first** the Kingdom of God and His righteousness!
Be willing to acknowledge shortcomings,
and choose to **travel** in His **life-giving direction**,
even if others are driving the opposite way.
In turn, His **light** and guidance will be **evident**.
He will not only give us **answers**,
but **double--** yes, **exponential**.
More than we can ask or imagine.

You can probably guess what I did after experiencing this parable.
Yup, I got a car wash.

**Want some practical ways to get a car wash for the soul?
Revisit the blogs and podcasts below.**

Then forward the encouragement to friends via the Social Share buttons.

Read or listen to *Time Remaining*, a lesson from a clock and a car wash. What happened at a simple car wash will powerfully influence your perspective on relating with God, in addition to getting ANSWRS 2 your questions.

Read "Time Remaining"

"Time Remaining" Podcast

Read or listen to *The WARsh Room*, a testimony about one woman's dream, another woman's dream, and the supernatural merging of both. The life-changing impact from this experience is guaranteed to spill over into your life.

Read "The WARsh Room"

"The WARsh Room" Podcast

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