

Twelve Reasons Why Prayer Is Hindered

Scripture Reading: 1 Peter 3.1-12

From reading Scripture and our studies in prayer it is obvious that it is God's plan to richly endow his children with every spiritual blessing in Christ (Ephesians 1.3, Romans 8.23), yet we seem to live contrary to this. Instead the lives of many Christians appear to be powerless, purposeless and provision-less. Has a once living faith deteriorated into mere religion?. What has gone wrong? It may be time for some spiritual diagnosis. Here is a check list drawn from the pages of Scripture which may bring refreshed understanding, restored commitment and renewed blessing. Get alone with God and on your knees complete this check list of your spiritual health!

- ❑ **Sin in the Life** This is basic to so many problems. Sin can be outright transgression (1 John 3.4), hidden sin that only you and God know (Psalm 51.5-10), an omission of a known way (James 4.17), a failure of faith (Romans 14.23). Sin takes many insidious forms. Let the Holy Spirit put His finger on any sin in your life, then confess it. Psalm 66.18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear [me] (RV) Also in Isaiah 59.2, 1 Peter 3.12.
- ❑ **A Divided Heart.** God will not share His glory with another (Matthew. 4.10, Luke 4.8) Note the first commandment Exodus 20.2-7, Jeremiah 29.13, 2 Chronicles 15.15. & 16.9. Ezekiel 14.2 & 3 Son of man, these men have taken their idols into their hearts, and set the stumbling block of their iniquity before their faces; should I let myself be inquired of at all by them? (RV)
- ❑ **A Lack of Compassion.** Christian living is giving, and the very essence of the love of God (John 3.16) Compassion to our kin (1 Timothy 5.8),

our brothers and sisters in Christ (1 John 4.20, 1John 4.11) and people generally (Luke 11.41). Beware of a callous, hardened heart which spreads to a stiff neck. Proverbs 21.13 He who closes his ear to the cry of the poor will himself cry out and not be heard. (RV)

- ❑ **Neglect of the Word of God** leads to all kind of problems. The Bible not only instructs and guides us but keeps us from sin (Psalm 119.11,66,105). Why are we so soon to neglect it? Proverbs 28.9 If one turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination. (RV)
- ❑ **A Miserly Attitude Toward God** brings a frugal response from God. The Bible abounds with such admonition as Isaiah 41.17-18, Ezekiel 22.29-31. Malachi 3.10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour {Heb. empty out} you out a blessing, that [there shall] not [be room] enough [to receive it].

- ❑ **Broken relationships**, broken hearts. Have we hurt people? Ephesians 4.31-2 & 2., James 4.1-2. We need to put it to rights. Exodus 22.1-6. Restitution should be full in measure to the hurt done. Matthew 5.23 So if you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. (RV)
- ❑ **An Unforgiving Spirit.** Look up 1 Corinthians 8.12, Colossians 3.13, Matthew 18.15-22 & 35 (To treat as a heathen and publican does not mean rejection, but prayerful compassionate witness to Christ. Note the context) Mark 11.25 And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against any one; so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses."
- ❑ **A Lack of Faith in God.** This is a basic tenet of prayer Hebrews 11.6. Wavering faith produces wobbly Christians. Everything comes to the Christian by faith through Jesus Christ James 1.6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. For that person must not suppose that a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways, will receive anything from the Lord.
- ❑ **Prayerlessness as Unbelief.** Note the example in Colossians 1.9, 1 Samuel 12.23, then 1Thessalonians 5.17, James 4.1 What causes wars, and what causes fightings among you? Is it not your passions that are at war in your members? *You desire and do not have: so you kill. And*
- ❑ **Broken Marriage Vows**, and other family relationships Ephesians 6.1-3 see verse 8. 1 Peter 3.7 Likewise you husbands, live considerately with your wives, bestowing honour on the woman as the weaker gender, since you are joint heirs of the grace of life, in order that your prayers may not be hindered.
- ❑ **An Unworthy Motive** We need to ask ourselves why! Read Jeremiah 17.9, James 1.26, Psalm 51.. Morbid introspection is not recommended, but we should be continuously aware of our motives. James 4.3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. (RV)
- ❑ **Confidence From Knowing God.** This is a major theme of the New Testament Boldness is used once in the OT, but 10 times in the NT. The sons of God should live up to their birthright. Confidence before God should engender boldness before man. First read Hebrews 10.19-23, Ephesians 3.12, 1 John 4.17, then see how this factor directed the behaviour of the apostles. Acts 4.13, 29 & 31, 2 Corinthians 3.12. (Here plainness means boldness) Meekness and boldness are not mutually exclusive. 1 John 3.21 Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God; and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him.