

Hindrances To Prayer

by Pierre Chiasson

This sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering to God, acknowledging His kingship, and the need for genuine prayer. It addresses hindrances to prayer such as sin, lack of faith, ignoring the Word of God, pride, losing heart, and the significance of setting aside dedicated time for prayer in solitude.

Scripture: Matthew 6:6, James 4:6, Luke 18:10, James 5:16, John 15:7, 1 John 5:14, James 4:3, Luke 18:1

Topics: "Surrender to God", "The Power of Prayer"

Description

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Transcript

Father we come in the name of Jesus Christ and we acknowledge our need of you Lord. We acknowledge oh God that you are King of Kings and Lord of Lords and that where we have the privilege of conversing with you the creator of the universe. So we bow before you Father we give you thanks that you would even regard us oh Lord and yet not only regard us but love us and not only love us but lift us up to yourself.

Lord you're not like someone who passes by and maybe has a little bit of pity on some poor beggar on the street and gives him a little bit but Lord you've given yourself completely away to us that we might be lifted up. You were broken and humbled and you became far less than a beggar on the street especially in the eyes of men and yet you did it to save us. So we worship you, we thank you, we welcome you into this meeting because without you we can do nothing.

The best of words will fall to the ground and bear no fruit in our lives without the working of your spirit. I acknowledge this oh God and look to you to have mercy to speak into our souls and to Lord transform us more into the likeness of Jesus. So open our ears and our hearts and let the seed of the Word of God find rich soil to grow in tonight in Jesus name.

Amen. Hindrances to prayer. Some of these subjects we've covered in the little sessions we've had on prayer some of these verses but I thought it would be a good thing for us to go through some of the hindrances to prayer that we can experience in our lives and I suppose if it was the first thing I was to ask you what would be the greatest hindrance to prayer you'd probably agree that it would probably be sin.

That sin in our lives can have a tremendous dampening effect on prayer. That's not to say that of course we know that an unbeliever has no recourse on the basis of coming on the even the righteousness of Christ. At first God does hear sinners cries because of his goodness and mercy but he makes it clear that if we want to have an effective prayer life effective communion with God we have to have communion with God and sin breaks that communion that vital connection in relationship with him.

Psalm 66 18 says if I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear. That's pretty strong words isn't it? If I regard iniquity in my heart if I'm aware of sin in my life and I don't deal with it the Lord will not hear. You know in the world and I think I've mentioned this before but you see it on Facebook all the time I need help I need prayer and lots of people put the prayer emoji or symbols up and praying praying praying praying and you know I have to say that I'm a little bit skeptical of how much actual praying is happening.

It's become more of an expression thoughts and prayers whatever it is and I think I've mentioned this a lot when I sell somebody I'm gonna pray for them first thing I do is pray for them because if I don't I can forget but I wonder how much real praying is going on in the world and even how much real praying is going on in the church. I think I've already mentioned and I but I bears mentioning again that sometimes prayers don't get past the ceiling. I don't want my prayers to just go to the ceiling and that's it.

I want them to go into the ear of God and here it says the Lord will not hear. So when it comes to prayer if I would you say it's a good idea for a little bit of search me Oh God Psalm 139 and try and try me see if there's any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting that we need the Spirit of God to say a humble heart that says Lord show me if there's sin in my life because what's the point if I'm going to deal with and not deal with sin the Lord will not hear. Isaiah 115 says this when you spread out your hands I will hide my eyes from you even though you make many prayers I will not hear.

Your hands are full of blood wash yourself make yourselves clean put away the evil of your doing from before my eyes cease to do evil. This passage goes on to say come now let us reason together though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool. Here it's so graphic it's not just you know some casual praying person this is someone who is making many prayers in other words there there's a fervency there there's even perhaps a zeal in prayer which is I'm not hearing you I'm not hearing you because you're living wickedly because your life is wicked this is where the world has adopted one and I don't say all of the world I know there's other people that say you know prayers are stupid and everything like that there's a great swath of people in the world who believe in prayer but holiness no so they want prayer without holiness they want prayer without a vital living connection with God they want prayer as a backup as a as a rescue plan for when there's a crisis in their life that's very common it really is and a lot of people believe in prayer but there's no really understanding of prayer and therefore there's there's such a hindrance to prayer in their lives because there's no connection with God and there's a sin in our lives I mean without the Lord without salvation the God is not under any obligation to answer any prayer he has obligated himself to answer prayer if his according to his will and if we are if we are living right we are abiding in him but he's not under any obligation now God is merciful and I would never go to the unbelievers and say don't pray because sometimes God will answer prayer to testify to them as I think I've mentioned a verse before in Romans says the goodness of God Romans chapter 2 is to lead you to repentance so God will be gracious at times and even answer the prayers of unbelievers to speak to their lives and say I'm really here but it is not just to leave them in there getting answers and and not walking with God it's to bring them to the place of repentance that's the passion of God and we find again in Isaiah 59 1 behold the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save nor his ear heavy that it cannot hear but your iniquities have separated you

