



# Prayer Changes Things

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**Matthew 6:6** When you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans.

# PRAYER IS:

- **expected**
- **intimate**

# Characteristics assumed by Jesus

- ✓ rapt **attention** (focus)
- ✓ devout **heart** (love)
- ✓ pure **motive** (passion)
- ✓ simple **confidence** (faith)

There are many instances in Scripture where God thwarted the intentions/plans/actions of men IN RESPONSE TO PRAYER

- **Daniel** (den of lions)
- **Peter** (prison)
- **Hezekiah** (Assyrian army)

But would God ever alter his own plans or stated intentions in response to prayer?

- **Hezekiah** (*11 Kings 20*)
- **Abraham** (*Genesis 18*)
- **Nineveh** (*Jonah 3*)

1. There are **ultimate events** that no human prayer will ever change. However, there is no Scripture that tells us God will never alter his course or change his plan **within** those ultimate **limits**.

So, confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. 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... (*James 5:16-18*)



2. God is (within those ultimate limits) able and willing to stop the train or switch it onto a different track. This is why God **asks** us to pray! He is **glad** to consider our requests!

Ask and it will be given to you. Seek and you will find. Knock and the door will be opened unto you... Which of you, if his son asks for bread would give him a stone?... If you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ASK him!

*(Matthew 7:7-11)*

Do not be anxious about anything,  
but in everything, by prayer and petition  
with thanksgiving PRESENT YOUR  
REQUEST TO GOD.

*(Philippians 4:6)*

3. Does prayer work?

YES, in the sense that God hears and responds

NO, in the sense that prayer is a PIN for a heavenly ATM.

If you lack wisdom [for example], ask God, who gives generously to all without faultfinding, and it will be given. But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt. (A doubter is like a sea wave, blown and tossed by wind.) A doubter shouldn't think that they would receive anything from the Lord. They are double minded and unstable. (*James 1: 5-7*)