

REASONS WHY PRAYERS ARE NOT ANSWERED

Henry, Damatie

Matthew 21:22: And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive. John 14:13-14 (NKJV) 13 And whatever you ask in my name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If you ask anything in my name, I will do it.

It was in view of suffering and the power of prayer as a source of strength during the same, that Peter cautioned Christians to conduct their lives that their “*prayers be not hindered*” (1 *Pet. 3:7*).

Prayer can be defined as making your request known to God and believing that He will hear you and grant you your request. Prayer can also be defined as communication to God about the issues of your life. As a believer, the place of prayer can never be overemphasized. Jesus speaking in Luke 18:1, encouraged us to pray always and not faint. However, prayers can be very frustrating when we don't receive answers to our prayers. Today we shall be looking at 15 reasons why prayers are not answered. This will help us understand not only how to pray, but how to receive answers to our prayers. All we need to do is to understand the art of prayer. It takes understanding to make one outstanding in life. When you lack understanding about prayer, you will keep praying like the Pharisees in the bible who never get answers to their prayers. Now let's go into the business of today.

REASON 1: SIN:

Psalm 66:18: If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me

Sin is a primary reason why prayers are not answered. Now I want us to understand this concept. The bible said if i regard iniquity in my heart, not in my life. What does this mean? The bible made it clear that all have sinned and have fallen short of Gods glory, Romans 3:23. As far as sin is concerned, we are all guilty, but thank God for the perfect sacrifice of Christ that has saved us all unconditionally from sin and that has made us righteous before God.

Isaiah 59:1- 2 “Surely the arm of the Lord is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear. ***But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins***

have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear. Proverbs 15:29 The LORD is far from the wicked, but he hears the prayer of the righteous.

Peter declared that “the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous and his ears unto their supplication” (1 Pet.3:12). Yes, the prayers of the righteous person avails much (**Jas. 5:6**)

REASON 2: LACK OF FAITH:

Mark 11:23 For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

In a world of doubt and confusion, how can we have confidence that God is truly listening and responding to our prayers?

Faith is absolute dependency on God. Without faith, it is impossible for God to answer your prayers, Hebrews 11:6. God is not a magician, He is a God of faith, He operates in the realms of faith, for God to show up in your life, you must believe in Him. Many Christians pray to God without faith, they just pray and they walk away forgetting even what they prayed about. Faith is the key to answered prayers. You must believe that you are praying to a living God and you must expect answers from Him. Expectation is an evidence of faith. When you pray in faith, you will always have expectation that your prayers will be answered.

If we have faith and sincerely trust God, we will not be concerned as to whether the answer is "wait" or the answer is "no" or "yes." We must just trust and wait and see if God in His timing will see fit to answer as we have requested, or perhaps He has something better in mind for us. Remember your prayer should end with **"Not my will, Lord, but Your will."** (Luke 22:42). **"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."** Proverbs 3:5,6.

Reason 3: PRAYING AMISS:

James 4:3 Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

Rom 8:26-27 Likewise the spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

1 John 5:14, "...if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us

Praying amiss is praying outside the will of God for your life. 1 John 5:14-15 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that **if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us**. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him. James 4:3 When you ask, you do not receive, because **you ask with wrong motives**, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

Proverbs 16:2 All a person's ways seem pure to them, but motives are weighed by the LORD.

It is not everything that you want, is good for you. When we pray outside the plan of God for our lives, we will often hit the rocks. When we discover Gods plan for our life, it helps us to channel our prayers accordingly. Jesus Christ our Lord also prayed outside Gods plan for His life, when he asked God to take this cup from Him, but immediately He said again, "not my will but thy will be done" Matthew 26:39. The solution to this reason is to search the scriptures and discover Gods plan and purpose for your life and pray in line with that. Ask God to fulfill his plans and purpose for your life and you shall see speedy answers to your prayer.

REASON 4: FEAR

2 Timothy 1:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

Fear is the reverse of faith, while faith is believing in God, fear is believing in the devil or your circumstances. Fear is also faith, but faith in the wrong direction. What you fear, you believe in. When you pray with fear in your heart, God cannot answer you, because God only manifests himself in a faith filled environment. Child of God, do not let fear cripple the faith of God on your inside. No matter how tough your situation might be, you can overcome it by faith. Mark 9:23 tells us that "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him/her that believeth". Praying without faith is praying with fear and they only way to overcome fear is to believe the word of God more. You must learn to trust God more in prayers and you shall overcome.

REASON 5: WORDLESS

Isaiah 43:26 Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified.

The word of God is the only thing that abides forever, Matthew 24:35. Praying without the word of God backing your prayers, is protesting without knowing. It is the word of God that gives potency to your prayers. Just like in the court of law, you cannot plead your case without quoting relevant sections in the law book, the same way, you cannot see breakthrough in your prayer without quoting relevant scriptures from the bible. For instance, if you are believing God for the fruit of the womb, while you are praying, you remind God of His word in Genesis 21:1, Exodus 23:25-26. You challenge Him with His word and you will see The God of answered prayers in action. This is why prayer is not effective without adequate knowledge of the word of God. To be effective in prayers, you must spend time with the word so that you can discover strong reasons why your prayers must be answered.

