

| WHY ISN'T MY PRAYER WORKING?             | WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT IT?  |  |
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| <b>GOD'S WORLD</b>                       | 1. COMMON SENSE  |  |
|  | Am I asking God to do something stupid, meaningless, or illogical?   | Consider praying in a different way or just doing something practical yourself!  |
|  | 2. CONTRADICTION   |  |
|  | Are my prayers likely to be conflicting with those of someone else?  | Remember that you share the planet with 7.7 billion other people, and thank God that in saying no to you He's probably blessing someone else.  |
| <b>GOD'S WORLD</b>                       | 3. LAWS OF NATURE  | Matt. 8:23–27  |
|  | Are my prayers potentially detrimental to the natural order or the lives of others?  | Don't stop praying—God can and does do miracles over the natural order! But remember: although your prayer seems so reasonable, in saying no to you, God may be protecting many others.  |
|  | 4. LIFE IS TOUGH   | John 16:33; Rom. 12:12; 2; Cor. 4:16–18  |
|  | Am I expecting God to spare me from stuff that's just common human experience because of the fall?   | Discuss your situation with God and with your friends. Are you experiencing a direct satanic attack or a byproduct of the fall? Is God asking you to pray against this or for grace to endure it <i>with</i> Him?                                    |
|  | 5. DOCTRINE  | 1 Tim. 4:16  |
|  | Does my prayer reflect God's character and His promises in the Bible? Might it be out of line with His will for my life?   | Talk to someone sensible about the thing you're asking God to do. Does that person think it's in line with what God wants? If so, go to item 13 in this list. If not, don't moderate your expectations; elevate them to what God has for you!        |
| <b>GOD'S WILL</b>                        | 6. GOD'S BEST  | Jer. 29:11–12; 1 Cor. 2:9–11   |
|  | Although my desire in prayer is for something good, is it possible that God has something even better in store for me?   | With this one, only time will tell whether God is saying no because it's not the best for you or simply if He is saying "not yet." Keep asking, but hold your prayers lightly, remembering all the ways that God has given you the best in the past. |
|  | 7. MOTIVE  | James 4:2–3  |
| Are my prayers essentially just selfish? | Assuming that you want something that is not intrinsically sinful, feel free to chat with God about how much you'd like whatever it is—the way a kid might with their dad—but don't expect or insist on it in prayer. Also, make sure that you're not coveting something that belongs to someone else! |  |

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| <b>GOD'S WILL</b>  | 8. RELATIONSHIP   | 2 Cor. 12:7-10; Phil. 3:10   |
|  | Is there an opportunity here for going deeper in my relationship with God?  | Remember that the ultimate answer is the Answerer. Take time to worship and thank God. Turn your prayers into a conversation and get rid of the shopping list. Are you willing to trust Him even if the answer is no?  |
|  | 9. FREE WILL  | Gen. 2:16; John 7:17   |
|  | Am I expecting God to override someone's free will?   | Pray a small step at a time and pray creatively into the situation, remembering that while God won't control a person, He will allow you to influence that person's situation in prayer. For example, "Please make John become a Christian" might become, "Please send a Christian to talk to John."   |
| <b>GOD'S WAR</b>   | 10. INFLUENCE   |  |
|  | Am I trying to exercise ungodly power over a person's life in prayer?   |  |
|  | 11. SATANIC OPPOSITION  | Dan. 10; Eph. 6:10-18  |
|  | Is my prayer in-line with God's will but experiencing specific demonic resistance?  | Learn about spiritual warfare. Study what the Bible says about your authority in Christ. Wield the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Find scriptures that you can use in prayer. Get others to share the prayer burden with you. Ask God to reveal any particular keys that could unlock the situation. Make sure you spend more time worshipping Jesus than thinking about Satan. Also, try fasting. |
|  | 12. FAITH   | Dan. 3:16; Mark 9:24; 11:23-24   |
| Do I really believe that God can do this? Am I out of my league? | Could you perhaps start smaller and work up to this? Keys to growing in faith include worshipping, fasting, and memorizing God's promises. (See the full list in chapter 10.) |  |
| 13. PERSEVERANCE   | Luke 18:1   |  |
| Do I want it enough to keep praying?                             | Don't give up! Find a way of praying regularly into this situation, and make a habit of it.   |  |

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| <b>GOD'S WAR</b>  | 14. SIN  | Mark 11:25; James 5:16   |
|   | Honesty time: Is there secret sin I need to confess?   | Find someone you trust who is a Christian and confess your sin. If there are strongholds in your life, ask a mature person to help you walk free. Also, consider whether there is anyone whom you need to apologize to or forgive. |
|   | 15. JUSTICE  | Isa. 58:2-9  |
| Am I actively seeking to express God's love for the poor? | Make friends with just one person in your community who is marginalized in some way. Make sure you budget time and money each month for hospitality. Get educated about the challenges facing the poor at home and in the developing world. Get political! |  |
| <b>THE SILENCE</b>  | 16. NONE OF THE ABOVE  | 1 Cor. 13:12-13; 2 Cor. 12:7-10  |
|   | Am I trying to find answers where I need instead just to trust?  | Ouch! You're doing all the right stuff, but your situation doesn't make sense. Be real with God. Hold onto Him like a hurting kid who doesn't understand. You really need your friends right now.                                  |