

1. The power of prayer is not automatic and it certainly is not magical.
2. We find conditions attached to the promises of the Bible regarding prayer.
3. The following verses are often cited when talking about prayer; “Ask, and it will be given unto you” (Matt. 7:7); “If two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven” (Matt. 18:19); and, “Whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith” (Matt. 21:22).
4. Unfortunately these verses have brought about some odd theories concerning prayer. This happens when we isolate these passages from everything else Jesus and the Bible say about prayer.
5. We still must experience the results of sin, disease, and death. We do pray and ask God to comfort us, to deliver us, to heal us—but we cannot demand these things.
6. The idea that God “always wills healing” has been a destructive distortion in the Christian community.
7. Prayer is not magic. God is not a bellhop that stands waiting to respond to our beck and call to satisfy our desires.
8. In some cases - our prayers must involve agony of the heart and soul - as Jesus Himself experienced in the Garden of Gethsemane.
9. Sometimes believers become disappointed and discouraged, not because God failed to keep His promises, but because well-meaning believers made promises “for” God that God Himself never made.
10. The New Testament expands on the conditions surrounding prayer, providing insight into what is involved in effective prayer.
(John 9:3; John 14:13; John 15:7; 1 John 3:22; 1 John 5:14)
11. As we see from these passages there is more to receiving what we desire from God than just simply asking. (Ephesians 6:18)
12. There must be proper reverence for God, obedience to His will, and an ongoing communion with Christ.
13. Our request must be made in accordance with the revealed will of God, and in accordance with His nature and character.
14. The Bible teaches us that we are to pray “in the name of Jesus.” The use of Jesus’ name is not a magical formula; its significance lies much deeper.
15. To ask for something in Jesus’ name is not to add a phrase at the end of a prayer - it means that we believe that our request is directed to our Great High Priest, our Intercessor.

16. The important thing to notice is that if we follow the Scripture, we will not ask for anything selfishly - but that the will of God be so.

17. Why do we pray?

We pray because God has commanded it and because He is glorified when we pray.

We pray because it prepares our hearts for what we will receive from Him.

We pray because we desire the leading and teaching of the Holy Spirit.

We pray to adore God, to praise Him, to express our wonder at His majesty, His sovereignty, and His mighty acts.

We pray to confess our sins and to experience grace, mercy, and forgiveness at His hand.

We pray to thank Him for all that He is and all that He has done.

We pray to make our supplication known to Him, to fulfill the invitation He has left us.

18. We have been invited to come confidently before God, but never flippantly, arrogantly, or presumptuously. (Ecclesiastes 5:2)

19. Prayer forms the very center of the heart and will of God concerning men. (1 Thess. 5:16)

20. We must come to the place that we believe no situation - however evil or difficult it may seem - is beyond the scope of prayer. (Psalm 145:17)

21. We know in theory that God can do anything - but do we pray that way?

22. But - we must also be willing to wait. We have this tendency to want immediate results. (Isaiah 40:12)