

Hindrances to Prayer
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The Well Church of Lewisville
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Hindrances to Prayer

Overview:

God desires to have a one-on-one relationship with his people. He has made it clear that our heart is what he wants, not our outward appearance or meaningless words. When our hearts are in the right place, then our prayer life will reflect our desires to line up with God's will, to pour our hearts out for His desires, and to see miracles take place.

Heart Condition and Prayer

Prayer must come from the heart. It's not the outward motions or what we say that matters, it is our sincere desire to have a relationship with God. God desires a humble and honest heart.

Luke 18:9-14

To some who **were confident of their own righteousness** and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: 10 "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'

13 "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'

14 "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

Matthew 15:1-11

That Which Defiles

15 Then some Pharisees and teachers of the law came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked, 2 "Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They don't wash their hands before they eat!"

3 Jesus replied, "And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? 4 For God said, 'Honor your father and mother' and 'Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death. 5 But you say that if anyone declares that what might have been used to help their father or mother is 'devoted to God,' 6 they are not to 'honor their father or mother' with it. Thus

you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition. 7 You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you:

8 “These people honor me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me.

9 They worship me in vain;
their teachings are merely human rules.”

10 Jesus called the crowd to him and said, “Listen and understand. 11 What goes into someone’s mouth does not defile them, but what comes out of their mouth, that is what defiles them.”

God Wants a Sincere Heart

Hebrews 10:22

22 let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

8 Hindrances and Prayer

(1) Come to God with Sincerity

Prayer Matthew 6:5-6

5 “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.

Matthew 6:5-8

5 “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.

(2) Un-confessed Sin Hinders our Prayers

Psalm 66:18

If I had cherished iniquity in my heart,
the Lord would not have listened.

Isaiah 59:2

But your iniquities have separated
you from your God;
your sins have hidden his face from you,
so that he will not hear.

(3) Selfish Prayers go Unanswered

James 4:3

3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

1 John 5:14

14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.

(4) Forgiveness is required

Matthew 6:9-15

9 "This, then, is how you should pray:

"Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
10 your kingdom come,
your will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

11 Give us today our daily bread.

12 And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

13 And lead us not into temptation,[a]
but deliver us from the evil one.[b]'

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

Fasting

The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant

Matthew 18:21-35

21 Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?"

22 Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.[g]

23 "Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. 24 As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold[h] was brought to him. 25 Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

26 "At this the servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' 27 The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

28 "But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins.[i] He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded.

29 "His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.'

30 "But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. 31 When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.

32 "Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. 33 Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' 34 In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

35 "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

(5) Our Attitudes in our Homes Must Reflect Christ as the Head

1 Peter 3:7

7 Husbands, in the same way be **considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect** as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, **so that nothing will hinder your prayers.**

(6) Our Hearts Must be in Submission

Hebrew 5:7-8

During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard **because of his reverent submission**.⁸ Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered

(7) Our Hearts Must Be Thankful

Philippians 4:6

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Colossians 4:2

2 Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.

1 Timothy 2:1

2 I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—

(8) Unbelief - We must believe that God is able

James 1:6-7

6 But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. 7 That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord.

Our Righteousness Was Received Through Grace

Romans 9:30-33

30 What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; 31 but the people of Israel, who pursued the law as the way of righteousness, have not attained their goal. 32 Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone. 33 As it is written:

“See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes people to stumble
and a rock that makes them fall,
and the one who believes in him will never be put to shame.”[m]

Our Hearts are to stay away from judgment

Romans 10:5-7

5 Moses writes this about the righteousness that is by the law: “The person who does these things will live by them.”[a] 6 But the righteousness that is by faith says: “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’”[b] (that is, to bring Christ down) 7 “or ‘Who will descend into the deep?’”[c] (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).

Do Not Stop Praying

Luke 18:1-8

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. 2 He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. 3 And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.'

4 "For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care what people think, 5 yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually come and attack me!'"

6 And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. 7 And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? 8 I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

Summary

(1) Come to God with Sincerity

(2) Confess Sins

(3) Prayers must not be for selfish pursuits

(4) Forgiveness is required

(5) Our Attitudes in our Homes must be Godly attitudes

(6) Our Hearts Must be in Submission to the Lord

(7) Our Hearts Must Be Thankful

(8) We must believe that God can do anything. When we pray, believe your prayers will be answered.