



Harvest Warriors **NEWSLETTER**



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Warring to Harvest

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Hindrances to

? ? ?

PRAYER

During these past couple of months, I, Rebecca, have been lead by the Lord to study the issue of pray during my quiet times. I have been greatly helped in this endeavor by R.A. Torrey in his book *Prayer and Faith*, and by Finney in his book *Power, Passion and Prayer*. I do not claim to be an expert on the subject of prayer, rather, prayer is something that I struggle with. I want to share with you a few of the things the Holy Spirit has been

pointing out to me, in hopes that you will be helped just as I have.

Let's get honest. So many of us ask others to pray for us for three major reasons:

** *because our own prayers are not getting answered, and we hope that God will answer someone else*

** because we do not have confidence that God will answer our prayers

** because we KNOW we are not putting enough quality time into prayer to feel we would get an answer from God

Let's be honest now, hasn't this been the case in your life at some point? I believe this is common to most Christians' experience. So, I want to bring to your attention some of the major things that hinder us from getting answers to our prayers, and keep us from having the confidence that God will indeed hear and answer us.

We Pray With Wrong Motives

"You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures." James 4:3

"Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Cor. 10:31

"And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." John 14:13

The next time you start to pray, STOP! First sit down and think about *what* you are going to ask God for, and *why* you are asking for it. Do you know that God not only takes note of what we are asking for, but He also examines our hearts to see WHY we are asking?

The WHAT we are asking for may not be wrong, but nine times out of ten God does not answer us because the reasons we are asking for it are wrong.

Do you know that there is one operating principle in God's kingdom that must rule our whole lives? It is: *everything we do, say, ask for, or think, must bring glory to God.* Most of us never stop to think about God's glory, except occasionally during a praise and worship session at church. Even then, we don't really understand what it means to bring glory to God. What, exactly, does the word *glory* mean? Originally the word *glory* made reference to an opinion or estimation in which one is held. Then the word came to denote the reputation, good standing, and esteem given to a person. It progressed to honor or glory given to peoples, nations, and individuals. The New Testament word for glory becomes splendor, radiance, and majesty centered in Jesus and God

the Father. (Word Wealth, John 2:11, *Spirit Filled Life Bible*)

You see, God is very concerned with His reputation! God IS everything that is wonderful, majestic and splendid! *Our lives are to be lived in such a way that everything we do and say points to Who and What God IS!* Why? So that others can come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and come to see just how wonderful our God is.

Now, back to our prayers. We may have a whole list of things that we are asking for, BUT, why do we want these things? Have we ever sat down to think about it and see if what we are asking for will result in other people seeing just how wonderful our God is? (That is, give glory to God.) Or are we asking for our own comfort, or our own pleasure?

You see, in the scripture quoted in John, Jesus said that He would answer whatever we *ask in order to bring glory to the Father.* If we ask for something that will NOT bring glory to the Father, then God won't answer us. If we ask for something which we desire in our hearts for our own pleasure rather than God's glory, then God won't answer us.

The next time you start to pray, STOP!
First sit down and think about *what* you are going to ask God for, and *why* you are asking for it.

When the Holy Spirit drove this point home to me, it put a whole new light on my prayers. I realize that I haven't spent nearly enough time thinking about God's glory! Am I living in such a way as to show how wonderful God is to other people? Am I asking for things in my prayers that will bring glory to God? Frankly, in some cases, I don't know. So what is the solution?

"Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God." Romans 8:26-27

The Holy Spirit will show us how to pray if we will just take the time to ask Him! When it comes to prayer, the Holy Spirit is our teacher. I find that my most effective prayers come only after I have spend considerable time seeking the Lord and studying His word, asking the Lord HOW to pray, and WHAT to pray for.

For instance, maybe you are married to a man who is not a Christian. If you were a Christian when you married him, then you directly disobeyed God's Word in the first place, and you need to ask God's forgiveness for that sin. (2 Cor. 6) Now you are terribly unhappy, and there is a terrible struggle in your home because your husband is leading your children into all sorts of things that go against God's Word. You have prayed and prayed for your husband's salvation because you are so weary with the continual struggle in your home. That is a wrong motive. You are seeking merely your own pleasure and comfort. But, if you ask the Lord to move on your heart so that you come to the place where you *genuinely grieve* because your husband is rebelling against God and bringing disgrace to Him, then your prayers will be answered much more quickly! When your heart wants only God's glory, you will ask for your husband's salvation in order that God may be glorified through his conversion. You will then, in your prayers give God full control over exactly what needs to happen in your life and the life of your husband to bring him to Christ.

Too many times church congregations and pastors pray for revival simply so that more people will come into the church and thus improve the finances of the church. God will never answer such motives!

Sit down, and spend some time prayerfully considering this principle. Ask the Holy Spirit to examine your heart and reveal to you exactly what is in it. Remember, our own hearts can deceive us.

