

Corrie ten Boom

“Is prayer your steering wheel or your spare tire?”

Martin Luther

“Pray and let God worry.”

Oswald Chambers

“God never gives us discernment in order that we may criticize, but that we may intercede.”

The challenge of “unanswered” prayers



John 14:14
“If you ask Me
anything in My
name, I will do it.”



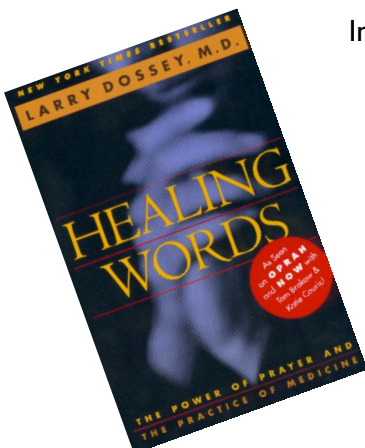
The promise seems
to be of the granting
of any request.
(not “yes”, “no”, or “wait”)

Most commonly asked questions about prayer

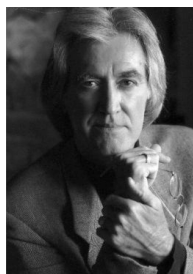
How can I know God’s will
and what to pray for?

How can I have more passion
for prayer?

Why doesn't God seem to
answer my prayers?

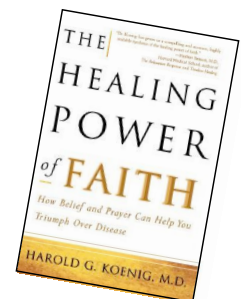


In 1993 Larry Dossey’s
Healing Words
put science behind
prayer and health.



Prayer research

The government has
spent more than \$2.3
million on prayer
research since 2000
with mixed results.



**The Healing Power of Faith: Science
Explores Medicine’s Last Great Frontier.**

by Dr. **Harold G. Koenig** director and founder of
the Center for the Study of Religion/Spirituality
and Health at Duke University



Religious people

- have stronger marriages and families
- have healthy lifestyles
- cope well with stress
- have less depression
- live longer, healthier lives
- have less serious cardiovascular disease
- have stronger immune systems
- use fewer expensive hospital services

Why the dissonance with respect to prayer?

Simplistic responses

Fake it till you make it.
“Yes, no, wait, maybe”
Technically answered?
Not enough holiness or faith

Logical problems

Conflicting requests
Immature requests
Short sighted requests

1 John 5:14-15

“14 And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything **according to His will**, He hears us. 15 And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.”

**Does “His will” refer to
what we ask
or how we ask?**



1 Peter 5

“ 6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time 7 casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you. 8 Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 9 But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world. 10 After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you. 11 To Him be dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

1 Peter 5

“6 Therefore **humble yourselves** under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time”

1.

**Because He is Lord
submit your will and timing to His.**

James 4:3

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

**Humility has
no place for
selfish passions
and plans.**



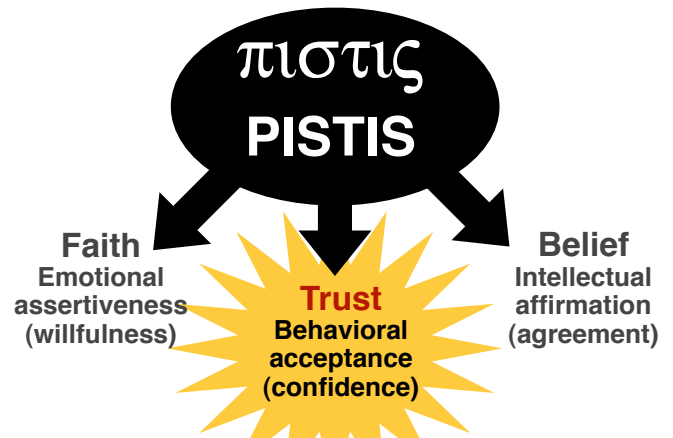
Luke 22:42

“Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from me; yet not My will, but Yours be done.”

**Humility defers
to God’s higher
purposes and timing.**



*What does it mean to pray with
confidence, not doubting?*



1 Peter 5

“7 **casting all your anxiety on Him,**
because He cares for you.”

2.

**Because He cares for you
bring every care to Him.**

**As long as it is a “care”
give it to Him in prayer**

*The call is to bring the issue to God
not to tell Him how to respond to it.*

Romans 8:26

“And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words;”



**The Spirit of Christ
intercedes
as we cast our
cares on God.**

1 Peter 5

“8 **Be of sober spirit,** be on the alert Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 9 But **resist him, firm in your faith,**”

3.

**Because you are in spiritual warfare
resist false messages.**

Renewed minds

1. **Seek to know the things of God.**
2. **Accept the limits of reason.**
3. **Are not puffed up by knowledge.**
4. **Are sensitive to false messages.**

Ephesians 4:14

“we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming;”



1 Peter 5

“9 . . . knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.”

4.

**Because you live in a fallen world
do not be surprised at suffering.**

1 Peter 5

“10 After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you. 11 To Him be dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

5.

**Because it is not about this life
aim at being established in Him
for glory.**

Luke 11

“11 Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? . . . 13 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?”

**Asking for snakes
and thinking they are fish
affects the efficacy of prayer.**

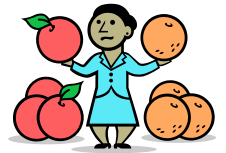


John 15:16

“You did not choose me but I chose you, and appointed you that you should 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.”

“bear fruit” = “whatever you ask”

**The object of our prayer
should be the object of
God’s interest -
spiritual fruitfulness.**



How should we pray when facing illness?

1. **Seek to glorify God more than satisfy self.**
2. **Respect God as our Lord more than our servant.**
3. **Trust God’s heart and wisdom more than our motives and convictions.**
4. **Take our baptism seriously and expect that God will.**
5. **Cast our cares on Him and let the Spirit intercede.**
6. **Trust God to build our inner man not just restore our outer man.**

