



Does God always answer prayer?

by Beth Jones

A single woman in her 30's named Anita had never been married. Having been terribly verbally abused by her mother in childhood, becoming addicted to meth and cocaine in her 20's, and ballooning to over 300 pounds in weight after she got off drugs, Anita was unloved and miserable until she gave her life to Christ and began to know His unconditional love, joy, and peace. She wanted to share this new life in Christ with a godly man and prayed for a long time for a good, loving Christian husband, with friends praying in agreement with her.

Finally she found this man of God, and he and his family were more than she even prayed for. But before the wedding date, it was discovered that Anita had cervical cancer. She prayed in faith, had a complete hysterectomy to remove the threatening cells, and underwent chemotherapy. She and friends believed for a miracle, and God soon healed her. Everyone was overjoyed at her testimony.

Anita was radiant on her wedding day, and she and her new husband Kenny were very happy living on his farm in Wisconsin. However, the joy was short-lived when months after they married, it was discovered that she had cancer again. This was a more aggressive time of cancer, one that required both chemo and radiation. She became very sick and weak, and to her great dismay, all of her hair fell out.

Within one year's time, despite many prayers of faith that went up on her behalf, and before they could have any children, Anita went home to be with God in heaven. What happened? Why did she die when she had just discovered a new life in Christ and had finally found the man of her dreams?



Does God always answer prayer?

From a lifetime of answered prayers from God, I'd like to share my thoughts on this complex issue with you from page 33 of my book *Walking With God*, available here at this link. <http://www.bethjones.net/my-products/walking-with-god-ebook-now-available/>

"I have explained it very simply to our children. Sometimes God says yes, sometimes God says no, and sometimes God says wait. God does *not* say maybe. However, sometimes His yes answer is conditional upon our obedience to Him, based on Deuteronomy 11."

Deuteronomy 11:26 says, "See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse- ²⁷ **the blessing if you obey the commands of the LORD your God** that I am giving you today; ²⁸ **the curse if you disobey the commands of the LORD your God** and turn from the way that I command you today by following other gods, which you have not known."

If we do what God says, we'll be blessed. If we don't, then there's big trouble!
YOU pick!

If we are walking in obedience to God's word, He will hear our prayers and answer us. God says in 2 Chronicles 7:14 (NKJV), "if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their

wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land."

What a beautiful promise. **God means what He says!**

Okay, so what about those "no" answers? Why does God do that?



Annabelle and Violet

Our granddaughters Annabelle and Violet are 6 and 4 years old. They are beautiful and so very precious, but also are extremely strong-willed (it runs in the family!). Cute as they are, they don't always ACT cute. Sometimes when their parents Kyle and Heather, or my husband and I, tell them "no" to something they really want such as eating more candy or watching ANOTHER cartoon video, they don't LIKE it. They may pout, continue to pester us to try to change our minds, or even have a temper tantrum.

We are the same way when God tells us "no," aren't we? We don't like it at all, and sometimes we have our own temper tantrum - or at least we sulk a little or ask "why?" When will we ever learn to trust God?

I don't know about you, but **I thank God for His "no" answers** to some of my prayers!



As my new dear friend Mary Kane says in her article, *Because You Prayed Part 2* <http://onlybyprayer.com/because-you-prayed-part-2-by-mary-kane/>:

Think for a moment— what if God answered every single one of your past prayer requests in the manner in which you desired? How many of us would be married to our eighth-grade boyfriends? We'd be in a lot of trouble, wouldn't we? Instead of childishly demanding our own way, let's ask Him to answer our prayers the way Jesus modeled—Thy will be done.

Oh yes, I am VERY thankful for God's NO answers! ☺ In His infinite wisdom, God did say "no" for my OWN good sometimes. Thank You, Jesus!



If we look in the rear-view mirror of our lives, we can clearly see that **some of the things we prayed for weren't in our own best interest - or others' best interest!**

What about my "good" prayers that aren't answered yet?

But what about other prayers we have prayed for, or that we're praying for right now, that are GOOD prayers, such as asking for someone's healing or salvation, or

for God to provide funds for a family to go on a missions trip to Africa? (something our family has prayed about for years!)



