

Prayer and Wishes
Chapter four: Prayer vs Wishes

Dear God

Please stop stupid people from breeding so quickly, we're severely outnumbered down here.

Dear people

I already know what you want, I just wanted to hear you beg

People's prayers are funny. Their jokes about God answering prayer are funny too. Yet, possibly we really do feel that way. We say "oh God" and roll our eyes at stupid people. Many believe that God is vindictive. This life of ours is a joke to him. Some believe that all powerful gods are not real. There are also those who feel the gods ignore us. Were just tiny insects to them. The non-sequential. Who are we to the gods anyways?

The top four wishes

1. To earn money without working
2. To be smart without studying
3. To love without being hurt
4. To eat without getting fat

Then there is real wishing. We wish stupid people would disappear. We wish God would answer our prayer. We love to wish. I see money in fish ponds, wells, and probably in those machines that give out wish answers. Usually the head in that machine looks ominous. I think it laughs every time it spits out an answer. Laughing at us because we gave it another coin, or is it the spiritual mocking us at our helplessness? Then, there is the fun part. A light comes on asking for more money to answer another wish. The craziness of want, hope, and desire is rearing its ugly head. Deep in the back of my mind I can hear the condescending voice saying "it's a man-made machine stupid."

Prayer and Wishes

Chapter four: Prayer vs Wishes

In the movie “Big” with Tom Hanks. He is a kid who finds one of those machines. Hanks ends up getting his wish to be an adult. Yet, he is still a kid inside. Upon several lessons learned, including having sex, he pursues that wishing machine to regain his youth. It’s a fun movie. Usually we are adults wishing for youth. If I were to wish to a genie, I’d ask for more genies first. If asked, we could easily tell people what we’d wish for.

Either way, prayer and wishes are fun. We hope that these two ways to get things answered come true. They did for Aladdin, Cinderella, and Snow White. In tales by the Grim Brothers, we might want to be more careful what you wish for. With those stories it’s about lessons learned in what you want. There usually is a painful moral to the story.

One called the *Millar and the cat* tells the story of a dunce boy who was tricked by two friends. All three were asked to get a horse for the miller. The dunce boy ended up serving a cat for seven years. The cat promised a fine horse for the boy. In the end, the dunce boy brought the miller the best horse of the three. The cat transformed into a princess and whisked the boy away to a castle to live happy ever after. His wish to find a fine horse turned out better than he hoped. The boys that tricked him got nothing.

The Wizard of Oz is another good example. Dorothy’s wished for her heart’s desire. She had to fight a witch to find her answer. She wished and prayed that her desires were far from Kansas. In the end, she realized that the answer was back home all along. Do you have wish or prayer stories? I believe you’re not alone. We all have stopped at a well or at least paused, wondered, and thought about dropping in a coin. I have prayed to God. I have wished on a falling star too. Why?

Prayer and Wishes

Chapter four: Prayer vs Wishes

I tried to point out in the first three chapters that we desire to pray or wish. I think its engrained in us to seek out something greater beyond ourselves for help. Maybe it's just to gain wisdom. Maybe its to make a dream come true. Let's pretend that we really wanted this girl or guy who is living across the street. Every morning you say hi, in passing, as you head off to school. For some reason you're in love with them. Who really knows why that happens. But, each day, your heart deepens for them in a one-sided love affair, forged within you. So, you wish.

I feel Taylor Swift is the wandering heart. She writes a few songs dedicated to the wishing and desiring love. A girl with a wandering heart. She sings "*you belong to me*" without having him. Taylor writes in her song Gorgeous "*You're so gorgeous, I can't say anything to your face, cause look at your face.*" In comes the prayer or wish. We got to have them almost at any cost. Secretly, we pray for help. We drop the coin in the well. Hoping were building a bridge across to what we desire.

There can be fallout from those prayers and wishes Taylor has also been known to write fiery songs about relationship destruction. A wandering girl's heart might also sing "*Praying the floor won't fall through, again.*" Taylor is well known to suffer from bad relationships too. Snow White is caught in the grip of her evil step mother. She longs to be wisped away to a safer distant land by prince charming. At the well, she sings "*Make a wish into the well, that's all you have to do. And if you hear it echoing, your wish will soon come true.*" Peril ensues until she is recued. Whether it's prayers or wishes, we want our heart's desire to come true. To tame the wandering heart.