from your God your sins have hidden his face from you so that he will not hear now most of the instructions that I'm reading here weren't to the pagans they were to the house of Israel they were that's that's who they were too so it is not that they were not aware of the living God and it's not that they didn't have a testimony of the power and the majesty and the might of the living God they had received so much of the oracles of God already I mean Isaiah was a prophet to them he was sent to them to prophesy and basically God told them you're gonna prophesy to these people and they won't listen to you so I'm sending you but they're not gonna listen to you and so this is part of his challenge here to them and so I think it bears well for us to think about that not only just a thing about lost people because for the most part they're just living in ignorance but the people of God us the people of God ought not to be we can't use the excuse of ignorance of these things we know that if we don't walk right with God that it's going to have a great hindrance in our lives but when crisis comes oh we're ready to pray we're ready to pray even as God's people but all that we would have asked the Lord yes give us clean hands and a pure heart listen to this Psalm 24 3 who may ascend into the hill of the Lord or who may stand in his holy place and then he gives some qualifications he who has clean hands and a pure heart who has not lifted up his soul to an idol nor sworn deceitfully you can see that song we sung earlier give us clean hands from this passage in Psalm 24 who can come into the presence of God it says you need to have clean hands and a pure heart someone who is not worshiping at another altar and who has not lifted up his soul to an idol now do any of us qualify in ourselves for this thank God for the Lord Jesus Christ because Christ is ascended Christ has come into the holy place on our behalf but that doesn't mean that we are not to be holy it means we are challenged to be holy and we can have clean hands and a pure heart we can have we can forsake idolatry we can forsake our lying ways and we can cast ourselves on the mercy of God because we have forgiveness of God so even though sin may be a hindrance it doesn't have to be a hindrance because what does the Lord do he forgives sins but if I continue on in sin and think I have a prayer life there's something wrong there's a there's a real problem it's a hindrance to prayer that person shall receive blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of his salvation that is the one who has clean hands and a pure heart that can only come from Jesus okay it's humbling Matthew 5 23 says if you bring your gift to the altar and that means you're coming into the presence of God and then remember that your brother has something against you leave your gift there before the other go to your way first be reconciled to your brother then come and offer your gift now there's this sense here that you can't be out of fellowship with your fellow believers and be in fellowship with God God's not interested in that his passion is that we walk with him but we cannot walk with him if we do not walk with the people of God there's a there's a great disconnect there if there's some division here don't think that there's going to be unity here we are it's impossible because the church is called the one I mean the family of God what else is the picture the body the bride yes but also the very body of Christ so I cannot say I'm connected to the head but I'm not connected to the arms and the feet and everything else I can't I have to realize that my standing with my fellow believers isn't is vital and important first John emphasizes that doesn't it if we don't love if we say we love God we don't love our brother we are liar the truth's not in us it's not true you can't do this so the seriousness of sin is important for us to understand when it comes to prayer if we are unwilling to deal with these kinds of issues then we are unwilling we are we are not going to have an effective prayer it's a great hindrance and it's a great tragedy because many are walking in these places and sometimes it just leaves me boggled my mind boggled at how people can live with such a disconnect and still think you know me and Jesus we got our own thing going you know I don't need the church or I you know whatever or somebody's hurt me and I'm done you know and whatever it is and finding themselves contrary and disconnected from fellow brothers and sisters and that doesn't mean that every professing Christian is going to be willing to be involved in any reconciliation with you that may not be the case there's nothing