Our friend in Africa, Alpha

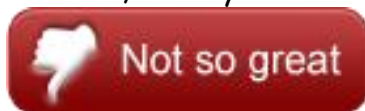
There's one thing we need to remember: **GOD IS GOD!** He knows what is best for our lives. Here are some possible reasons for unanswered prayers, from my book *Walking With God*:

<http://www.bethjones.net/my-products/walking-with-god-ebook-now-available/>:

- **It may be a timing issue.** God sometimes seems to answer prayers at the last minute, but His timing is always perfect! One time Ray and I looked for several months for a new place to live, when our landlord gave us notice they were putting our rental house on the market. We had a very hard time finding something affordable and big enough for our three kids. It was getting down to the wire, and we had only three days to move from our rental house into another place when suddenly God came through for us! It was a lot of stress and much work, but we made it. Talk about **a midnight hour deliverance!**
- We may have **unconfessed sin in our hearts.** Jeremiah 14:7 (New Century Version) says, "We know that we suffer because of our sins. We have left You many times, we have sinned against You." God may not be answering your prayers because of sin.

- **Strife** certainly makes the heavens as brass! **Husbands and wives need to be in unity, or their prayers will be hindered.** (1 Peter 3:7) Likewise, unity brings God's blessings. Psalm 133:3 (The Message) says, "How wonderful, how beautiful, when brothers and sisters get along! It's like costly anointing oil flowing down head and beard, flowing down Aaron's beard, flowing down the collar of his priestly robes. It's like the dew on Mount Hermon flowing down the slopes of Zion. Yes, that's where GOD commands the blessing, ordains eternal life." Isn't that beautiful? 😊
- **Another reason for unanswered prayer is unbelief.** Faith can't operate where there is unbelief, doubt, or fear. Jesus rebuked His disciples for their unbelief during a fierce storm. "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?" (Luke 8:25) Repent of unbelief. You may even have to pray as the father of the epileptic boy did, "I believe, Lord, help my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24)
- **A final reason for unanswered prayers is because we have an enemy, satan, who opposes and hinders our prayers.** Remember, when Daniel prayed to God for understanding and for God to release His will over Israel, an angel was sent to speak to Daniel and was fought hard by the prince of Persia (a demon). The archangel Michael was dispatched by God to go help the angel so he could be released to go to Daniel and explain the end times vision to him. (Daniel 10:10-20)

The above scenarios are indicative of a "yes" answer - but the "yes" is being hindered. **God's third answer to us when we pray may be "wait."** I really hate this one, don't you? And it seems that God tells me this one a LOT!



Patience is not one of my virtues, but God often has me in a waiting room of some kind to TRAIN me in patience. I seem to always get in the sloooow grocery lines (even if it's a speed lane, the cashier is slow), slow bank lines at the drive-through, and inevitably hit all the yellow or red lights in traffic. With His wonderful sense of humor, God also blessed me with a husband who doesn't make decisions quickly. I am like a racehorse rarin' to go, and he moves like a turtle. Yes, we balance each other out nicely...but it's HARD!

If you are in a situation where you are waiting on God, I want to encourage you **DO NOT STOP PRAYING**. **Press on**, like the woman with the issue of blood who pressed through the crowds, the social stigma, her fears, to touch the hem of Jesus' garment for her healing. **PUSH. Pray Until Something Happens!**



God hears your voice when you pray. Ray and I prayed fervently with family and friends for our daughter Leah to be healed of grand mal seizures that started suddenly in the middle of the night (diagnosis: epilepsy). It was a living nightmare of hell for two years, but **Jesus Christ miraculously healed her**. She has been seizure free for almost three years now! Praise the Lord!

Don't stop praying! Your breakthrough is coming! God's answer is on the way!

Waiting is the hardest part in prayer. But it's going to be worth it all, dear friend! God honors obedience, trust, and faith! I have known women who prayed for their husbands' salvation for literally years. Sometimes they wanted to give up, but they kept on. God heard their prayers and the husband was saved. My husband Ray has been used greatly by God to heal the sick. Jesus still heals today!

Maybe you're praying for a new job, a new house, a prodigal child, an unfaithful spouse, a trip to Europe, a health issue, direction for ministry, financial blessings. Whatever it is, God hears you! Be encouraged; He will answer you!

Your prayers matter. Your prayers make a difference. Your prayers are effective. "The prayer of a person living right with God is something powerful to be reckoned with." (James 5:16, The Message)

Does God answer prayer? Yes, He sure does! I could tell you testimony after testimony of all the prayers He has answered on mine and my family's behalf. **God says one of 3 things: yes, no, and wait!**

I encourage you to **spend some time today seeking His face**, and hearing what He has to say to you about whatever is on your heart. **He loves you, He cares about you and every detail of your life, and He wants to help you. His arms are open wide for you right now!**

"Prayer does not fit us for the greater work; prayer is the greater work."
Oswald Chambers



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Beth Jones
Tablet Of My Heart
www.bethjones.net
elizabethdjones@gmail.com

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