

Sometimes
Various passages

Sometimes God acts whether people pray or not.

"I know that you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted." - Job 42:2

Advancement of salvation history

For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.
- Habakkuk 2:14

Design for Israel and the nations

The LORD Almighty has sworn, "Surely, as I have planned, so it will be, and as I have purposed, so it will happen. ²⁵ I will crush the Assyrian in my land; on my mountains I will trample him down. His yoke will be taken from my people, and his burden removed from their shoulders." ²⁶ This is the plan determined for the whole world; this is the hand stretched out over all nations. ²⁷ For the LORD Almighty has purposed, and who can thwart him? His hand is stretched out, and who can turn it back?" - Isaiah 14:24-27

Perfection of Believers

Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. - Philippians 1:6

"The sovereignty of God is like the believer's pillow on which he would rest." - D.L. Moody

Sometimes God doesn't act because people don't pray.

What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? ² You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. - James 4:1-2

Our passivity

⁷ "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

⁹ "Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? ¹¹ If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!" - Matthew 7:7-11

We don't persevere (Matthew 7:7-8)

Poor perception (Matthew 7:9-11)

*"To fail to pray then, is not to merely break some religious rule- it is a failure to treat God as God."
- Timothy Keller, *Prayer**

Sometimes God acts because people do pray.

“God instituted prayer to lend us to the dignity of causality.” – Blaise Pascal

You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. - James 4:2

Elijah was a human being, even as we are. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years.¹⁸ Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops. - James 5:17-18

Common People

Extraordinary Results

On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. ²⁴ When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. “Sovereign Lord,” they said, “you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. ²⁵ You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David:

“Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? ²⁶ The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his anointed one. ²⁷ Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. ²⁸ They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen. ²⁹ Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. ³⁰ Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”

³¹ After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly. - Acts 4:23-31

Sometimes God doesn't act even though people do pray.

Moses- Consequences

²³ At that time I pleaded with the LORD: ²⁴ “Sovereign LORD, you have begun to show to your servant your greatness and your strong hand. For what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do the deeds and mighty works you do? ²⁵ Let me go over and see the good land beyond the Jordan—that fine hill country and Lebanon.”

²⁶ But because of you the LORD was angry with me and would not listen to me. “That is enough,” the LORD said. “Do not speak to me anymore about this matter. - Deuteronomy 3:23-26

Paul- Character

⁷ or because of these surpassingly great revelations. Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. ⁸ Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. ⁹ But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. - 2 Corinthians 12:7-9

You