you can do about that but you want to make sure that your heart is right in the matter that there is not something that you haven't dealt with personally with someone else of course we have the passage in Mark 6 14 which says in the prayer still turn to our father if you forgive men their trespasses your heavenly father will forgive you if you don't forgive him in their trespasses neither will our father forgive your trespasses so again here if I hold the grudge towards someone then and I come to God and I'm looking for his mercy in my life and I'm unwilling to grant mercy to someone else you're not going to get the answer that you want from God he's not going to you might think you've got it but you don't have it because you're holding a bitterness in your own soul of your own heart towards someone so sin is serious it is always deadly serious and it has a tremendous effect because prayer is actually the expression of your communion with God we take prayer out and you have no communion with God it is the very expression of your relationship with God is wrapped up in the word prayer yeah it's relational it's your it's your method of relational communion with God and if that's shut down what do you actually have there's no abiding there's no everything comes to a screeching halt in our lives so what happens if we don't deal with these kinds of issues then we're cold and hard and dead and we might go to church we might sing choruses we might praise and all kinds of things I think I told you this lady had once approached me and she said I don't understand it she said all week long she said I hate my husband and I hate my kids she said I can't stand them they drive me crazy but at least when I go to church and I get in the presence of God oh she said the worship and the praise and all she said I feel the presence of God there and I had to graciously tell her no you're not feeling the presence of God you're not worshiping God she was like first very insulted that I would say such a thing I said you cannot live in hatred of your own family and think that when you get there I said you're having an emotional experience and you can have emotional experiences and feel like you're in the presence of God but that isn't the confirmation of being in the presence of God what you're feeling it is the truth that sets you free and the truth is that if you're living in hatred of your own family there is no way that you're worshiping God for one hour a week while you're hating your family the rest of the week said that's not the case so you need to understand that otherwise you're deceiving yourself and thinking well at least I have this no you don't even have that that's not easy to say to someone because she thought at least I have this and I had to say no you don't have this you need to deal with what's going on here you need to deal with reality and that's pretty clear from the scriptures I don't think I was making something up in there I was making it very clear and I took her to scriptures to show her that reality and hopefully there was some change for her in that so sin it's a huge thing it's not a small thing it has a tremendous effect we know that Christ died for our sins as a Christian we know that the judicial punishment for sins has been dealt with but fellowship fellowship is so vital if you're a true believer you want fellowship and there is no fellowship with God if we are going to continue on and say there just is there and sadly there are probably many who thinking they have fellowship with God continuing to walk in sin who are not really saved at all they don't even have the judicial punishment dealt with because there is no willingness to deal with the fellowship issue there's no willingness to deal with sin as I said on Sunday resurrection Sunday that we're we've risen to a whole new way of life and that we're called to live resurrection power we need the power of God the power of God is available the resurrection power of God is there and there has to be some kind of transformation you can't just think our sins are all forgiven and I can live any way I want it's not possible another aspect of a hindrance to prayer is to choose to ignore the Word of God Proverbs 28 9 says this one who turns away his ear from hearing the law even his prayer is an abomination isn't that powerful whoa that's not like vague that is so explicit that if we choose to ignore the Word of God turn away your ear from the truth of what God says even his prayer is an abomination to God it doesn't impress God at all what do you think of a verse like that isn't that kind of shocking yeah well yeah they don't even know what the Bible says but even the people of God

