

3 Prayer Killers

(1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

You ever found yourself wondering why God wasn't hearing and responding to your prayer? It is not unusual for Christians to find themselves feeling frustration when it comes to prayer.

In fact, it is interesting that when our prayers seem to fail, usually our first instinct is to blame God and charge Him with not staying true to the promises made in His word. The truth is, when our prayers seem to be going unanswered, either one of two things have occurred.

- First, God has answered our prayers, but not in the way that we desire. Paul learned to accept when God responded to his requests with a "no." See 2 Corinthians 12:7-10.
- Second, we are clearly not doing some things right in our lives.

Let's consider three things that can stand in the way of our prayers.

- **Sin**

- The way we live has a huge impact on whether or not God will respond to our prayers.
 - If we have wickedness in our hearts, God will not hear us (Psalm 66:16-20).
 - Sin can make our prayers an abomination before the Lord (Proverbs 15:29; 28:9).
 - Sin can serve as a barrier between us and God (Isaiah 59:1-2).
 - Also see James 5:16; 1 Peter 3:7, 12.
- Whenever we begin to feel like our prayers are not being answered, the first thing we need to do is examine our lives. If we are not living right, we need to remove the sin by repenting and confessing our sins to God (1 John 1:8-10).

- **Unforgiveness**

- If we want God to respond to our prayers, then we must be willing to forgive others (Mark 11:25-26).
 - It is not right to expect God to extend to us what we are unwilling to extend to others (Matthew 18:21-35).
 - If God was unwilling to forgive, none of us would be saved!
- Is holding a grudge really worth cutting off our communication with God and losing our souls?

- **Insincerity**

- For any act of worship to be acceptable to God, it must flow from a sincere heart. It must flow from a heart that is void of hypocrisy.
- Jesus stresses this in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6:5-8)
 - God doesn't want us to pray for show (Matthew 6:5-6).
 - God doesn't want us to recite empty words (Matthew 6:7-8).

Conclusion: Don't let any of these things kill your prayers!

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