

Why We Shouldn't Abandon Prayer

Topical

This message examines four hindrances to prayer that can contribute to a diminished prayer life.

- **Hindrance #1: BELIEVERS FORGET PRAYER'S PURPOSES.**

Primary Purposes of Prayer

- Prayer is how I maintain my relationship with God.

Whom have I in heaven but you? I desire you more than anything on earth. ²⁶My health may fail, and my spirit may grow weak, but God remains the strength of my heart; he is mine forever. Psalm 73:25, 26 (New Living Translation)

“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 men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. ⁶But 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. ⁷And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.” Matthew 6:5-8 (New International Version)

Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge. Psalm 62:8 (NIV)

- Prayer is how God directs my life. (See 1 Peter 4:2)

If we are living now by the Holy Spirit, let us follow the Holy Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. Galatians 5:25 (NLT, 1996)

- God communicates His moral will.
- God communicates His individual will.

If you need wisdom—if you want to know what God wants you to do—ask him, and he will gladly tell you. James 1:5a (NLT, 1996)

- Prayer is how I receive help from God.

I lift up my eyes to the hills—where does my help come from? ²My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth. Psalm 121:1-2 (NIV)

Then Asa called to the LORD his God and said, “LORD, there is no one like you to help the powerless against the mighty. Help us, O LORD our God, for we rely on you, and in your name we have come against this vast army. O LORD, you are our God; do not let man prevail against you.” 2 Chronicles 14:11 (NIV)

He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us, ¹¹as you help us by your prayers. Then many will give thanks on our behalf for the gracious favor granted us in answer to the prayers of many. 2 Corinthians 1:10-11 (NIV)

- **Hindrance #2: WE HAVE A LACK OF CONSISTENCY.**

Be . . . faithful in prayer. Romans 12:12 (NIV)

. . . be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. Ephesians 6:18b (NIV)

- **Hindrance #3: WE HANG ON TO SIN.**

If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened. ¹⁹But truly God has listened; he has attended to the voice of my prayer. Psalm 66:18-19 (English Standard Version)

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. James 5:16 (NIV)

- **Hindrance #4: WE EXPERIENCE DISILLUSIONMENT WITH GOD.**

. . . “Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised.” Job 1:21 (NIV)

. . . “I'm convinced: ²You can do anything and everything. Nothing and no one can upset your plans. ³You asked, ‘Who is this muddying the water, ignorantly confusing the issue, second-guessing my purposes?’ I admit it. I was the one. I babbled on about things far beyond me, made small talk about wonders way over my head . . . ⁶I'm sorry—forgive me. I'll never do that again, I promise! I'll never again live on crusts of hearsay, crumbs of rumor.” Job 42:1-3, 6 (The Message)