(Jer. 17:9) *How does your heart need to change so that you now ask only for things that will bring glory to God? If you are sincere in asking the Lord to show you, He will.* What are your true motives? Why are you asking for the things you are asking for? Do you want out of a difficult situation? Maybe God wants to keep you in that situation, but enable you to walk victoriously in the midst of it to bring glory to Himself.

Are you demanding that God send you a husband or wife or children? Why? Did you ever stop to think that perhaps God could work in such a way in your life that would bring more glory to Him if you didn't have those things? Once our hearts begin to be centered on bringing glory to God, our prayer requests will change, and God will be quick to answer us.

Sin In Our Life Blocks Our Prayers

**“Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened,
That is cannot save;
Nor His ear heavy,
That it cannot hear.
But your iniquities have separated you from your God;
And your sins have hidden His face from you,
So that He will not hear.” Isaiah 59:1-2**

This scripture clearly shows us that unconfessed and undealt with sin makes it impossible for God to answer our prayers, even though the things we are praying for are entirely according to His will.

If you have never taken the time to thoroughly cleanse your life, you need to do so. Write to me and send me your mailing address, and I will send you a handout to help you go through this process. I cannot tell you how important this is!

This scripture clearly shows us that unconfessed and undealt with sin makes it impossible for God to answer our prayers...

**“Catch us the foxes,
The little foxes that spoil the vines,
For our vines have tender grapes.”
Song of Solomon 2:15**

**“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
Be acceptable in Your sight . . .”
Psalm 19:14**

The sins that most often block our prayer life, are the hidden and secret sins that we justify to ourselves. They are the little things that when they come up, we have a “feeling” that they are not pleasing to God, but we don't have a firm scripture that says “Thou shalt not . . .” so we justify them. If you are struggling to obtain an answer to prayer, you should ask the Lord to reveal to you the hidden sins in your life. When He does bring something to your mind, don't jump to justify that thing. Instead agree with God. Confess that thing as sin and put it out of your life. Too often we say, “Oh Lord, IF this thing is wrong in Your sight, I will give it up.” You already KNOW it is wrong because the Lord has brought it to your attention. Instead you must say, “Oh Lord, please forgive me for this sin, I agree with you that it is sin, and am putting it out of my life, please help me to do this.”

Remember, God's forgiveness is instantaneous! Once you confess a sin, you are forgiven and cleansed immediately. The block to your prayers will be removed at once.

Idols In Our Hearts

“Now some of the elders of Israel came to me and sat before me. And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, “Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts, and put before them that which causes them to stumble into iniquity. Should I let Myself be inquired of at all by them?” Ezekiel 14 :1-3

Most Christians today do not set up literal idols in their homes and worship them – such things as statues of Buddah or other gods. However, most all Christians have “idols” in their hearts. What is an idol in your heart? *It is anything that you desire or value so much that you will sin to get it. It is also anything that means more to you than God or His commandments.*

Let me give you some examples:

Some people want love and marriage so much that they fall into sexual sin over and over again. The “Idol that causes them to stumble into iniquity” is the desire for love from another human being. The desire for attention.

Some people want wealth so much that they are willing to lie, cheat, steal, and neglect God's kingdom in order to get it. Do you cheat just a little bit on your taxes? Then you have an idol in your heart – money. Do you refuse to give when the Lord prompts you to give? Do you lie or cheat at work or in business to get ahead? Then you have an idol in your heart.

Do you desire to please your spouse so much that you are willing to neglect God's kingdom and engage in various social pursuits that are not pleasing to the Lord to please him/her? Then you have your spouse as an idol in your heart.

Do you love your children so much that you are willing to allow them to do and get involved in things that are sinful or not pleasing to the Lord? Are you supporting financially an adult child who is living in sin? Then that child is an idol in your heart. Almost every day I am contacted by someone who is in terrible financial difficulties because they are supporting an adult child who is living in sin or not working. They cannot



understand why their prayers are not answered. Simple. Their child is their idol. By not demanding that that child obey God's word, they are putting their child before God, and therefore come under God's discipline. No wonder their prayers are not being answered!

What idols are in your heart? You really won't know

until you ask the Lord to show them to you. Ask and ask again, with total sincerity. If you do this, God will show you. BUT, you must be willing to listen, no matter how painful it is. Removing idols from our hearts is terribly painful. We must have God's help to do this.

Unless you remove the idols from your heart, you will never have an effective prayer life.

Unforgiveness

“And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.” Mark 11:25-26

Without a doubt, unforgiveness is one of the greatest problems within the body of Christ. *As long as there is just one person in your life whom you have not completely forgiven, your prayers will go unanswered.*

I have written in detail about how to forgive in my book *Becoming A Vessel of Honor*, chapter 8.

**...all Christians
have “idols” in
their hearts.**

If God isn't answering your prayers, then you had better search your life. Do you have bitterness or anger or hatred toward anyone? If so, then you have not forgiven them.