Prayer and Wishes

Chapter four: Prayer vs Wishes

Why not make it happen yourself? Why not just talk to those you desire? I think comes back to embarrassment, failure, and misunderstandings. In 1995, on the Jenny Jones show, Jonathan Schmitz was humiliated by his admirer for admitting a crush on public television. The problem was that the admirer was a guy, Scott Amedure. Three days later, Justin couldn't take it anymore and killed Scott. It's a sad story, but it makes the case that is exactly why were nervous about revealing our affections n person.

Of course, it rarely ends that way. Who kills an admirer? Even stalkers usually keep their distance. Yet, it's clear, we stalk, keep our distance, or just dream of being with someone from afar. The safest way to get your dream to comes true is to pray or wish. What if God could reach across to the other persons heart for you? Humiliation and embarrassment could be avoided if it all falls though. Maybe you can't open their eyes. Possibly, maybe, something more powerful can.

There are organizations called *the make a wish foundation*. There are versions of this all over the world. They do amazing work. These organizations are not magical spirits or fairy god mothers. Its people like you and me giving money and time to make dreams happen. Usually it's for children that are dying or for the poor. It's people reaching out to help make someone's day through something greater than themselves. A make a wish foundation seems original. Isn't a well the original? Is God?

In the early 1900's A.B. Simpson felt that prayer could heal people. He created prayer houses/ hospitals. It combined prayer and healing to help the sick. They do not exist today, but for a time, they were doing amazing things for needy people. Benny Hinn is an interesting case. He believes he has the divine gift of healing through God. He prays and touches people to heal

Prayer and Wishes

Chapter four: Prayer vs Wishes

them. They both believe in prayer and healing. They both pray to God for help. Both men try and heal through ministry work. They call it the work of God, but they use prayer and situations like hospitals and stadiums to achieve it.

Both prayer and wishes want to accomplish the same goal. Will God help us? Can a wish come true? I suppose a wish could ask for a car in a lottery. I guess a prayer could be for a wife. Let's take a small look at why. Why call on something to help your desires? It's true that desires are not the only reason we wish and pray. You could be sick. You could be sad. Yet, we are calling on something to help us.

Above, I talked a little about desiring someone. I also briefly talked about the need for healing. Is that why we wish and pray? They are very good reasons. I remember Linus in the peanuts cartoon listening to his sister Lucy give five good reasons. She pulled each finger down until there was only her fist left. At that moment, Linus was left staring at his sister's fist saying "*those are five really good reasons.*" However, is the desire, a threat, some peril, or impending destruction good reasons? Are we desperate? Is it the end of the line that compels us to wish and pray?

I do think there is desire straight up. We see something and it demands our attention. I had an experience with cabbage patch dolls in the mid-eighties. Big deal. Once my girlfriend wanted one it became a bigger deal. When the stores and company fueled the hype of low stock and high demand, it became a frenzy. I literally wrestled a doll away from a little old lady. In *Jingle all the way* with Arnold Schwarzenegger the same thing happened. That stupid doll for his kid. What, we can't find it? Then it's time to panic. It might be time to pray or wish too.

Prayer and Wishes

Chapter four: Prayer vs Wishes

Desperate times call for desperate measures. Once the heart wants it, usually you have to have it. I guess chemicals and hormones kick in. Yet, a message from the eye goes to the brain. The brain asks for hormones to annoy the heart. The heart starts dancing and calling for action. Is it just that easy? Our brain is Santa giving us what the heart desires. That allows us to go on television and profess our love to an unexpected person. It might also drive a person to blow someone away with a 12-gauge shot gun for embarrassing them on national television. I bet on a rating scale of our heart: passion and embarrassment are equal. We will act in both instances to satisfy them both.

Certainly, an embarrassment does not always lead to a killing. Certainly, a passion does not always lead to rape or stealing. The pull to react is strong. Is that the hormones talking? It's the brain talking too? I want chocolate. My brain says yes, but my brain knows diets too. I don't pray or wish for more chocolate. I have prayed for a wife or relief from pain. I have wished for a better life or a new stereo. Was I driven to grab a coin and find a well? Not usually, but certainly if I see a falling Star I might pause for a second and wish. What pushes us to pray or wish?

