



# HIDDEN ASSUMPTIONS

*Subtle Assumptions That Can Affect Your Faith*

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## Assumption No. 3 "If I pray longer and harder God will answer"

Many Christians quietly assume that the effectiveness of prayer depends on how long we pray, how passionately we speak, or how eloquent our words sound. If God does not respond quickly, we may conclude that we simply didn't pray hard enough. This assumption can subtly turn prayer into a kind of spiritual performance, where effort and intensity seem to determine results. Yet the Bible often presents prayer very differently—many powerful prayers in Scripture are surprisingly simple and brief, yet God responds to them.



### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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**1. What can we learn from the prayer of Jabez regarding Hidden Assumption No. 3?**

*"Jabez cried out to the God of Israel, "Oh, that you would bless me and enlarge my territory! Let your hand be with me, and keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain." And God granted his request." 1 Chronicles 4:10 NIV*

**2. Why do you think many Christians still feel that they must pray longer or harder for God to respond?**

**3. According to Jesus in Matthew 6:5–8, what are some inappropriate ways to pray?**

*"And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. 6 But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. 7 And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. 8 Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. (Matthew 6:5-8 NIV)*

**4. If God already knows what we need (Matthew 6:8), why does He still instruct us to pray?**

*"Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him." (Matthew 6:8 NIV)*

**5. Since lengthy or emotionally charged prayers do not necessarily result in answers, what is emphasized in the Lord's prayer (Matthew 6:9-13)?**

*"This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one." Matthew 6:9-13 NIV*

**6. Look up the following verses and summarize what each one is saying about prayer:**

- John 14:13–14; 15:16; 16:23 –
- Romans 8:26 –
- Colossians 1:9–11 –
- Philippians 4:6–7 –
- 1 Thessalonians 5:17 –
- Matthew 7:7–8; Luke 18:1 –
- James 5:16 –
- 1 John 5:14–15 –
- Hebrews 4:16 –

## **SUMMARY**

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Write a brief summary of what you learned from this study on prayer, listing a few important aspects you'd especially like to remember.