

**Series: Praying Always
“Hindrances to Prayers” – Pt 2
1 Peter 3:7**

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

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

Two letters for marriage to work .
Never say the D word and always do the C word.
Never say “divorce”, always do “Commitment”

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.

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

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.”

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

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.

6. Unbelief

When we pray, we are to ask in faith.

Mark 11:22 “So Jesus answered and said to them, "Have faith in God.

23 For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.

24 Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.”

James 1:5 “If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking.

6 But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind.

7 Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord.

Illustration: Missionary to Mongolia

James Gilmour, who was a missionary to Mongolia, was once asked to treat some wounded soldiers. Although he was not a doctor, he did have some knowledge of first aid, so he felt he could not refuse the request. He dressed the wounds of two of the men, but a third had a badly broken thigh bone. The missionary had no idea what to do for such an injury. Kneeling beside the man, he asked the Lord for help and believed somehow God would provide it.

He didn't know how God would answer his prayers, but he was confident that his need would be supplied. He couldn't find any books on physiology in the primitive hospital, and no doctor arrived. To complicate matters, a crowd of beggars came to him asking for money. He was deeply concerned about his patient, yet his heart went out to those ragged paupers.

Hurriedly he gave them a small gift, plus a few kind words of spiritual admonition. A moment later he stared in amazement at one weary beggar who had remained behind. The half-starved fellow was little more than a living skeleton.

The missionary suddenly realized that the Lord had brought him a walking lesson in anatomy! He asked the elderly man if he might examine him. After carefully tracing the femur bone with his fingers to learn how to treat the soldier's broken leg, he returned to the patient and was able to set the fracture.

Years afterward, Gilmour often related how God had provided him with a strange yet sufficient response to his earnest prayer. When we raise our petitions, we too can be certain that the Lord will help us—even though the answer comes by way of those who “have no power.”

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7. Not abiding in Christ

An ongoing abiding life in Christ (having regular fellowship with Him) will allow your prayers to be heard. When fellowship is broken, so is communication with God

"If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.... " (John 15:7)

Colossians 3:16 “Let Christ's word with all its wisdom and richness live in you...”

8. Not asking.

Luke 11:10 10 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

James 4:2c “Yet you do not have because you do not ask.”

Sometimes people tell me they hate to “bother” God with their problem when there are so many other folks with bigger problems!

News Flash!! No problems are big to God! No request is too small or too large!

Illustration: Alexander the Great

Among those in the court of Alexander the Great was a philosopher of outstanding ability but little money. He asked Alexander for financial help and was told to draw whatever he needed from the imperial treasury. But when the man requested an amount equal to \$50,000, he was refused—the treasurer needing to verify that such a large sum was authorized. When he asked Alexander, the ruler replied, “Pay the money at once. The philosopher has done me a singular honor. By the largeness of his request he shows that he has understood both my wealth and generosity.”

Illustration: Cattle on a Thousand Hills

In its early days, Dallas Theological Seminary was in critical need of \$10,000 to keep the work going. During a prayer meeting, renowned Bible teacher Harry Ironside, a lecturer at the school, prayed, "Lord, you own the cattle on a thousand hills. Please sell some of those cattle to help us meet this need." Shortly after the prayer meeting, a check for \$10,000 arrived at the school, sent days earlier by a friend who had no idea of the urgent need or of Ironside's prayer. The man simply said the money came from the sale of some of his cattle!

9. Not praying in the Spirit and not persevering in prayer.

Ephesians 6:18 "Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere."

Prayer in the Spirit (that is, under the control of the Holy Spirit) is also a prerequisite. This verse instructs us that we must also persevere in our praying. Prayers offered in the flesh will not be heard by God

10. Unwillingness to forgive someone who hurt you.

If you are unwilling to forgive someone for something that person has done to you, then God says He will not forgive you. Restored and right relationships are essential for open communication with God.

Be honest - don't say I can't -say I won't !,

Mark 11:25 "But when you are praying, first forgive anyone you are holding a grudge against, so that your Father in heaven will forgive your sins, too."

11. An ungrateful, unthankful heart

Philippians 4:6 "Do not worry about anything, but pray and ask God for everything you need, always giving thanks."

1 Thessalonians 5:18 "Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.

We are to pray with thankful hearts. Those of us who come before God without a spirit of thankfulness will find our prayers are not heard