

QUESTIONS

ABOUT PRAYER

PART 4



REVIEW OF OUR SERIES:

DOES PRAYER CHANGE
GOD'S MIND?

IF GOD IS SOVEREIGN,
WHAT GOOD WILL IT DO
TO PRAY?

WHY PRAY IF GOD
ALREADY KNOWS
ALL OF YOUR NEEDS?

DOES PRAYER CHANGE CIRCUMSTANCES,
OR DOES IT ONLY CHANGE US?



IS THERE SOMETHING THAT CAN GIVE MY PRAYERS MORE POWER?



Maybe You Have Heard Someone Say...

If your prayer is not answered, it is because you lack the faith.

The greater the number of people praying for a certain result, the more likely it God will grant that request (praying in agreement).

Some people have the “gift of intercession” which means they have a spiritual gift whereby God listens more to their prayer for others.

THE POWER OF PRAYER

IF YOUR PRAYER
IS NOT ANSWERED
IT IS BECAUSE
YOU LACK FAITH.



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"I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him." (Mark 11:23)

"Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours." (Mark 11:24)

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“I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.” (John 14:12-14)

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“Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, “Why couldn't we drive it [the demon] out?” He replied, “Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.” (Matthew 17:19-21)

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*“But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord.”
(James 1:6-7)*

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“The verses are quoted out of context.”

“Literary context means that words only have meaning in sentences, and that biblical sentences for the most part only have clear meaning in relation to the preceding and succeeding sentences.” – Dr. Gordon D. Fee and Dr. Douglas Stewart

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“Jesus is exaggerating to make the point [using hyperbole].”

Jesus also taught using parables, irony, metaphors, similes, poetry, questioning the questioner, and others methods.

Robert H. Stein, The Method and Message of Jesus' Teaching (Westminster John Knox, 1994)

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“To ‘move mountains’ is a metaphor known to the audience.”

The metaphor = to do the most improbable or impossible things.

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“There has never been a miracle since the time of the apostles.”

“Lazarus was not dead, he was only sleeping.”

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Even if Jesus words about faith are read in context . . .

. . . the statement is not an accurate statement of the totality of Jesus' teachings on the subject, does not reflect the limits placed on these words elsewhere, and does not reflect the full counsel of scripture.

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1. Your prayer may not be answered because it is against God's sovereign will.

1 John 5:14: *"This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us."*

2. Your prayer may not be answered because it is against God's moral will.

1 John 3:22: *"And whatever we ask we receive from Him because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight."*

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3. Your prayer may not be answered because you are not abiding in Christ.

John 15:7: "If you abide in me, and My words in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done."

4. Your prayer may not be answered because of sin.

1 Peter 3:12: "For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil." (citing Psalm 34:12-16)

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5. Your prayer may not be answered because of improper motives.

James 4:3 *“When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.”*

6. Your prayer may not be answered because of issues of forgiveness

Mark 11:25: *“And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you.”*

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And finally . . .

7. Your prayer may not be answered because you lack faith.

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And finally . . .

7. Your prayer may not be answered because you lack faith.

*Faith that what you pray for will happen,
or faith that God can make it happen?
Which one?*

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How much faith?

“I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.” (Matt. 17:20-21)

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It's Not a Formula:

The Problem of Un-Prayed Blessings

The Problem of Un-Wise Prayers

The Problem of Contradictory Prayers

The Problem of Inconsistent Results

THE POWER OF PRAYER

THE MORE PEOPLE AGREE
ABOUT A PARTICULAR PRAYER
THE MORE LIKELY IT IS THAT
THE PRAYER WILL BE ANSWERED.



“I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.” (Matthew 18:18-19)

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“Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” (Matthew 16:19b)

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shall have been bound

“Whatever you bind on earth ~~will be bound~~ in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth ~~will be loosed~~ in heaven.” (Matthew 16:19b)

shall have been loosed

THE POWER OF PRAYER

DOES THE GIFT OF
INTERCESSION MEAN
THAT PERSONS PRAYER IS
MORE EFFECTIVE FOR OTHERS?



“The gift of intercession is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to pray for extended period of time on a regular basis and see frequent and specific answers to their prayers, to a degree much greater than that which is expected of the average Christian.” [Citations]

Luke 22:41-44; Acts 12:12; Colossians 1:9-12; Colossians 4:12-13; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 5:14-16

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WE WANT A FORMULA,
SOME SORT OF MAGIC
INCANTATION:



Job's friends: This is happening because....

As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned,' said Jesus, 'but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life.'

- John 9:1-3

THE POWER OF PRAYER

GOD WANTS YOU TO BE
HEALED AND IS WAITING
FOR YOU TO ASK.



THE POWER OF PRAYER

DOES THE GIFT OF
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Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured. I vouch for him that he is working hard for you and for those at Laodicea and Hierapolis.

- Colossians 4:12-13

NEXT WEEK:

**DO THE PRAYERS OF A RIGHTEOUS
PERSON CARRY MORE WEIGHT
WITH GOD?**



THE POWER OF PRAYER

THE PRAYERS OF A RIGHTEOUS
PERSON CARRY MORE WEIGHT
WITH GOD.



“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.”

- James 5:16-18

THE POWER OF PRAYER

GOD WANTS YOU TO BE
HEALED AND IS WAITING
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Jesus appears to have healed everyone who asked for healing.

But there were many others Jesus did not heal or feed.

Jesus seemed to selectively use miracles.

Miracles in our world today also seem to happen on an infrequent basis.

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Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us." Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. . . . Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves. I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

- John 14:8-9; 11-14



WELCOME TO EXODUS INTERACTIVE FORUM

INTERACTIVE



Participate, ask questions, talk back...

What if we listened to what everyone had to say — and discovered that God can speak through us all? After all, we all learn better when we talk things out, hear different points of view, and give room for the Spirit to speak through our deliberation.

[Read more](#)

THOUGHTFUL



Test everything, hold on to what is good...

Many hours of research are dedicated to prepare each one of our series. We explore the scriptures, the breadth of Christian scholarship, contemporary authors, and consider a wide range of sources outside of our faith.

[Read more](#)

FAITHFUL



Set apart Christ as Lord...

We all have questions. But we learn together in a way that tackles the deepest part of our doubts while making sure that our purpose is clear: to always know the reason for the hope that we have in Jesus Christ, and to be prepared to share that answer with everyone who asks us about that hope.

[Read more](#)

THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF
EXODUS INTERACTIVE FORUM.

WE WELCOME YOU TO SEND
FEEDBACK, QUESTIONS OR
COMMENTS, AND WE WOULD
LOVE TO HEAR HOW EXODUS HAS
IMPACTED YOU. EMAIL US AT:

INFO@EXODUSPODCASTS.COM

WANT MORE INFORMATION?

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:

WWW.EXODUSPODCASTS.COM

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