

That Your Prayers Be Not Hindered

Sunday AM 04/14/19

Introduction:

Why do you pray? We might say because they are told to pray, *1 Thess. 5.17*. We might say because we are taught to pray. Jesus encouraged His disciples to pray, *Luke 18.1*. We read through the Bible and see the power of prayers, *James 5.16-18*; Hezekiah in *2 Kings 20.1-6*.

Many folks are skeptical of prayer. It might be we don't think God will answer prayer any more or we think He won't answer our prayers. In short, we pray if we think it will do any good and won't if we think it is a futile exercise. What might be some reasons God won't answer our prayers. Keep in mind the fact that God determines who He will and will not listen to. In one sense we might say He listens to all prayers as God knows everything. In another sense we are talking about an assurance that He cares.

I) Faulty Husband/Wife Relationships

A) ***1 Peter 3.7* husbands who do not treat their wives properly will not be listen to by God.**

1. You don't have to beat your wife just fail to honor her.
2. Guard against harsh words, being demeaning, bickering and just being hard to get along with.
3. Being the "head of the wife" is not a license to abuse.
4. Could our home life be the reason our prayers are being hindered?

B) **If so**

1. Value her as a fellow heir of the grace of Christ. Jesus died for her too.
2. Consider the value of her soul! Tragically a lot of marriages end to due abuse.
3. Consider *1 John 4.20-21*.

II) Regarding Prayer As A "Last Resort" or an "Emergency Measure"

A) Some think of God only when they are in trouble.

1. The "break this glass in case of emergency" mentality.
2. After we have tried it our way and have no other alternative, we will finally pray to God and ask or demand His help.

B) Pray without ceasing, *1 Thess. 5.17*

1. Pray in the good times and in the bad times. Be thankful for your blessings.
2. God desires our prayers but not only when things are going badly. *Luke 11.9-13*

III) We Can't Forgive Others

A) Forgiveness is a condition of prayer, *Matthew 6.15; Mark 11.25,26*

1. Forgiveness is often hard and requires great faith.
2. But Jesus makes it plain we have to be willing to forgive others if we want God's forgiveness. *Romans 3.23*

B) You benefit when you forgive others.

IV) Selfishness, *James 4.1-3*

A) James is talking about selfish prayers

1. A laundry list of things I want without thinking of God's will, *1 John 5.14*.
2. Maybe even praying for things that harm others.

B) Think of others and what they need (Supplication and intercession).

1. As a Christian you have the relationship to approach God on behalf of other Christians. We need the prayers of each other.
2. As a Christian you have the relationship to approach God on behalf of those outside of Christ.

V) Lack of Faith, *James 1.5-7*

A) How many times have we already given up on our prayers being answered?

1. As we pray, we understand God's will must be done.
2. We understand sometimes God says no.
3. We must accept the no as God's answer and not to the power of prayer.

B) If you pray for rain, carry an umbrella!

VI) Sin in Our Lives, *1 Timothy 2.8*

A) The non-Christian does not have the same assurance as the Christian.

1. Your relationship with God is not right. You are living in sin. *1 Peter 3.12*
2. Obey the Gospel of Christ.

B) A Christian living in sin

1. Our avenue of prayer can be for our forgiveness, *1 John 1.9*. Includes the idea of repentance.
2. But if we "walk in darkness we have no fellowship with Him" *1 John 1.6*.
3. Be willing to ask God for forgiveness.

Conclusion:

Prayer is a wonderful privilege and power, but it comes with responsibility. It can be negated for several reasons. Don't cut your connection with God. Obey His word.