

THINGS THAT HINDER OUR PRAYERS

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Living for God and being spiritually-minded takes effort in this old world of sin and sorrow. There are many obstacles, or hindrances, that can slow our spiritual progress. Paul asked the Galatians, “You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?” (Gal. 5:7). Our journey to heaven is too important to allow things of this world to hold us back.

The Scriptures warn us about our prayers being hindered. There are things that can cause us not to pray as we should or when we need to. Prayer is a very important part of our spiritual lives. Lack of prayer leads to spiritual decline. It is important not to allow these things to hinder our prayers.

1) **Discouragement** – Jesus taught His disciples that “men always ought to pray and not lose heart” (Lk. 18:1). We face discouragements in this life. The ups often are followed by the downs. We become discouraged with someone or something, and just don’t feel like making the effort to pray. We may think that it will do no good. This is exactly what Satan wants us to think. Prayer is a lifeline to God’s throne of grace (Heb. 4:16). It is exactly what we need in times of discouragement. “Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees” (Heb. 12:12).

2) **Laziness** – We can become lazy and not pray as we ought. Our minds are so occupied with the problems of the moment that we may forget to give thanks for our food and other blessings of life. Not giving attention to prayer undermines our faithfulness, thus we are told to “pray without ceasing” (1 Thess. 5:17). Let us “show diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish...” (Heb. 6:11-12a).

3) **Marriage Problems** – Husbands are commanded to dwell with their wives “with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered” (1 Pet. 3:7). It is quite clear that relationship problems between husbands and wives can hinder prayer. Selfish attitudes that refuse to obey God and fail to honor the role of one’s mate create a hindrance to prayer. One will not pray for his mate, his marriage, his children, or other matters when he is filled with selfish pride. Being faithful to God and marriage encourages prayer.

4) **Sin** – “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear” (Psa. 66:18). This does not mean that God will not hear our prayer of repentance, but the prayer of one living in sin without any intent to change. The prayers of such ones are not acceptable to God. The sinner needs to turn from his sins!

Dear friend, is anything hindering your prayers? Remove those obstacles today and pray to God without ceasing!

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