yeah you know it's amazing how many people do not read the Bible and profess to be believers they choose everything else but the Word they don't read it they don't study it they don't look into it and so they turn away their ear from hearing the Word of God even your prayer is an abomination well this is this is pretty strong stuff isn't it and you know whether for myself it makes me realize oh God let me pursue you let me hear from you let me hear this let's not just think about some other person but let us consider these things in our own lives because you can neglect the word can't you you can get into a lot of other things and you can even be zealous about those things but do not ignore the Word of God but oh I pity the person who professes to be a believer ignores the Word of God goes on his way and then thinks his prayers are going before the throne of grace and they're not even get his prayers an abomination of God he hates it he despises it what abomination is a strong word it brings the idea of absolute abhorrence to it don't want to hear it it's awful it's something ugly and awful you ever think of God thinking prayer is ugly and awful that's something to think about isn't it yeah well before you're a believer it's one thing but people who are professing to be believers I'm challenging people the people of God when it comes to prayer here to realize I can't ignore the Word of God I can't you know just walk away from God's word and realize and think that everything is going to be good you can see in second Timothy 3:15 there's plenty of verses that could use about the value of the Word of God in second Timothy 3:15 and that from a child if you have known the Holy Scriptures which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus it's so valuable God's Word it's profitable for doctrine for reproof for correction and instruction in righteousness that's the next verse it's profitable well no we realize that but but when you have it and you ignore it there's something else remember that the in Proverbs again it is to the people to the Jews to the people who are who are chosen to call by God and then choosing to to to pray but not to know I mean lost people are already under condemnation they can't be under and more condemnation than they're already under in that respect you're lost you're lost and even if they're praying it doesn't matter until there's a you know heart prayer where the Spirit of God is working and stirring their souls and drawing them to himself you mean if you're lost you're lost but once you're a believer or professing believer and you have the knowledge of the Scriptures and you ignore them it's to our peril that such a thing would happen Johnny detrimental and there's probably people out there but they go to church probably are positive they're saved but the only Bible they might get is from preaching exactly bother reading yeah yeah and there's so I mean you get a lot out of someone preaching depending whom the preacher is however there's so much in the word yeah and you can read it 200 times and learn 200 new things but if you're if you really want to be with the Lord I mean that book is there it's really yeah what's that it's like your telephone yeah yeah I mean you're hearing from God it is that's why I'm often encouraged when you're praying pray with your Bible because God speaks through his Word the Word of God is so vital and so important it can't be no no one is going to walk with God in fellowship if they are feeding on one sermon a week in church they're just not you just can't get enough from that we need all that we can get we need to know the truth because Johnny 32 says you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free there's a soul I mean we could spend a year study on the value of the word but to understand that the word and prayer go together there is no real prayer without the truth and we need the word we need the revelation of God I often think what a blessing it is to have the time to to and a discipline to read because when I was working full-time I mean you know just flying flying rushing rushing so I mean from 6 in the morning till 10 at night it's just rushing rushing yeah and it's true and it's it's a discipline and it's not easy for sure but it's but it is but it's not that hard if you have the time but I just think of the people people who are working full-time and have a lot of responsibilities and children and meals and transportation and everything that goes with yeah it's a good point that I feel blessed that I in the morning I can write it yeah but even for those who are in that situation here's a little action that I often will say if you take time for Jesus he will make time for you can we have

enough faith to believe that if I take this time even though my life is so grand and busy if I take this time and somehow he will make time for me things go better with Christ and so as busy as the day might be and the challenges that come with it the Lord can smooth things and and give you more time back than you ever gave up to meet with him and give you the energy those that wait upon the Lord shall what renew their strength that there is a renewed strength that comes from God and I believe that that could be physical emotional mental strength where you can go through the whole days I don't have time to read the word so I have to get all these things done the strain of it the doing it on your own without depending on God will cost you far more energy and time then if I actually take time to be you have to speak more loudly and clearly you've also told the story with the woman that had the family for half an hour she was Anna Wesley everybody had to be quiet yeah yeah so we all have 24 hours in the day and I firmly believe that if we did if we take time for Jesus time for his word that they'll be he'll make time for us I think Don Curran's talk to a Saturday morning about discipline yes and discipline too yeah like he says I get up at 6 in the morning so I have enough time to read my Bible and then go on with what I have to do yeah it is now the fruit of the spirit is self-control or self-discipline because some of us are not very self-disciplined some of us are erratic and I need the Holy Spirit and a dependence upon him that drives me to the Word of God that enables me to do that some people have their whole life as well it's very disciplined but but God can bring discipline into your life by his power as I'm willing to yield to the Spirit's power and control in my life I'm willing to yield to him in that but if I'm unwilling to do that I'm with unwilling to meet with God I'm well unwilling to get into the Word of God well that's a whole other thing isn't it we will not find much freedom if we do not walk in the truth and we won't walk in the truth if we don't know what it is or if we're unwilling to read it and listen to it and I said before I think I'm like a sieve I only hold so much and it most of it leaks out so I need to be constantly in the word more you know constantly being filled with the truth of God in my life so I mean there's a lot we could talk about in terms of the word and memorizing scripture while it's just a tremendous thing so often a scripture that you memorize will come back to you and it will you you'll find it God speaking to you from that memorized verse even with not having the word open in front of you or not going to that particular verse he will recall verses that you already have so yeah immerse ourselves in the in the Word of God I don't think there's anyone that has an effective prayer life that is not immersed in the word I don't think it's quite you know I mean I understand in places where they don't have Bibles where they can't you know and and God meets them where what they have with what they have but when we have that availability and we don't we are missing the vitality of prayer because you'll not have a vital prayer life there'll be a great hindrance to prayer if I am not willing to be in the truth of the Word of God so the ignoring the Word of God is to our peril another hindrance to prayer is unbelief James 1 5 says if any of you lacks wisdom let him ask of God who gives to all liberally and without reproach and it will be given to him but let him ask in faith with no doubting for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind do you ever find this verse challenging I do is unbelief easy to be there for let not that man suppose he'll receive anything from the Lord he is double-minded man unstable in all his ways Wow it's just you can almost feel like okay how can I ask with such faith with no doubting because if I'm doubting I'm like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind and what does this verse make you feel like when you read it well what's your reaction to that don't suppose you're going to receive anything from the Lord said any comments well what do you think what's the point of praying what about the man who said Lord I believe my unbelief well when you read this let's look at what the prayer was in the first place okay if you lack wisdom ask of God who gives to all liberally without reproach and it will be given to him if you are praying and you know that it is in the will of God then you are no longer see the idea that praying in the will of God there are people who get mad they actually get angry Christians who get angry when you say we have to ask according to his will because they suddenly feel