I think we wish and pray because of all the things we think could work, usually don't work. At least in our mind they won't. I remember so vividly that period of time during my divorce. Three men with three wishes. How to save their marriage. One guy chose to plead and beg. Another guy chose to serve and do the estranged wife's bidding. Another fought back and took her to court. They all had wishes. Each one of them probably prayed. Each situation turned out the same. Divorce, hard feelings, and sadness.

All three guys tried in his own way to save the marriage. They all had desires, hopes and dreams that needed filling. The same results show me a few things. One is that the way we wish

Prayer and Wishes

Chapter four: Prayer vs Wishes

or pray makes no difference. Fate, providence, and dumb luck cannot be bought. The way each marriage ended were similar, yet to a man, each of these guys were different. One believed in God and the other two did not. I do believe all three-tried praying. God cannot be bought either.

If I had believed in tarot cards, would I have consulted them? I know without a doubt I would have. If I had believed in God (at that time) would I have consulted God? Sure, I would have. Throwing a coin in a well never crossed my mind. I was desperate, but not desperate enough to pray, wish, or kill her. My desire was confused with what to do. Can't say I was driven to win her back. I was at my wits end though. In the end, one guy dreamed of being married one day. Another retreated to his parent's basement for years. The last got his wife back for a time, but in the end, divorce was still the outcome. Not sure fate can be bought either.

I guess what I'm saying is: which is better? A wish or a prayer? Does one fit a certain circumstance better than the other? Are we results driven? Desiring the best possible outcome. Does our eye gate see something and madly desire it? A stalker would say a resounding yes! My diet and brain hold back with a skeptical no. What fuels our desire? It's easier to drop on our knees than drive across town to a lucky well. I have driven to the lake to pray. A falling star is lucky and good timing. Which makes better use to gain the right results? Do we stand there at night wishing for a falling star?

I pray for myself. I do pray for others too. I wish for myself. Rarely, if ever, do I wish for others. Really, I think if I wished for others, it's for them to change. I pray for myself to change. I wish I'd change. yet, I don't wish for a life change. Are they the same? I want to be good. I don't wish to be goodness. I suppose I wish for good things to happen to me. How often do I wish that I am good to others? Not at a well or if I saw a falling star. I reserve that for prayer.

Prayer and Wishes

Chapter four: Prayer vs Wishes

My drive to fall to my knees is usually caused by grief and tragedy. You should be on your knees when you win the lottery too, but who does that? Who offers prayer to God for getting a car? Were more likely to pray while wanting or needing a car. It's not that we would not thank God. I bet we do. Yet, it's probably not what drops us to our knees. It's just like me getting in my car and searching for a lake spirit to pray to. How about driving to a well. Should I sit outside and wait for a falling star? We just don't do that. We certainly don't do that if we win or get what we want. With prayer it's different than a wish. The knees are usually involved. We don't throw coins to God.

I found a great safe spot to think by the river. I don't think I have ever prayed there. I might have wished there. I never threw a coin in the water. I have come to that river in the middle of winter, in frustration, and jumped in. It was extremely cold running back home ten blocks. Don't try this at home. Yet, it was my sacred safe place to sit and reflect. I should go back there some day. It's been a while. I don't think it's spiritual, but it is serene. It's probably been turned into a condo now.

I have read fascinating articles about sacred spaces. Religions have holy spaces like a church or synagogue. There was a space by a river for me. People take a retreat to a convent where nuns minister to them all weekend. There is a lot of solitude and recluse to think and pray. I know people put that space in a coin, rosary, or lucky charm. They stop in a quiet spot and reflect on the thing their holding. It's their sacred space. I gathered a list of prayers for the top of God's mountain: Mt Sinai. I figured it was a hot spot spiritually. I prayed that list there. Are we driven to sacred spaces?

Prayer and Wishes

Chapter four: Prayer vs Wishes

I was driven to jump in the river. I have been driven to my knees. Driven to wish? Not so much. I wonder if wishing is all about being in the moment. Maybe it's about being in the right place at the right time. Oh, there is a wishing well. How cool, a vent to a volcano, awesome. I see a falling star, sweet. A black cat crossing the road brings the opposite reaction. We wish we had not been there. If you hit the cat is it better or worse? I just think wishing and circumstances go hand in hand.

I know Cinderella wished and the fairy god mother appeared. Aladdin rubbed the lamp and a genie materialized granting him three wishes. I guess Snow White wished at the well, and through a series of events, her dreams came true. I like Jim Carey in Bruce Almighty. He wished he was God. God granted his requested. Answering all those prayers took work. That took a toll on him. In the end he wished he was not God. I bet answering wishes and prayers would be full time work. Actions follow prayers and wishes. Someone greater is expected to do something about them.

