

## Prayer: Permission or Magic?

### Blab It and Grab It Prayer

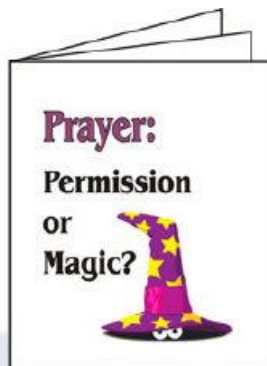
**Suggested reading:** James 4:3, John 14:12–14 and 15:5–8, Psalm 106:12–15, Psalm 37:4, Deuteronomy 28, Matthew 6:33

Prayer is one of the foundational issues in the Christian walk, yet many Christians do not understand the nature of prayer. Many in the Christian community sincerely believe that the essence of prayer is a three-step process:

- 1) They decide on what they want/need in life,
- 2) they find a promise—one of the more than 7,000 in the Scriptures—that seems to cover it,
- 3) and then they use that Scripture to pester God for it, reminding Him of His promise and His obligation to keep that promise.



This has been termed “name it and claim it” or “blab it and grab it” prayer and it’s actually a form of magic! It is magic because it attempts to manipulate unseen realms for a person’s own soul-driven purposes. An example of “magic prayer” is seen in James 4:3–7, where the author points out that the people are praying with wrong motives, so that they can spend what they receive on their own pleasures.

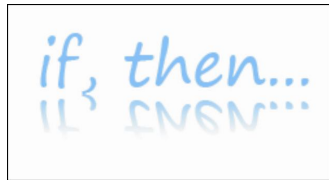


One of the dangers of “name it and claim it” prayer is that a person may enter into the spiritual world, but this spiritual world is not God’s kingdom; it very well may be Satan’s kingdom. In pestering God for the perceived want/need, the person begins to enter into and cooperate with the enemy’s kingdom. If it suits the enemy’s purposes, he may well answer that prayer. The prayer may have worked, but be clear that it is not from God; it is from the enemy’s kingdom. The consequences of this are serious—the enemy uses this type of prayer to separate the person from Father God and to draw that person into a closer relationship with himself and his kingdom of darkness.

But wait...doesn’t Scripture say that God will give us whatever we ask for? The suggested reading passages at the beginning of this section seem to indicate that. However, does that match your experience, that whatever you ask for, you get?

## The “If/Then” of God

When you read these Scriptures, you find they say, “If you hearken unto my voice,” “If you believe, doubting not,” “If you delight yourself in the Lord,” “If you trust me and keep my commands,” “If you abide in me,” and “If you commit your way unto the Lord; trust in Him”—then He will bring it to pass.



Matthew 6:33 is an if/then passage also: “(If you) seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, (then) all these things shall be added to you.”

In each passage, God says, “If you do this, then I will do that.” It is clear that His promises are conditional. What is the condition? It is a relationship with Himself. God wants us to trust Him and obey Him; that’s [Puppiness](#) and [Featherness](#)!

So what is the problem with the “name it and claim it” type of prayer? The short answer is that “magic prayer” comes from the soul of man and not from the heart of God. It is trying to get to the “then” (the blessing) while skipping over the “if” (the relationship).

### **First, Seek the Heart of God**

What is the eternal purpose of God? Romans 8:28f says that God wants to change us into His likeness, that we would take on the nature of His Son, Jesus. Only Father God knows the life path that changes us from who we are into who He is. Moment by moment, at every step of our lives, only He knows the *next most needful thing* for our walk. Only that intimate relationship ([Puppiness](#)) with Father God will allow us to hear His voice and know His heart.

Psalm 37:4 says, “Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.” This passage is not saying that you can have whatever you want. It is saying that if you delight yourself in the Lord ([Puppiness](#)), then He will put His desires into your heart. Let me repeat that: God will put *His* desires into *your* heart. You will then know the heart of God for the moment. Then you can ask Him for the desires of your heart safely, because they will be His desires.

The first act of prayer, then, is to seek and know the heart of God.

## Second, Give God Permission



So now you now the heart of God, and you know how much He wants to bless you...yet nothing is happening! **What is it that is shortening the hand of God in your life?**

The nature of God is that He is a gentleman. He does not force you to do anything—including to receive the blessings He so desperately wants to give you. He awaits your permission. In the [Principles or Guidance](#) chapter, I tell the story of my encounter with the oyster farmer. I knelt down by his couch in his study and gave God “irrevocable permission to do whatever He needed to do to change me into His likeness.” That happened more than 45 years ago now, and it was the beginning of a life of learning to give God permission. Over the years I have learned that giving God permission is at the heart of prayer.

First, if you have not done so, give God irrevocable permission to do whatever He needs to do to change you into His likeness. Then seek God’s heart and give Him permission to give you His heart, His desires for your life. As you come to know God’s heart, give Him permission to accomplish that in your life. Rest in Him ([Puppiness](#)), move as He moves, in His power and His timing ([Featheriness](#)), and watch Him do wondrous things in your life.

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**Prayer:** Engage your heart and pray: "Father, protect me from any attempt to manipulate unseen realms for my own purposes. Show me the if/then of your will and your timing in all of your blessings and enable me to come into agreement with your will for my life."