like if I'm asking according to his will then that's so narrow I'm not gonna have very much to ask as if the will of God was small when the will of God is great there are many things that you can ask in assurance for as a matter of fact can you ask for wisdom and be certain that you'll get it how do you know it says it here he gives to all liberally and without reproach and it will be given to him yeah so there are what this comes back again and that's why I've tied this one in with the word because the truth of God's Word I can go to the Word of God and there is much that I can pray with absolute assurance that this is in the will and the way of God and therefore I'm not living in the land of doubt I'm not living in the land of doubt because I know this is what God has said and I can take him at his word it is a place of actually believing that God is who he is and says what he says is true so that's the position to take in prayer now there are things that we are uncertain as to what the will of God may be and in that respect we can ask him and ask him to Lord show me we're way show me your will in this matter take me further take me deeper in prayer in this matter so what he's speaking about here is a doubt tossed like the wave and the wind and the waves because there is an unbelief in the truth of who God is and what he has already promised is that making sense to you if God has promised something in his word I can take it him at his word and I can pray it without wondering I wonder if this is in the will of God so often I will encourage people and say wow why don't you go through your Bible and find out how much of the will of God there is and start praying there and when you start praying there you'll find you have lots to pray about yes the promises of God and also what God has what the way of God who he is what his character is like will he do this does he you know there's so much about who God is yeah so to discover his will will bring us into a place of prayer where unbelief is not the market I mean this is strong words here he said don't suppose you get anything from the Lord he's double-minded man unstable in all his ways this is like a real challenge but the real challenge here is the fact that if God has promised something I can take it to the bank I can pray it through with a great confidence that he will do it so I would encourage you to grow in prayer in this way to realize okay Lord unbelief is it it is a great sin unbelief it really is it's it's it's at the core of lostness unbelief so Lord take me into the place of faith in prayer of actually believing what you say in your word there are many things that we you may have uncertainties about and those things you can talk to God about them and you can say like the man who said Lord I believe help my unbelief that's just open honesty but when you know that something is in the will God then there is no room for unbelief I have to take God at his word and if I don't take him at his word I've already decided he's not gonna do it I'm already living in the place of doubt I'm like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind no assurance but it is no assurance because there is no foundation underneath this really expresses a lack of foundation altogether here because we have much that we can be praying about another hindrance to prayer this might seem almost obvious you don't pray that's a pretty big hindrance to prayer you just don't pray James 4 one says where do wars and fights come from among you do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war and your members who's he writing to he's writing professing Christians and he's saying where did all this this this conflict come from do they come from your desire for pleasure that war and your members that you you want you lost and you don't have your murder and covenant cannot obtain your fight and war yet you do not have because you do not ask you've abandoned prayer and you thought that what you need and what you want is to be gotten by your own conniving your own way of going about things so you're busy trying to live your life without dependence upon God without calling on the name of the Lord and so that means you're left up to your own devices and your own devices are not good and they give an example of all the wickedness that comes out with the manipulation and all the things that you try to do to get things to happen the way you want them to happen and no prayer you don't have because you don't ask now we'll get into the rat asking for the wrong reasons but here the challenge here is that you've abandoned prayer and you've trusted in your own devices and this is the result of it so you don't pray so when you when you think about

