

## HINDRANCES TO PRAYER

### 1 Peter 3:1-7

**Introduction:** "Now I lay me down to sleep..." Years ago this was part of a prayer that taught children how to pray. Today many don't pray and many offer worthless prayers. An empty form of prayer is a mockery to God. Those who never sincerely ask of God have no excuse when they stand before Him in judgment. Prayer is like a channel to blessings. It is like a window to God. Prayer helps get our needs met and it is one of the most precious things in a Christian's life. Anything which hinders prayer is very wrong.

### I. WE CAN BE HINDERED FROM PRAYER

1. Lukewarm relationship with God hinders prayer. We can fool others outwardly but we cannot fool God. Our prayer life is like a thermometer with God.
2. We can have too much to do and miss out on prayer.
  - Our business or job demands so much time or our selfish ambitions over ride wisdom.
  - Lots of Christians are useless to their churches for they have used God's time for self.
  - The parable of the rich man and Lazarus, the beggar, point out that the desire for things can be disasterous.
  - Our Church needs our time and maybe some of us need to attempt less and pray more, remember that Jesus took some time off to pray.
3. We can also have too little to do. Who does a wise person go to to get a job done? He/she goes to the busiest person he/she knows.
  - Those with little to do are often the ones who fuss the most and waste other's time.
  - When a Christian is able to retire from his/her life of work, it would seem that he/she would find a lot of ways to serve God.
4. Some lack an ordered life. They are the ones who are always late or behind. There seems to be no appointed time for anything. The day has ended and there has not been any prayer.
  - How much time is spent eating? How much time is spent with friends? How much time is spent with God in prayer?

### II. WE CAN BE HINDERED EVEN WHILE IN PRAYER

1. We can choose the wrong time and place to pray.
  - If company is coming or expecting customers or it's lunch time or family time, that's not a good time to begin to spend time with the Lord in prayer.
  - We need to give to God a suitable time and place. Somewhere where there will be no interference and there will be plenty of time to be alone with God.

2. Our minds can be on worldly matters.
  - Do we take matters from God or to God? "Faith gives peace."
  - The cares of the world confuse our minds and takes our heart away from praying.
  - We get so entangled in the things of the world that we can hardly hold our head up so we need to be careful to not go into prayer with our mind bubbling with worldly matters.
3. Sometimes we are filled with self-pity. There are times when we have every right to feel sorry, down, sad, and want to throw things but those things should drive us to prayer, not the revenge, not hate, nor gossip.
4. We have gone to God with a bad temper. Sometimes we are angry at someone and we have that right to get angry, but when going to God in prayer, it needs to be in peace. Be angry? Yes, but also be forgiving.
5. We have sometimes brought dishonor to God the Father by not living as He wants, we have a cold, indifferent heart and this brings us nothing from God. Misuse of His name, lack of respect, unrepentant over some sin, all will give us a wall between us and God.
6. When we have dishonored the Lord Jesus Christ by any degree of selfishness it does not let Him have control of our lives and labels us as ungrateful and God will not hear.
7. When we dishonor the Holy Spirit by quenching and not listening to Him, our prayers will not be heard.

### **III. WHEN GOD DOESN'T HEAR OUR PRAYERS WE ARE HINDERED**

God will hear a lost person's prayer for forgiveness and mercy. However God doesn't always answer a Christian's prayer.

1. The Christian must be living a holy life. If we don't do Christ's will, He will not hear ours.
2. We must believe that God will and can answer our prayers. We must ask in faith.
3. We must pray according to God's promises. Bring God's promises to Him and claim them.
4. We must pour out our heart in all sincerity.
5. Our desire in our prayers is for God to be glorified, no matter what we may ask.

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. God gives us the right and privilege to ask of Him, but we are to ask in Jesus' name.
2. If we walk contrary to God, then when we pray He will walk contrary to us and not hear.