

10 Hindrances to Answered Prayer

1. Prayerlessness-Prayerlessness in the Christian life says that we believe in God, but we can usually get along without Him.

*Prayerlessness excludes God from working.

*God's plans, secrets, and cause have never been committed to prayerless people.

*Neglect of prayer has always brought less of faith and loss of love.

*God is restrained in doing because we are restrained by our failure to pray.

Solution-

*Repent! Change! Turn! *Call upon God to give you a fresh view of this incredible resource called 'prayer'/'believing prayer'. *Remember God does hear and answer prayer *Begin where you are; (Hence; 5 minutes a day); be determined

2. Pray in faith/unbelief- James 1:6-8-"But let him **ask in faith**, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thin of the Lord, A double minded man is unstable in all his ways."

*Note-This Scripture is not putting a degree on the *amount* of faith you have but just that you are praying *in faith*. And remember our definition from last week what 'true faith' is. It originates from Jesus Himself and is given to us. True faith is from the heart; not our minds or anything else.

Unbelief-

He entered into His own country, "He did not many mighty works there because of their *unbelief*." Matthew 13:58

*Jesus said that the disciples could not cast the demon out of the boy because of their *unbelief*! Matthew 17:20-And Jesus said unto them, Because of your *unbelief*: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Perhaps their lips were saying the words, but their hearts *were not believing* what they were saying! Jesus called them a 'faithless' and 'perverse' generation.

'Faithless'='unbelieving' and 'perverse'='having been perverted'

If it is the 'real deal' faith; (from the heart as we learned last week), it can be the size of a grain of mustard seed and it will work!

*Mark 6:5-6-And He could do there no mighty work, save that He laid His hands upon a few sick folk and healed them. And He marveled because of their *unbelief*. And He went about the villages teaching.

Solution-

*Repent! *Feed on the Word. Romans 10:17-So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. *Look at what God *has* done. Let this build your faith.

*Hear testimonies of others. Read what God has done for others and let yourself receive encouragement and faith. *Pray the promises of God.

3. Unconfessed Sin/Disobedience-Unconfessed sin in a person's life places them outside the will of God.

*Isaiah 59:1-2-Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy that it cannot hear: But your *iniquities* have made a separation between you and your God.

*Psalm 66:18-If I regard *iniquity* in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.

*Proverbs 28:9-*Your sins* have hidden His face from you, so that He does not hear.

*Disobedience-plainly disobeying doing what you know you should do. Plainly disobeying the voice of God when He has unctioed you!

*1 John 3:22-And whatever we ask, we receive of Him, *because we keep His commandments* and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.

Solution-

*Search your life; your heart *When you pray, is there anything that continuously comes up and you just know you need to deal with it? Do it! Deal with it once and for all! Repent, confess it, forsake it and receive fresh restoration. Then ask God to help you to not repeat the same sin!!!

*Ask the Holy Spirit to give you a sensitivity to sin. John 16:8-And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.

*Psalm 139:23-23-Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.

4. Unforgiveness- Mark 11:25-And when ye stand praying, forgive if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

*Matthew 18:35-...we are to forgive "from the heart" (that is, genuinely and without limit)-because God has so graciously forgiven us.

*Matthew 6:14-15-For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

*An unforgiving spirit is one of the most common hindrances to prayer.

*The spirit of prayer is essentially a spirit of love.

*John Bevere-The Bait of Satan-Luke 17:1-Then said He unto the disciples, it is impossible but that offenses will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come! The Greek word for "offend" in Luke 17:1 comes from the word *skandalon*, which originally referred to the part of the trap which the bait was attached. Hence, the word signifies laying a trap in someone's way. In the New Testament it often describes an entrapment used by the enemy. The following are some quotes from the book:

- Our response to an offense determines our future.
- When we filter everything through past hurts, rejections, and experiences, we find it impossible to believe God.
- There is only one person who can get you out of the will of God, and that is you!
- Acquiring an offense keeps you from seeing your character flaws because blame is deferred to another.
- A person who cannot forgive has forgotten how great a debt God has forgiven them.

5. Ask amiss/wrong motives-James 4:3-When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

If we pray simply for the gratification of self and for the satisfaction of our own pleasures, the Bible says we ask amiss (wrongly).

Solution-

*Begin with a motivational check *Search your heart *Ask God if your motives are correct. Will God be glorified in the answer?

*Matthew 7:7-Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

***Motive: 1 Corinthians 10:31-So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.**

6. Unresolved relationships/improper treatment of mate/allowing discord in the home-

1 Peter 3:7-Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; *that your prayers be not hindered.*

*God took man and from man He made woman. Using the Hebrew words, Genesis 2:23-“She shall be called *Isha*, because she was taken out of *Ish*.” “...an help meet for him” that is, a ‘help that was fit for him’. In other words, she was to be the other half of him. He was only half a man, and she was to be the other part of him. She is there to love him. And he is there to love and protect her.

*If husbands and wives should seek diligently to find the cause of their unanswered prayers, they would often find it in their relations to one another. There is much to be covered up under the holy name of marriage that is a cause of spiritual deadness, and of powerlessness in prayer.

Solution-

*Any man or woman whose prayers seem to bring no answer should spread their whole married life out before God, and ask Him to put His finger upon anything in it that is displeasing in His sight. (Make sure I don’t forget to address the issue if *you* are doing everything *you* know to do but your spouse is not....I have something to say on the matter....)

*Confess to each other and ask for God’s forgiveness.

*Also, make sure you are not acting one way in front of others and then acting totally differently when at home. (e.g., at church all smiles; at home; terrible!)

Regarding relationships

*Confront our feelings we may have about others. Be quick to reconcile. *God knows our hearts. Romans 12:18-If possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Give my example of ‘reconciling’ with someone.

*Matthew 5:23-24-So if when you are offering your gift at the altar you there remember that your brother has any (grievance) against you, leave your gift at the altar and go. First make peace with your brother, and then come back and present your gift.

*Matthew 22:39-And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

*Pray that God will give you the power to love others as yourself.

7. Stinginess in giving-Proverbs 21:13-Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard. It is the one who gives generously to others who receives generously from God.

*Luke 6:38-Give and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

*1 John 3:22-And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. This scripture is made in direct connection with generosity toward the needy. In the context, we are told that it

is when we love, not in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth, when we open our hearts toward the brother in need, is when we have confidence toward God in prayer.
*Philippians 4:19-But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. This glorious promise was made to the Philippian church, and made in immediate connection to their generosity.

8. Idolatry-Anything that we revere more than God is an idol. Ezekiel 14:3-“Son of man, these men have set up their idols **in their hearts**, and have put right before their faces the stumbling block of their iniquity. Should I be consulted by them at all?”

Solution-

*Is God absolutely first? *If not, put away the idols (can be in the form of spouse, business, career, etc.) God will then hear our prayers.

9. Unteachable attitude-Proverbs 1:28-30-Then they will call upon me, but I will not answer; they will seek me diligently but will not find me. ²⁹Because they^(B) hated knowledge and^(C) did not choose the fear of the LORD, would have none of my counsel and^(E) despised all my reproof,

10 Giving up-Quitting too soon. Jesus gives 2 parables re: perseverance in prayer:
Luke 11:5-8 Luke 18:1-5