this you don't pray you might say well that's not me I'm afraid it is at times I'm afraid it is probably probably quite frequently how easily do you become anxious and you're trying to figure out how to fix something whatever it might be and you're not praying it through we should be praying about how many things Philippians 4 6 says what be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with Thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God now what's the word the big word here in the context of what we're talking about mm-hmm no no you're missing it no everything everything in everything you get it yeah you see what I'm saying in everything oh there's a huge crisis that's too big for me I need to pray we're good at that we know what to do with that because it's beyond us but do we understand that everything in life is beyond us and that means in everything prayer and there's I'm focusing on the word everything here because the other ones are all true to don't misunderstand me and the promise is the peace of God that passes all understanding there's quite a difference in the promise here and the action that we read in James 4 1 and 4 2 isn't there the action in James 4 1 4 2 is all the wrangling and manipulation and the ugliness of man trying to do whatever he can do for himself and then we find here the actual peace of God that passes understanding guarding our hearts and minds no anxiety over things now because it is by prayer and supplication with Thanksgiving now the word Thanksgiving is actually an expression of faith isn't it I'm thanking you Lord I'm asking but I'm thanking you let your requests be made known to God in everything by prayer so that will challenge you what to pray without ceasing first Thessalonians 5 17 pray without ceasing in everything give thanks there's a Thanksgiving again for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you or for you pray without ceasing do you pray throughout the day are you constantly in prayer about everything that you're doing Lord I'm going to the co-op so I pray so I talk to God about going to the co-op I talked to God about whatever it is I'm doing we're working up on the hill I pray I talk to God about it I ask him for wisdom what to do you know put in a driveway and gravel and tractor or whatever whatever you're doing bathe it in prayer pray without ceasing and then of course you pray about some of them we call them the major things but I'll tell you most of your life is made up of the minors not the majors and if you're not praying in all of the minors then you'll just have desperate prayers for the majors whenever they show up but in the meantime you're not in communion with God we're meant to be in constant communion with God pray without ceasing and so you don't pray I challenge you and I challenge myself are you praying remember I told you about the Bible school professor who when they would meet him in the hall he would ask do I meet you praying yeah and some of them want to avoid him yes I had to tell the truth do I meet you praying I wonder if we met each other whenever we saw each other and do we ask what do I meet you praying it might be a challenge right don't it isn't it often that you're mulling over something in your mind you're mulling over a problem a situation a circumstance and but are you praying are you actually lifting these matters to before the throne of grace pray you don't pray so you know sometimes you read this and you think about you know James and your wars and fights and all the desires and everything else here and you say well that doesn't apply to me yet you do not have because you do not ask I think it does I know it applies to me I cannot tell you that I'm always praying without ceasing but I can tell you that even in recent days I've become more and more convinced of my desperate need of God every single second of my life and I have found myself doing a lot more praying without ceasing than I had in the past but there's more I need to grow in praying without ceasing and to lift every matter up to the Lord oh how easily we become tied up in worry and fear and frustration and you know somebody says something and we feel like why would they do that why would they say that what's the matter with them and all of a sudden we are not praying instead we're thinking about what's fix that person over there Lord and while we're saying that God is saying you need fixing right now right now did you pray it through have you prayed it through have you sought the Lord you know what I thought this would be a half hour okay well yeah I I don't know if I'll get through it all but