Stinginess in Our Giving

“For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities. Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account. Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God. And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in Glory by Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:16-19

How we love to quote the last part of this section of scripture: *“And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”* But what we don't do is include the previous two verses that go with this statement. WHY could the Apostle Paul be so confident that God WOULD supply everything the Philippians needed? *Because of their sacrifice in giving.* If you are not a generous giver, then you

CANNOT claim the promise in this verse! All of God's promises are conditional, this one included.

There are so many scriptures on this topic that I cannot include them all here. This is an area in your life that you need to examine and ask the Lord to deal with you about. Are you a giver? Do you give only because you feel you have to? Do you give grudgingly? Do you give only the bare minimum you feel God will accept? Do you get angry when a love offering is taken up, or do you simply not think about love offerings at all. Are you ready to give in your everyday life when you come across someone in need?

Do you give only to receive in return? Do you harbor anger and unforgiveness at someone who has borrowed from you and not repaid the debt? Remember, Jesus told us that if we lend to someone, we should not expect to be paid back. (Luke 6:34) I know many Christians who have destroyed their prayer life over this one thing. Someone borrowed from them and then was not able to pay them back. They became very angry and set out to destroy this person. In so doing, they just blocked God from answering any of their prayers.

Difficulties Between Husband and Wife

“Husbands, likewise, dwell with them [wives] with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.” 1 Peter 3:7

Difficulties between husbands and wives is one of the greatest hindrances to Christians receiving answers to their prayers. *If your relationship with your spouse is not Godly and loving, then you need not expect God to hear and answer your prayers!*

Do you fly into rages at your spouse? Do you hold bitterness and anger toward your spouse for something he/she has done in the past? Are you jealous of your spouse? Do you lie to your spouse? Do you attempt to manipulate and control your spouse? Are you sarcastic, critical, and put down your spouse to others and to him/her? Do you NOT value your marriage relationship with your spouse above ALL others except the Lord? Do you put your children before your spouse?

Do you put your job before your spouse? The list goes on and on. If you do any of these things, then your prayers will be greatly hindered.

God wants our whole heart and our undivided attention when we pray.

Lack of Fervency

“... The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.” James

5:16

So many of our prayers are not answered simply because we don't really care about praying them. *God wants our whole heart and our undivided attention when we pray.* Too many of our prayers are emotionless, brief and careless. I think one of the reasons why the Prayer Basket we have helps people to get answers to their prayers is because they have to put some effort into writing out their prayers. They have to think about what they want to pray about, they have to be specific, and they have to take the time and effort to write them down. God wants intensity in our prayers. He wants us to be serious and committed to what we are praying. If we don't care enough to be intense in our praying, why should God care enough to answer?

I know this is quite a list, but don't get discouraged. Take some time. Sit down with a pen and paper and pray through this list. Ask the Lord to show you the things in your life that are blocking Him from answering your prayers. Then write them down! Repent and confess them and ask the Lord to forgive and cleanse you.

Remember this. *If there is something in your life blocking God from answering your prayers, no one else is going to be able to get God to answer you!* Asking someone else to pray for you will not help. Yes, there is much power when God's people join together in unity in prayer, but here I am talking about your personal problems and prayers. *If you aren't getting answers, don't think that someone else can pressure God to answer you. It*



is up to you to go to the Lord and find out what is hindering your own prayers. This takes humility, time and effort, but I can tell you it is well worth the trouble!



Harvest Warriors
Ministries
Wishes You and Yours
a Joyous Christmas

May You Never Forget
The Reason for the
Holiday Season



Rebecca &
Daniel



Upcoming Trip to Africa

I leave on November 26th for Cameroon, Africa. I will not get back until Dec. 15th. I have been much in prayer for this trip and ask you to pray for me as well. First, I need protection. With the Muslim uprising around the world, this will trip will have some dangers. Also, it will be very long and tiring. I have to fly from Little Rock, Arkansas, to Dallas, Texas, then to London, England, then to Logos, Nigeria, then on to Cameroon. I am doing some better health wise, but the physical drain of the trip and the ministry will be intense. It is my burning desire to see souls saved and set free. I have told the Lord that if He will do a miracle and enable me to physically accomplish all that I need to do, that I will, on my part, do my very best to teach His people and bring the lost to Christ. It is my earnest desire that God Himself will do a mighty work in that country. I have been told that they are expecting some 30,000 people to attend the meetings in the two cities. I very much appreciate your standing with me in prayer for this trip.



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You are welcome to copy any of our newsletters to give to other people. If you know of someone who would like to receive our newsletter, if they live inside the U.S., please send their name and address to us. We will be happy to add them to our mailing list.

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Love Offerings

With all of my heart I want to thank those of you who have helped us with extra these past several months. Thanks to God's faithfulness and your generosity, my medical bills have been completely met! We pray fervently and continually for those of you who give to our ministry. It is our heart's desire that God will richly bless you and your families.

We are a faith-supported ministry. That means, we are directly dependant on your obedience to God to meet our needs and keep the many facets of this ministry going.

Please send your offering in the enclosed envelope. Thank you so much.

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