

UNDERSTANDING THE PURPOSE AND POWER OF PRAYER

(Principles from Dr. Myles Munroe book with same title)

Hindrances to Answered Prayer

1. Sin--let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us (KJV)

Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. (NIV)

And throwing off everything that hinders us and especially the sin that so easily entangles us, let us keep running with endurance the race set before us (ISV International Standard Version)

What problems does sin cause for the believer?

2. Fear – “To fear God” doesn’t mean “be scared to approach Him.”

- Fear drains the energy from your body
- Worry without profit
- Faith in what can go wrong rather than faith in what could go right

3. Guilt--constant sense of being condemned by God—always guilty

- Romans 8:1-2 there is no condemnation...
- Ashamed of some things but God can still use us---Moses, Paul, Peter, Matthew, Rahab
- Micah—“who is like the Lord” (7:18, 19 NIV) Who is a God like you, who pardons sin & forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy. You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot & hurl all our iniquities into the **depths of the sea.**
- He doesn’t go fishing for your sins!

4. Feelings of Inferiority – not believing we’re worthy enough to receive an answer; low opinion of self means person doesn’t know the value God places on them.

- *Eph. 1:4 - According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.*
- *Heb. 4:16 Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy & find grace in our time of need.*
- What a person knows & feels about himself plays a significant role in how he approaches God in prayer.
- Prayers are hindered because people don’t believe they deserve an answer.
- **Luke 15:11-24; son— hits rock bottom financially, physically, emotionally, spiritually (v. 19) I am no longer worthy..; (v. 21 son said, no longer worthy..) v. 22-24 but the father..says. “bring the best for my son”!**

5. Doubt – Do I believe my own prayers? If not, why? If so, what am I doing now in anticipation of the answer which may come later?

- Mark 9:17 Man's son speechless/possessed w/a spirit; vs. 19-faithless generation.; vs. 22 father—if you can do anything; have compassion on us; vs. 23 if you can believe all things are possible to him who believes; vs. **24 father---Lord, help my unbelief;**
- Disciples wondered why they couldn't heal boy—Jesus-vs. 29 this can only happen thru prayer & fasting.
- When we pray—confidence—move toward the fulfillment
- 4 men carrying their friend—Mark 2; vs. 5 sins forgiven; vs 11 & 12—pick up bed & walk

6. Wrong Motives---improper asking—James 4:3 (ask amiss)

- Ask for forgiveness if there are selfish & self-promoting motives over against the will of God.