There is not a program that answers prayer or wishes. Well I don't think there is. I doubt Microsoft has invented a way to do that. Yet, I bet they have slogans that say as much. I know Disney has slogans on fairytale endings at Disneyland. They say dreams come true there. What dreams? What wishes? It's interesting that fairies, nymphs, and spirits grant wishes. Why?

I know folklore is one answer. I looked up folklore and it's interesting. It's described as a common belief placed in a community setting. It could be common jokes, tales, or traditions. We don't wish because of spirits. However, folklore says, when we wish, spirits are the ones we are wishing too. Maybe that's really where guardian angels came from. Our community has always believed in these traditions.

Prayer and Wishes

Chapter four: Prayer vs Wishes

I've heard people say God was invented to explain the unexplainable. In time, as we have learned to explain things, we have distanced ourselves from God. Funny enough, we have drawn ourselves closer to the occult, and mysticism. Isn't all of it the spiritual? Yet, God is not the in thing these days. I bet he has an easier workload of prayer to answer. The local lake spirit needs a new contract. Overworked!

I find it fascinating that we work so hard to explain away the Bible. People tend to leave the mystical alone. If people love reading tarot cards, what's the harm. Yet, we feel religion is harmful. The actions of some people do make religion harmful. Yet, in times of trouble, we don't wish half as much: we pray. In time of peril, we pray and make pacts with God. "if I get out of this mess." I feel that with wishing we are just asking, hoping, and desiring good results. That seems cool. The Bible, God, and prayer seems personal. Wishes don't say no.

Is it personal with God because He does not always answer prayer? I bet it goes deeper than that. God choses which prayer to say yes too. Some prayer is seemingly met with silence or a resounding no. I bet there are prayers to stop a person from committing adultery. If it happens anyways, does the blame get thrown Gods way for letting it happen? What happens in your heart if God says no to a seemingly good job, and you are not hired. How does that work out at night when you have no money? Is it God's fault? He did say that if we pray that he would provide. I wonder if we feel no or silence is a broken promise? Prayer is most certainly personal.

Do we pick on sprits at the lake? If our wish is not met, do they get the blame? I feel we give them a pass. Have you ever marched back to a well and given it a piece of your mind? Have you put a *not working sign* on a well? Have you cursed a falling star? If the tarot card came up death would you quit trying to get a more favorable card? If you wish for a good night at the casino,

Prayer and Wishes

Chapter four: Prayer vs Wishes

and win, do you go back tomorrow? If God answers your prayer favorably do you fall on your knees the next night. Maybe? It seems performance is involved. Interestingly it's their performance, not ours.

I do think in both cases it's about winning. Prayer is not a huge priority in most churches. Oh, sure they pray. They say they have a prayer ministry. Yet, is it ahead of missions? Is it ahead, of the sermon. No, likely, it's added like insurance. We pray when finances are down. We don't pray often enough when things are well. Were too busy planning the next opportunity for crisis. Who wants that? We wish because we don't have. We pray because we don't have. Not often do we pray to avoid bad planning. We don't wish that way either.

If I was God or the wish genie, would I be annoyed at the lack of honor? The Genie in Aladdin was freed by the third wish, but not before the other two worked out well. God is a good God when prayer works. God is not so good when a child dies of cancer. Broken prayer is met with anger most of the time. Isn't that why people say my God would not let people die. My God would not cause divorce. In many ways we have reduced God to the wish dispenser at a circus. You only get another coin if it works.

Philippians 4:6 *"Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."*

So, which is it? Do we think prayer or wishes work better? I think the Study by C.R. Snyder is true. To make a wish means we have hope. To drop down on our knees in prayer is hope driven. What we believe will work is the key. Some people have a lucky coin or rabbit's foot. Another person goes to an altar at church. Where do you go, or what do you use to have your desires met?

Prayer and Wishes

Chapter four: Prayer vs Wishes

Darwin alluded to fate or survival of the fittest as the answer. That seems sketchy. I think a wish or a prayer has a better chance. Those who believe there is no spirit world would disagree. Leaving our fate to chance just seems sad. I believe in God but I might wish rather than doing nothing at all. I have known people who pray, wish, consult tarot cards, or mediums for answers. One of them has to be right. Just do something in the name of hope.