anyway and then James 4 3 says you ask and you do not receive because you ask amiss you ask for the wrong reasons you may spend it on your pleasures you don't get answers to your prayers and sometimes we don't because we're not asking the right things we're so God doesn't is not guaranteeing that whatever you pray you're going to get I mean there's people that think that but if you ask for the wrong reasons you're not going to get it and so sometimes that's exactly what happens it's a hindrance to prayer it's not even prayer you're not going to receive it because you ask amiss you know for that you may spend it on your pleasures you're asking for wrong reasons and many times and this here just bang speaks to that whole wealth and prosperity business and just just throws it out the window in one verse of scripture you don't need a lot of verses to dispel the crazy notion that you know you name it and then you claim it it's so far away from reality you don't receive because you ask for the wrong reasons Lord doesn't always bless you with what you want because he has a different plan absolutely and it may be and I read may not be recalling this correctly but it seems like I read some stories that people praying for this and for that it didn't happen but what turned out is they were spared from something that would have gone on they've been granted what they were looking for absolutely I mean plans change and suddenly you say oh my plans have changed oh no this is not what I had in mind and and and the when the Lord is circumstances and it might be because somebody said tell her did something or or put a blocker in your way and and you're you're mad at them you don't realize God knows what he's doing here yeah he's I can trust that God is sovereign even if somebody did something or meant something for evil to me I can trust that God is sovereign and that he knows what he's doing and he sees the proper outcome so I can trust the Lord and so sometimes we may ask for things and God says no I'm not doing that you know it's not gonna happen and it's for our blessing not to hinder us asking for the wrong reasons another one is pride there must be one before that is there yeah so pride is is a hindrance and what is pride how does it reveal itself it focuses on on me it focuses on me pride is a hindrance to prayer proud being proud is an independent spirit when we look in their verse in the Old Testament where it says the just shall live by faith the next half of that verse speaks about the ugliness of pride pride is the opposite of faith it is the opposite of it James 4 6 says but he gives more grace therefore he says God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble therefore submit to God resist the devil and he will flee from you pride will keep us from real prayer we know the story Luke 18 10 I'm gonna go quickly two men went to the temple to pray one a Pharisee the other a tax collector the Pharisee stood and prayed with himself God I thank you I'm not like other men extortioners unjust adulterers or even as this tax collector now you've heard me say this before he prayed with himself I think the Lord has a sense of humor I really do I think the Lord made it very clear he's praying with himself he's not praying to God he's patting himself on the back yeah well what a good boy am I right this is what he's doing and he says I'm just so thankful I'm not like other people are he's not talking he's not thinking about God he's thinking about himself and he has a wrong view of himself and of course well the result of it was I have that other verse here the result of it was our you skip on there Luke 18 12 next one two men women next no keep going down one more thank you I fast twice a week I give tithes of all that I possess his whole focus is on himself but the tax collector standing far up would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven but beat his breast saying God be merciful to me a sinner and what did Jesus say I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled he who humbles himself will be exalted you can see here one prayer was not heard and the other prayer was heard and then the other one is not in God's will and that was in between my mistake that I put up there for you you'll find it and yeah John 15 7 if you abide in me and my words abiding you will ask what you desire and it will be done for you this is an incredible promise do you want to notice something there's an ifs here isn't there it's not ask whatever you desire it'll be done for you is it no if you abide in me and what my words back to the Word of God again isn't it my words abide in you this is this

