

“THE HINDERANCES TO PRAYER”

Joshua 1:2 Fellowship

Pastor Mike Suarez Sr.

Monthly Newsletter

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James 4:2-3

“You want something but don’t get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, **BECAUSE YOU DO NOT ASK GOD.**” When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.”

Why is it that God sometimes does not answer the prayers of His children?

- Because we ask with wrong motives to spend what we get on our own pleasures!
- Because we do not ask for them through our prayers.
- Because many Christians neglect **PRAYER.**
- Because there is something in our life, or in our heart, that makes it impossible for God to **ANSWER OUR PRAYERS.**

What are these hindrances to prayer in our hearts, or in our lives that make it impossible for God to answer our prayers?

A WRONG MOTIVE IN OUR PRAYERS

“When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with **WRONG MOTIVES**, that you may spend what you get on your **PLEASURES.**” James 4:3

We pray with a **SELFISH PURPOSE.** We ask for things for our own **SELFISH GRATIFICATION** that we “may spend it on our pleasures.”

What ought to be our motive in our prayers?

I Cor. 10:31 says, “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, **DO IT ALL FOR THE GLORY OF GOD.**”

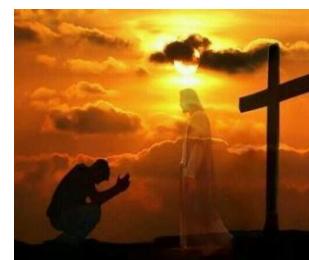
Our motive in our prayers should be that God may be glorified by answering our prayers.

Jesus said, “And whatsoever ye shall ask in **MY NAME**, that will I do, **THAT THE FATHER MAY BE GLORIFIED IN THE SON**” (John 14:13).

Illustration:

Many churches and Christians are praying for revival. This prayer is Biblical but are the motives right.

Ps. 85:6 says, “Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee.”



Many churches want **REVIVAL** because they want an increase of members, so they can show off as the biggest and fastest church in the city. Or for many other selfish reasons.

Why should we pray for REVIVAL?

That God may be glorified by it; because we can no longer bear how God is being dishonored by half-stepping Christians, and by the increase of wickedness and godlessness in the world. That God be glorified by the conversion of sinners!

SIN IN THE HEART OR LIFE.

Isa. 59:1-2 says, “Surely the arm of the Lord is not too short to save, nor His ear too dull to hear. But **YOUR INIQUITIES** have separated you from your God; **YOUR**

SINS have hidden His face from you, **SO THAT HE WILL NOT HEAR.**"

The trouble is not with God, the trouble is with us. Sin in our hearts or lives makes it impossible for God to answer our prayer, even though the thing we are praying for is according to His will.

What sins do we have in our hearts that are hindering our prayers?

- Stealing
- Anger
- Robbing from God
- Gossip
- Lust
- Adultery

Ask God to show you, if there is anything wrong in your heart or life, anything that is **DISPLEASING TO HIM.** When He shows you, set it straight at once and you will find an **OPEN HEAVEN**, and a God who **ANSWERS PRAYER.**

IDOLS IN THE HEART

Ezek. 14:1-3 says, "Some of the elders of Israel came to



me and sat down in front of me. Then the word of the **LORD** came to me: Son of man, these men **HAVE SET UP IDOLS IN**

THEIR HEARTS and put wicked stumbling blocks before their faces. Should I let them inquire of me at all?"

The elders of Israel (the church) had come to Ezekiel to pray for them. But God stops him and says, "Ezekiel, do not pray for these men, they **HAVE SET UP THEIR IDOLS IN THEIR HEART...**"

The Bible states clearly that **IDOLS IN THE HEART MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR GOD TO ATTEND TO OUR PRAYERS.**

What is an **IDOL**?

An idol is anything that a man/woman puts before God.