What if you went to some Chinese restaurant two nights in a row. At the end of the dinner, the server brought you the bill and a Chinese fortune cookie. On each particular night you break it open and the fortune falls on the table. You read it. Each one says something contradictory like you have been favored by God and God is angry with you. Oh boy, are you in a dilemma? In the mean time you had been praying for money. Which cookie was the right one? It might not be a stretch that you stick to the positive one. We want our desires met with good results.

So, I think we use a wish if it's favorable. We would use a prayer if it seems reasonable to God. Desires need good results. Do we wish or pray to get the best answer? I know a guy who believes in God. He always is spouting good God this and wonderful God that. His life is not that Godly. Some things have been messy. I know he believes in prayer. Yet, the results have been less than stellar. Maybe he should have tried wishing? Maybe he needs to be Godlier? It seems that simple. Do what works. The problem is answered prayer and wishes don't seem to work that way.

On the surface I would use prayer. I doubt a wish is anything but a wish. Yet, to hope or wish is a positive thing. I would rather you do that than nothing at all. Think about it. Where are your wishes being answered from? If Santa is not real, then why write to him. Spoilers. I work

Prayer and Wishes

Chapter four: Prayer vs Wishes

for Canada Post. We write Santa response letters. If God is really in heaven then a prayer is heard. Who hears wishes? Yet, in our lives hope must endure.

The heart and body are an amazing thing. The body, chemicals, and soul are somehow working to keep your machine functioning. I am just dumbfounded that a dog and human are animals, yet we are far more individualistic than a dog. I think therefore I am. Does a dog think therefore he or she is? I'm not so sure. Yet, we believe in wishing and prayer. Millions of people do all across this globe. It can't possibly be dumb luck. Something is true and right within using prayer and wishes.

We are results driven. I am pretty sure thousands of years ago, we would have tossed the spiritual out the window if it was man made. Wishes have come true. Prayer has been granted. By whom or what has been the 64-million-dollar question. I think we can self-heal to a degree. Positive thinking works. People have been miraculously healed. Prayer has healed. A wish has healed. Were these people's hearts so warmed with hope that their body responded? Did fate change her mind? Did God?

I believe pointing yourself towards a good thing is a good thing. Stress and hopelessness is life draining. The other day I went to the doctor because my body is acting weird. She asked me several questions about my life. In the end, the doctor pointed out that I was doing everything possible to heal. I was pointed in the right direction. I have hope in God. I am eating well. I am involved in peoples lives. It's all we have in this life. To do the best with what we have. To use the tools given us to remain hopeful. That includes prayer and wishes.

So, which is better Patrick? I know a woman who meets people at Tim Hortons every day to give them a card reading. Sometimes she posts it was a good day. What did that mean? I know

Prayer and Wishes

Chapter four: Prayer vs Wishes

another girl that believes in astrology. She has posted things look favorable. To my dying friend it's not a good day or favorable. He is praying like nuts. They are all using tools to find hope.

I suspect doing something is better than nothing. J Vernon McGee is a Pastor that had cancer. Some people told him to pray, while others told him to do nothing and wait on the Lord. He did something: he prayed. God granted him 20 more years. Providence says: what will be will be. Did prayer work or did providence? I think the answer to what is better is in doing something. As a Christian I feel that everything mystical beyond prayer is hollow. Yet, I am cautioned. The power of positive thinking does hold some value. By the way, J Vernon McGee prayed and went to a doctor.

Just do something. I recommend praying for perseverance. I recommend living in the moment rather than wishing for things you don't have. Just do something. Waiting for a ship to come in is just sitting around doing nothing. I would rather you wished than hate prayer. I would rather you hike a mountain, visit a monastery rather than doing nothing. In my heart, prayer is to something greater. History has shown that God tends to love more than hate. Can a wish claim that?

Did I answer the question? Which is better: prayer or wishing. Mainly, I just wanted to stir the pot. It's time to go deeper into both of them. Maybe if we draw in closer to prayer and wishes will see what's better? Possibly, it will draw us towards the something greater. Prayer is way more effective when we believe in who were praying to. I bet a wish is stronger when we have belief. With both of these, there's hope standing on the sidelines. Between prayer and wishes, who do you hope in more than the other. Let's draw deeper.