first conditional part of this verse is so rich grow there and you will find your prayer life growing don't grow there and you'll be frustrated with these promises that God makes about prayer you'll ask what you desire and it will be done for you we want the second half often without the first half of this verse John 15 7 1st John chapter 5 if you ask anything according to his will he hears us and we know that he hears us we know they have it I don't have it we don't have the petitions that we desired of him so abide means to remain in me to be within me and my words abiding in you there's the promise so praying outside of the will of God not a good plan right not in God's will and that is again going back to the truth of the Word of God pride will show itself here in that often if we are struggling with something James 5 16 confess your trespass your faults to one another pray for one another that you may be healed the effective and fervent prayer of a righteous man counts for much so sometimes pride will keep us going back to pride for a moment from actually asking someone else to pray for us with the struggle that we might have and that doesn't mean you're gonna stand up in church and you know say I've had sexual fantasies about you know somebody else in the church okay you understand what I'm saying actually that happened during what's called the Oxford movement and people they said well we need to be confessing our faults to one another so they were doing this in a public meetings and before long the world came to those services because they heard a lot of juicy stuff and they they were coming to hear who's going to confess what next right so this is talking this is in confidence with one another that you can trust someone to lift the matter up in prayer and pray for one another that you may be healed and then of course the great promise here the effective and we've been talking about effective prayer basically dealing with the hindrances that keep us from effective prayer and then fervent prayer which means pressing on in prayer to God of a righteous man it counts for much it produces much and then again we have James 4 10 here I'm gonna move over some of these verses humble yourself in the sight of the Lord and he will lift you up and also another hindrance to prayer is losing heart it's keep going not not persisting we talked about prevailing prayer not a little while ago but the idea is that oh nothing's happening so there's no point in praying anymore losing heart prevailing persisting in prayer remember Jesus giving the examples of you know your friend comes and he wants three loaves of bread and I can't get up but he because his persistence he comes through don't lose heart keep on praying you can stop praying when God tells you to know I that's my my general rule for me is that I will keep praying for something unless the Spirit of God makes it clear to me no point in praying for this anymore maybe because it's answered that's happened to people where you know that it's been answered or when when it's never going to be answered God says no that's move on somewhere else but otherwise persistent prayer before the Lord and you know keep looking to him of course doing that self-examination so that we can say okay Lord there's nothing in my heart that's hindering me from from talking to you and the parable of the unjust just unjust judge is used here in Luke 18 one to encourage us in that direction so and the last one I don't have it up here but I don't know why in my preparation I never I didn't include it I meant to but it is where Jesus says when you pray go into your closet and pray you need closet prayer you need time along with God this is where you know the mention of discipline comes in you know there's a public prayer is wonderful but you need to be praying and you need to be setting aside time to pray that's why Jesus said go into your closet now the only reason why we say that with your closet is so that you're shutting everything else out right so you know that means don't pray with Facebook on ding ding ding ding or you won't be praying for long you'll be picking it up to see who's saying what to who or you know those all those messages all those floods that are out there can be put aside so that I have quiet time with God so that I am actually spending time with God some would say well I'm a multitasker I can pray and then I can do all these other things at the same time no that's not the thing when Jesus said to go into your closet and pray in Matthew chapter 6 he said it for a reason now he doesn't diss public prayer because we know he prayed in public we know that the Saints of God prayed in

public but we also know there's a reason why he said it went to your closet it is because there is a place a secret place with God a trusting place with God that you need in your life and I need in my life don't neglect that because that is the time when there is we're without distraction we don't need the distractions of life so set aside time to meet with God without those distractions and yes it is a challenge when you're busy I can tell you I am a very busy person and it is always a challenge for me it is the thing the devil will move at me the most is to set aside praying set aside time individual time with God so we need that time where we set aside everything else and seek the Lord don't ignore it to your peril that will be a great hindrance in your life you will not have much of a prayer life if you do not spend time in the presence of God yes maybe I'm being too literal or maybe not but when I think of cloth I spent a lot of time outside right in the woods whatever and I think of talking to the Lord and so forth but that's a lot it's a lot that's not the same as being kind of in a closet or in a room where you're not distracted.

It can be I mean it depends on how your mind works but you know oh look at that nice leaf over there oh look at that caterpillar going across there you could be easily distracted but maybe you're not maybe I know people say well my time to pray is when I'm out walking my time to pray I'm not missing any of that I mean when Jesus said with your closet and pray obviously he is saying try to meet with God without distraction. That's why I mentioned am I being too literal because if you're in a closet or in a room where there's really nothing that can distract you it might be better it might be better yes yeah it may very well be that we could be missing something and we could find ourselves easily you know distracted in other directions. You have to keep your mind clear too and sometimes that's a struggle.

Yeah yeah at the best of times. In the middle of prayer to get your mind moving on something else that you're concerned about will come up. Yeah I know if you have a mind like mine my mind is always jumping from one thing to the other like crazy so I need I need to shut out you know to meet with God and you know there's enough goes on between my ears without let alone there be something else to distract me from from the Lord.

So I'm sure I have not covered all of this but I wanted to challenge you and myself and I have been self-challenged tonight to watch out for hindrances to prayer so that we might have a more effective prayer life and what more do we want I mean if we don't have an effective prayer life where are we going really you know what else is happening. Prayer moves the arm of God and without prayer we can have a lot of activities but is there real life you know how much real life is there. The Lord be gracious to us and give us hearts to pray.

Yes. Amen.

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