Many men make an idol of their wife. The more a man loves God, the more deeply and tenderly he will love his wife. When a man puts his wife in the wrong place, he may put his wife before God. Many wives fall into the same trap. We can make idols of our children. We can put our children before God, and we can do things to please our children that we know do not please God. How many Christian fathers and mothers are allowing forms of amusement and other things in their homes, that they know are displeasing to God, but their children want them? How many Christian fathers and mothers are letting their children mix with unbelievers because they are their friends.

II Cor. 6:14 says, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers,"

What idol do you have in your heart?

AN UNFORGIVING SPIRIT

Mark 11:25 says, "And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, **FORGIVE HIM**, so that your Father in Heaven may **FORGIVE YOU YOUR SINS.**"

An **UNFORGIVING SPIRIT** makes it impossible for God to answer our prayers. All of God's answering our prayers is upon the basis of God's dealing with us as forgiven sinners, and God cannot deal with us as sinners while we are not forgiving those who have wronged us. An unforgiving spirit creates bitterness in our heart toward someone who has wronged us. Many Christians are praying real hard for a petition, but with bitterness in their hearts. There is no use for whatever you are praying for, until you let God cast out that **BITTERNESS**.

FORGIVE SO GOD MAY FORGIVE YOU, SO THAT YOUR PRAYERS BE ANSWERED.

STINGINESS IN OUR GIVING

Prov. 21:13 says, "If a man shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, **HE TOO WILL CRY OUT AND NOT BE ANSWERED.**"

The one who is small, and mean, and **STINGY**, in his giving, cannot be a mighty man of prayer.

Luke said, **GIVE**, and it will be **GIVEN TO YOU**. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and

RUNNING OVER, will be poured **INTO YOUR LAP**. For with the measure you use it will be measured to you.”

Do you have the **GIVING SPIRIT** or the **STINGY SPIRIT**. God will answer your prayers as you give.

II Cor. 9:6-15 Read

Verse 8, “And God is able to make all grace abound to you, **THAT ALWAYS HAVING ALL SUFFICIENCY IN EVERYTHING**, you may have an abundance for every good deed;”



The word sufficiency means as much as is needed or wanted. A **STINGY** Christian never has what he needs or wants.

John said, “**AND WHATSOEVER WE ASK, WE RECEIVE OF HIM, BECAUSE WE KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS, AND DO THOSE THINGS THAT ARE PLEASING IN HIS SIGHT**” (I John 3:22).

Why do we **RECEIVE**?

I John 3:16-18 says, This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us. And we ought to lay down our life for our brothers. If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him. Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. We love by our actions - **GIVING**

Many Christians and churches have so little power in prayer because of their stinginess in giving. Great men of prayer are all great givers according to their ability. Many of us want God to give us all that we pray for, but we don't want to be **GIVERS**.

A WRONG TREATMENT OF HUSBAND OR WIFE

I Peter 3:7 says, “Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and **TREAT THEM WITH RESPECT** as the weaker vessel, and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so **THAT NOTHING WILL HINDER YOUR PRAYERS**.”

God tells us that a wrong treatment of a wife by a husband or a wrong treatment of a husband by a wife, **HINDERS**

PRAYER. Many Christians are looking for the “Burning Bush” to reveal to them why their prayers are not being answered. We do not need to look so far away, look into your home life.

Husband, are you treating your wife as the Bible tells a husband how to treat his wife?

Wives, are you treating your husbands as the Bible tells you to treat your husbands?

If you are not, God will not **HEAR YOUR PRAYERS**. God's **EYES ARE ON YOUR HOME LIFE!**

Married couples should pray this prayer: “If there is anything in my married life anywhere that is displeasing in Thy sight, show me what it is and I will put it away.”

When God shows you that spot or stain, put it away. Then shall we have an open door of access to God, and our prayers will no longer be hindered.

CONCLUSION:

- What is hindering our prayers?
- A Wrong Motive?
- Sin in the Heart or Life?
- Idols in the Heart?
- An Unforgiving Spirit?
- Stinginess in Our Giving?
- A Wrong Treatment of Husband or Wife?

