

Series: Praying Always
“Hindrances to Prayers”
1 Peter 3:7

Big Idea - When we pray it's important to remove all hindrances to our prayers.

God always answers our prayers in some manner (review last week)

God's four basic responses to our prayers.

No—Your request is not in God's will

Slow—Your request is not God's will at this time

Grow—Your motives are wrong

Go—Your request, timing, and spiritual condition are okay...Yes!

there are also guidelines for effective praying. Certain practices or attitudes can hinder your prayers and, in such cases, God will not respond to them.

God's Word says that we must be in a right relationship with God and with others for our prayers to be effectively heard by God.

1. Not giving honor to your spouse hinders your prayers.

1 Peter 3:7 "...you husbands should live with your wives in an understanding way, since they may be weaker than you. But show them respect, because God gives them the same blessing he gives you—the grace that gives true life. Do this so that nothing will stop your prayers."

Ephesians 5:21 Yield to obey each other because you respect Christ.

22 Wives, yield to your husbands, as you do to the Lord,

25 Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it

28 In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they love their own bodies. The man who loves his wife loves himself.

29 No one ever hates his own body, but feeds and takes care of it. And that is what Christ does for the church,

31 The Scripture says, "So a man will leave his father and mother and be united with his wife, and the two will become one body."

32 That secret is very important—I am talking about Christ and the church.

33 But each one of you must love his wife as he loves himself, and a wife must respect her husband.

2. Harboring unconfessed sin will put a barrier between you and God.

Psalm 66:18 If I had not confessed the sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.

19 But God did listen! He paid attention to my prayer.

Isaiah 59:1 "Surely the LORD'S power is enough to save you. He can hear you when you ask him for help.

2 It is your evil that has separated you from your God. Your sins cause him to turn away from you, so he does not hear you."

Proverbs 28:13 If you hide your sins, you will not succeed. If you confess and reject them, you will receive mercy.

A lady in the north of England said that every time she got down before God to pray, five bottles of wine came up before her mind. She had taken them wrongfully one time when she was a housekeeper, and had not been able to pray since. She was advised to make restitution.

"But the person is dead," she said.

"Are not some of the heirs living?"

"Yes, a son."

"Then go to that son and pay him back."

"Well," she said, "I want to see the face of God, but I could not think of doing a thing like that. My reputation is at stake."

She went away, and came back the next day to ask if it would not do just as well to put that money in the treasury of the Lord.

"No," she was told, "God doesn't want any stolen money. The only thing is to make restitution."

She carried that burden for several days, but finally went into the country, saw that son, made a full confession and offered him a five-pound note. He said he didn't want the money, but she finally persuaded him to take it, and came back with a joy and peace that made her face radiant. She became a magnificent worker for souls, and led many into the light.

My dear friends, get these stumbling stones out of the way. God does not want a man to shout "Hallelujah" who doesn't pay his debts. Many of our prayer meetings are killed by men trying to pray who cannot pray because

their lives are not right. Sin builds up a great wall between us and God. A man may stand high in the community and may be a member of some church “in good standing,” but the question is, how does he stand in the sight of God? If there is anything wrong in your life, make it right.

[Moody's Anecdotes, pp. 49-50](#)

3. God hears the prayers of those who obey His commands.

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

23 And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.”

4. God will not hear prayers that have wrong or selfish motives.

James 4:3 “And even when you ask, you don’t get it because your motives are all wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure.”

When our praying is wrong, our whole Christian life is wrong.

The Hot Water Bottle

Dr. Helen Roseveare, missionary to Zaire, told the following story.

“A mother at our mission station died after giving birth to a premature baby. We tried to improvise an incubator to keep the infant alive, but the only hot water bottle we had was beyond repair. So we asked the children to pray for the baby and for her sister. One of the girls responded, ‘Dear God, please send a hot water bottle today. Tomorrow will be too late because by then the baby will be dead. And dear Lord, send a doll for the sister so she won’t feel so lonely.’ That afternoon a large package arrived from England. The children watched eagerly as we opened it. Much to their surprise, under some clothing was a hot water bottle! Immediately the girl who had prayed so earnestly started to dig deeper, exclaiming, ‘If God sent that, I’m sure He also sent a doll!’ And she was right! The heavenly Father knew in advance of that child’s sincere requests, and 5 months earlier He had led a ladies’ group to include both of those specific articles.”

5. We are instructed to pray according to His will, not according to ours.

It has well been said that the purpose of prayer is not to get man's will done in heaven, but to get God's will done on earth.

1 John 5:14 "And this is the boldness we have in God's presence: that if we ask God for anything that agrees with what he wants, he hears us.

15 If we know he hears us every time we ask him, we know we have what we ask from him."

Jesus told His disciples to pray "Thy will be done" (Matt. 6:10).

"Prayer is a mighty instrument, not for getting man's will done in heaven, but for getting God's will done on earth," wrote Robert Law.

George Mueller, who fed thousands of orphans with food provided in answer to prayer, said: "Prayer is not overcoming God's reluctance. It is laying hold of God's willingness."

There are times when we can only pray, "Not my will but Thine be done," because we simply do not know God's will in a matter.

But most of the time we can determine God's will by reading the Word, listening to the Spirit (Rom. 8:26-27), and discerning the circumstances around us. Our very faith to ask God for something is often proof that He wants to give it (Heb. 11:1).