



PARTICIPATING WITH GOD IN
PRAYER

Faith Makes Prayer Work

What Prayer Is For

- “Prayer doesn’t work.”
- Serious misunderstanding of prayer.
- The purpose of prayer is to build a trusting relationship with God.

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Prayer Can Be a Battle

- Relationship with God means:
 - Intimacy
 - Provision
 - Partnership
- We want to be in charge
- Satan lies to prevent relationship

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Intimacy Can Be Hard

- Satan's lie: If we turn over control of our lives to God, it will ruin our lives.
- "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross, and follow me. ²⁵ If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it" (Matthew 16:24-25 NLT).
- Only God can be in control.

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It Can Be Hard to Trust God for What We Need

- Satan's lie: God will leave us destitute
- "Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be" (Matthew 6:19-21 NLT).
- As we pray, God transforms us into people who trust him.

It Can Be Threatening to Do Things God's Way and Not My Way

- Jesus' ministry was guided and supported by prayer.
- Satan's lie: If you do things God's way, you'll be nothing.
- Sometimes, God says:
 - Wait
 - Trust me
 - Just keep praying
- Sometimes we ask for God's retroactive blessing

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Faith Is What Makes Prayer Work

- We really do want to pray.
- What can get us past the barriers to prayer?
- **Faith**
- Not just intellectual assent

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Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge



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Finding the Best Life through Intimacy with God

- With faith, we can pray our way to deeper intimacy with God
- “If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.” (Matthew 16:25 NLT).
- “My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life” (John 10:10b NLT).
- With faith, we are free to pray and receive the life Jesus gives.

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Asking, Seeking, and Knocking

- "Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. ⁹ "You parents-- if your children ask for a loaf of bread, do you give them a stone instead? ¹⁰ Or if they ask for a fish, do you give them a snake? Of course not! ¹¹ So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him" (Matthew 7:7-11 NLT).
- With faith we are free to pray for what we need and to keep on praying until we receive it.

Living by Faith

It was by faith that Abraham obeyed when God called him to leave home and go to another land that God would give him as his inheritance. He went without knowing where he was going.⁹ And even when he reached the land God promised him, he lived there by faith—for he was like a foreigner, living in tents. And so did Isaac and Jacob, who inherited the same promise.¹⁰ Abraham was confidently looking forward to a city with eternal foundations, a city designed and built by God.¹¹ It was by faith that even Sarah was able to have a child, though she was barren and was too old. She believed that God would keep his promise...

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Living by Faith

It was by faith that Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice when God was testing him. Abraham, who had received God's promises, was ready to sacrifice his only son, Isaac,¹⁸ even though God had told him, "Isaac is the son through whom your descendants will be counted."¹⁹ Abraham reasoned that if Isaac died, God was able to bring him back to life again. And in a sense, Abraham did receive his son back from the dead.

(Hebrews 11: 8-11, 17-19 NLT)

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Living by Faith

- Do you think Abraham and Sarah would have preferred to do things *their* way?
- "Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith."
(Galatians 3:6 NLT)
- Faith enables prayer, which lead to Jesus-like ministry partnership with God.

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- As faith fuels our prayer, God gives us the life we most deeply want.
- There's a hunger in each of us that only God can satisfy. Prayer is the language of that desire.
- “And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him” (Heb. 11:6 NLT).

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Challenge

1. Ask God for deeper intimacy with him.
2. Identify something you really need and continue asking God for it until you receive it.
3. Ask God to show you one way you can partner with him in moving someone toward Jesus.



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