



Message Series Guide

Without Ceasing

Part 8 – Barriers to Our Prayers

Selected Scriptures

Unanswered prayer will test our faith. Weeks, or months, even years, of waiting on a particular prayer request can tempt us to despair. Yet God's Word gives us wisdom to help build a strong prayer life. With all the good that unanswered prayer can provide, Scripture reveals a category of unanswered prayer that we ourselves have caused. Sometimes we are the architects, building the ceiling that our prayers hit. Unanswered prayer is not always the result of God's telling us, "no", but rather that we have set up barriers that hinder our prayers. The Bible says God looks to and fro throughout the earth to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose hearts are perfect toward Him (2 Chronicles 16:9). When we are aware of these barriers to prayer and how to overcome them, we will experience the joy of a strong and healthy prayer life.

READ:

**Mark 11:24-25 • 1 John 4:19-20 • 1 Peter 3:7 • James 4:3 • Isaiah 59:1-2 • Psalm 66:18-20
Proverbs 15:29 • Hebrews 11:6 • James 1:6-7 • Matthew 9:28-30 • 1 John 5:14**

- Describe a time when you prayed, and you felt like your prayers were not being heard? How did you respond? How did God eventually answer your prayer?
- In what ways do broken relationships hinder our prayer life? Why must we always be willing to forgive others and restore broken relationships? According to 1 Peter 3:7, how does the way we treat our spouse impact our prayers?
- What are some things people pray for from the wrong motives? What is the result when we pray with impure motives? How can we pray for the right things for the right reasons?
- Why should followers of Christ continually confess and repent of sin? How is confession and repentance related to prayer? If God hears the prayers of the righteous, how do we become righteous?
- According to James 1:6-7, what does lack of faith produce? What are the results of faithless prayers? How can our growing faith impact the depth and fullness of our prayer life?
- What does it mean to "pray in God's will?" How do we know God's will? What can we assume if God's answer to our prayer is different from the way we thought He would/should answer?

DISCUSS:

- Describe a time when you prayed for something with the wrong motives? What was the result? What did you learn from that experience? How can we be sure that we are praying with right motives?
- Paul pleaded that God would remove the "thorn from his side" (2 Corinthians 12:7-10). How do we make sense of the fact that God did not remove Paul's "thorn?" How does this relate to prayer and God's will?
- Which barrier to prayer do you most often run into in your prayer life? How will you overcome that barrier?

PRAY:

Pray that God will help you overcome the barriers that hinder you from experiencing a healthy prayer life.

RESPOND:

This week, identify a barrier that you often encounter in your prayer life. Make a commitment to overcome that barrier through restoration of relationships, instilling pure motives, repentance of sin, increasing faith or by praying for God's will to be done in your situation.