

James 5:12 - 16 (NLT)

¹²But most of all, my brothers and sisters, never take an oath, by heaven or earth or anything else. Just say a simple yes or no, so that you will not sin and be condemned. ¹³Are any of you suffering hardships? You should pray. Are any of you happy? You should sing praises. ¹⁴Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make you well. And if you have committed any sins, you will be forgiven. ¹⁶Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.

James 5:16 (KJV) ¹⁶Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

1. Is God obligated to answer any of our prayers?

Ans. No (*But He does obligate Himself to answer prayers that agree with His will*) He will always answer prayer that meet the following conditions: Qualifiers:

a. **Keep His commandments and please Him**

1 John 3:22 (NASB)

²²and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.

b. **Ask according to His will**

1 John 5:14 - 15 (NASB)

¹⁴This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.

¹⁵And if we know that He hears us *in* whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.

c. **Continue to study and practice His Word**

John 15:7 (NASB)

⁷"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

d. **We must ask in His name. (i.e. Ask for what represents His character, image.)**

John 15:16 (NASB)

¹⁶"You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.

John 16:24 (NASB)

²⁴"Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full.

e. **We ask with the wrong motives and thus nullify the request.**

James 4:3 (NASB)

³You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend *it* on your pleasures.

2. Does faith guarantee that our prayers will be answered? Ans. No

It is not always God's will to heal those who are ill (see 2 Corinthians 12:7-10). A prayer for healing must be qualified with a recognition that God's will is supreme.

2 Corinthians 12:7 - 10 (NLT) ⁷even though I have received such wonderful revelations from God. So to keep me from becoming proud, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from becoming proud. ⁸Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. ⁹Each time he said, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. ¹⁰That's why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

3. Is there a formula for prayer that always works? (e.g. "name it, claim it"...) Ans. No

1. *Sometimes the answer is No. Not best for us! "Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?" (Matthew 7:9-10).*
2. *Sometimes answer is silence, not now.*
3. *Sometimes answer is yes, but different than what we expected.*
4. *Some answers are lost on us because we're not listening or not willing to accept a different outcome.*

Job 2:9 - 10 (NLT) ⁹His wife said to him, "Are you still trying to maintain your integrity? Curse God and die."

¹⁰But Job replied, "You talk like a foolish woman. Should we accept only good things from the hand of God and never anything bad?" So in all this, Job said nothing wrong.

Job 23:8 - 14 (NLT) ⁸ I go east, but he is not there. I go west, but I cannot find him. ⁹ I do not see him in the north, for he is hidden. I look to the south, but he is concealed. ¹⁰ "But he knows where I am going. And when he tests me, I will come out as pure as gold. ¹¹ For I have stayed on God's paths; I have followed his ways and not turned aside.

¹² I have not departed from his commands, but have treasured his words more than daily food. ¹³ But once he has made his decision, who can change his mind? Whatever he wants to do, he does. ¹⁴ So he will do to me whatever he has planned. He controls my destiny.

What prayer does for us?

1. Teaches us patience
2. Teaches us perseverance
3. Develops character (we learn to grow confidence, contentment and comfort with what God is doing in our lives!)
4. Teaches us to think biblically
5. Teaches us dependence and humility

MONDAY MORNING MOMENT: Action Step

"Weak prayers come from weak people; strong prayers come from strong people. So be strong!"

Romans 9:14 - 16 (NLT) ¹⁴Are we saying, then, that God was unfair? Of course not! ¹⁵For God said to Moses, "I will show mercy to anyone I choose, and I will show compassion to anyone I choose." ¹⁶So it is God who decides to show mercy. We can neither choose it nor work for it.