REASON 6: PRIDE

James 4:6 therefore it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

Pride is a very dangerous thing. Pride simply means overestimation of self. This is the reason why the devil is the devil today. The spirit of pride is an anti-Christ spirit. No proud man can receive answers to His prayers. This is because; God is the one that resists the proud, 1 Peter 5:5-6. A good example is that of the Pharisees and the publican or tax collector, in Luke 18:9-14. We see that the prayer of the Pharisee was not answered because he was full of pride, but God answered and saved the publican. You must reject

pride in your life if you want God to answer your prayers. You must ask God to break you and teach you to be humble, so that your prayers will be answered.

REASON 7: IMPATIENCE

Hebrews 6:12 That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

1 Thessalonians 5:17-18 pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 6:9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

Luke 18:1, Jesus, "spoke a parable to them that men always ought to pray and not lose heart." In the story of Abraham, God promised a son to Abraham. But Abraham became impatient when Sarah didn't bear him a son, so he took his wife's servant as his wife. Abraham tried to solve the problem in his own way and the result was disastrous. We are still seeing the results of his mistake today. God eventually answered his prayer at the time when He saw it was best for Abraham.

REASON 8: RELIGION

Matthew 6:5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.

Religious prayers are prayers that are prayed just for a show. In the days of Jesus, the Pharisees were very religious people, they thought they were close to God, but never knew they were very far from God. They love to pray in street corners and standing in the synagogues. They love it when people see them and applaud them. But that is all they get from God, the applause of men. Prayer is not a religious exercise; it is the raw communication with God by faith and expecting instant answers. Religious prayers cannot be mixed with faith because of its carnal and fleshly motives. The solution to this is being in the spirit always and seeking God in spirit and in truth.

REASON 9: VAIN REPETITION

Matthew 6:7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

Vain repetition is going round circles in prayer. It means not being specific or going straight to the point. Vain repetition means saying a lot of things and yet meaning nothing in your prayers. The Pharisees in those days because they wanted the people to see them as spiritual, they prayed for long hours just talking out of point. We must learn to be specific in our prayers. After giving God thanks, we must learn to go straight to the point and tell God what we need.

REASON 10: NEGATIVE CONFESSION

Matthew 17:20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

In this kingdom, you shall only have what you say, Mark 11:23. Many times when we pray, we ruin our prayers with negative confessions. What you say is what you will see. You cannot expect God to answer your breakthrough prayers when you always talk defeat. You cannot talk failure all the time and expect God to answer your prayers of success. Negative confessions are poisonous to your prayers. Your confession must align with your prayers for God to answer you. Its important for you to know that, your life will always move in the direction of your mouth. If you talk failure you see failure, if you talk success, you see success. This is because life and death are in the power of the tongue Proverbs 18:21.

REASON 11: STRIFE/ UNFORGIVENESS:

Ephesians 4:32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Mark 11:25-26 And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.

Matthew 6:14 For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

Anger, bitterness, malice, unforgiveness are all products of strife and all these are spiritual poisons to your prayers life. When your heart is bitter towards someone, when your heart is full of hatred and unforgiveness, you cannot flow on the altar of prayer. I understand that some people have offended you, some have even betrayed you but think about how we offend God daily as Christians, yet for Christ sake He forgives us. Ask the Lord to heal your heart and wash away the pain so that you can move on with your life. When your heart is free of Strife, your prayers shall be answered.

REASON 12: HINDERING SPIRITS

Daniel 10:12 Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. 10:13 But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.

Hindering spirits are territorial spirits that controls a given territory. These spirits can attempt to resist our prayer, which is why we must be persistent in prayers. As long as we don't give up on our prayer altar, we will surely overcome these forces. Daniel was praying for his nation and the demon of Persia opposed his prayers for 21 days, but Daniel never gave up, he continued to pray until God sent an arch angel Michael to subdue the enemy. Persistence in prayers will always lead to answers to prayers.

REASON 13: FOUNDATIONAL PROBLEMS

Psalms 11:3 If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?

Foundational problems are very serious problems. Your foundation is your roots, and until you deal with it, you may continue to struggle in life. Many believers were born into families that are under strange demonic oppression. Even after they are born again, though their spirit is saved but through the flesh they are still trapped in this demonic cage. Take for instance there are some families that suffer from late marriage, it runs in the family, its an evil pattern, even after you are born again, you have to violently separate yourself by force in order to enjoy victory in life. Dealing with foundational problems is attacking your problems from the source. Jabez knew that his problems started with his birth name, the same with Jacob. No matter what you pray for, until you deal with your foundation, you may keep struggling. How do you deal with your foundation, simple, through prayer and fasting.

REASON 14: SELFISHNESS

Matthew 15:8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.

Selfishness is praying with the wrong motive. God searches the heart of man and He knows why we do what we do. When you pray with the wrong motive, you don't receive answers to your prayers. For instance praying against someone just because they don't agree with you is a wrong prayer, which will not be answered. We must pray for the right reasons in order to get answers.

REASON 15: INGRATITUDE

Philippians 4:6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

Gratitude is a catalyst for answered prayers, when we thank Him for what He has done, we see more of His goodness in our lives. As a matter of fact, every prayers starts and ends with thanksgiving. Whatever you are not grateful for you will most likely lose. Ingratitude will always lead to unanswered prayers. Thanksgiving is the only solution to ingratitude.

CONCLUSION:

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven... 2 Chronicles 7 vs 14

Matt 7:11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

I believe you are blessed by these words; these are some of the common reasons why many of our prayers are not answered. But when we begin to understand how to overcome all these reasons, we see our prayer life improve from glory to glory. I can tell you with authority that when I pray, God hears and He answers me. I have prayed my way out of countless situations in life. You too can have the same testimony.