

# Unanswered Prayer

# Doubt

- Doubt breaks the faith connection which is essential to answered prayer
  - Doubt says “God, I do not really believe that you are going to keep Your Word”
  - Doubt puts us at our senses as the ultimate arbiter of all things
  - Doubt leads to us being double-minded
  - We end up receiving nothing from the Lord
- Matthew 14:30-31
  - Matthew 21:21,22
  - Mark 11:23
  - 1 Timothy 2:8
  - James 1:5-8

# Not Asking

- We have not because we ask not
  - Not asking - or asking very vaguely is a defense mechanism to avoid disappointment and stems from unbelief in the goodness of God
  - Asking is a clear and definite process of placing our requests before God 'with thanksgiving'
  - We should ask for a specific positive godly outcome e.g. 'that I may be healed and made whole'
  - Leave the method to the Lord!
- James 4:2,3
  - Matthew 7:7-11, 21:21,22
  - Luke 11:8-13
  - John 4:10, 14:13,14
  - John 15:7,16; 16:23,24
  - Ephesians 3:20
  - 1 John 3:22, 5:14,15
  - Philippians 4:6,7

# Covetousness / Worldly Prayers

- Covetousness = idolatry
  - Scheming to get things
  - Focus on worldly things and sensual pleasures
  - God becomes simply a spiritual mechanism for self-gratification
  - Not a holy Lord and Savior but a quick fix idol.
- James 4:2,3
  - 1 John 2:15-17
  - Ephesians 5:3-5
  - Colossians 3:5

# Mean-Spiritedness & Unforgiveness

- Husbands who are mean and who lack understanding toward their wives (or vice-versa) do not get their prayers answered
  - Unforgiving people do not get their sins forgiven
  - Quarrelsome, squabbling people who seek to get things by fighting instead of asking from God do not receive
  - **Rule of Thumb:** God treats us as we treat others
- 1 Peter 3:7
  - James 4:2
  - Mark 11:25,26
  - Matthew 6:12-15
  - Matthew 18:21-35
  - Luke 16:19-31

# Unrighteousness

- God is 'against those who do evil'
  - Having a character that is deeply inclined to evil stops prayer being answered
  - This is different from the occasional sin that God easily forgives (1 John 1:7-9)
  - An evil heart is like the Temple which was supposed to be a place of prayer but had become 'a den of thieves'
  - The Kingdom is blocked to the wicked and the unrepentant (1 Cor 6:9,10)
- 1 Peter 3:10-12
  - 1 Corinthians 6:9,10
  - Matthew 21:13
  - Luke 20:47
  - Acts 8:19-24

# Hypocrisy

- Hypocrisy = hupo (under)+ crites (mask)
  - Hypocrites are mask wearers – inwardly are unrighteous, but outwardly they are respectable.
  - God looks on the heart and will not answer the prayers of hypocrites
  - We need to be “real” and honest with God - as was the case with the repentant publican
- Matthew 6:5-8
  - Matthew 23:23-39
  - Luke 20:46,47
  - Luke 18:9-14

# Pride!

- The search for earthly status is the opposite of the spirit of humble prayer
  - If we exalt ourselves God will humble us
  - If we humble ourselves God will exalt us
  - Those who ‘become as a little child’ inherit the Kingdom of heaven – being open, trusting and un-pompous
  - God gives grace to the humble
  - **Rule of Thumb:** We only receive as much of God’s grace as we think we require.
- Luke 18:9-14
  - Matthew 18:1-4
  - Matthew 23:5-12
  - Luke 14:7-11
  - James 4:6-10

# Disunity, Squabbling & Wrath

- Unity strengthens prayer while disunity destroys it
  - Disunity means we are on the wrong spiritual level – that is we have become carnal not spiritual
  - We need to confess our sin and fix up our relationships before we enter into serious prayer and intercession
  - Our attitude is our altitude
- 1 Timothy 2:8
  - Matthew 18:18-20
  - James 4:2,3
  - 1 Corinthians 3:1-3
  - Matthew 5:20-26

# Lack Of Persistence In Prayer

- Persistence is a sign of true faith and ‘holy desperation’
  - Many of the healing miracles came to people who ‘cried out’ persistently
  - Unbelief gives up and walks away
  - Faith says “God will come through – I just know it!”
- Luke 18:1-8
  - Luke 11:5-13
  - Romans 4:19-21, 12:12
  - 2 Kings 13:14-19
  - 1 Corinthians 15:58
  - Ephesians 6:18

# Not In God's Will Or Timing

- Some things are not 'righteous' – that is outside *God's moral will*
  - Some things are simply not for you personally, you are not trained, gifted or ready for them or they are not assigned to you - that is not in *God's specific will*
  - Other things have a 'spiritual timing' that you must wait for as God's Word comes to pass – that is not in *God's sovereign will*
- 1 John 5:14,15
  - 1 John 3:22
  - 1 Corinthians 12:27-31
  - Romans 12:3
  - 2 Corinthians 10;13
  - Jude 1:6
  - Ecclesiastes 3:1-11
  - Psalm 105:17-22
  - Jeremiah 45:1-5

# “Weak Hands” - Not Seizing The Day

- When God is moving in amazing and prophetic ways we need to ‘get on board’ as Joshua did in ordering the sun and moon to stand still
  - Now is the day of salvation
  - If we get ‘tired’ or just miss the moment entirely we will see defeat and not victory
- Exodus 17:9-13
  - Joshua 10:6-15
  - 2 Kings 13:14-19
  - Matthew 11:20-30
  - 2 Corinthians 6:1,2

# Not Using Our Authority In Christ

- God has given us authority (see last lecture) so that we can use it for the glory of His Name and for the building up of the Body of Christ
  - Acts 19:13-17
  - Acts 3:1-8
  - Matthew 17:14-20
- We must be born-again , bible-believing Christians
- We must act in the name of Jesus and speak with decisive and faith-filled authority

# Lack of Thankfulness & Joy

- Gratitude is the heart of prayer and of the Abba Father-Son relationship
  - We are commanded to always be thankful and rejoicing - as a clear sign of our faith
  - God is light – that is He is always positive in nature and the Christian should be full of light as well – in gratitude, thanksgiving and praise
  - Negativity and unbelief go hand in hand
  - Thanksgiving helps us to create the positive faith picture ‘of the mountain moving’ that is essential to powerful prayer
- Philippians 4:6,7
  - Ephesians 1:16, 5:20
  - Colossians 2:6,7; 3:15-17, 4:2
  - 1 Thessalonians 5:18
  - 1 John 1:5, James 1:17

# Sleeping Saints

- Christians need to ‘watch’ and ‘be alert’ in prayer
  - We are to be faithful, sober, alert and ‘people of the light’ – not of darkness, drunkenness and carousing
  - This includes both current events and the Second Coming
  - It may also include long times of prayer such as praying through the night watches
- Luke 21:34-36
  - Matthew 26:38-41
  - Matthew 24:42,43; 25:1-13
  - Mark 13:32-37, 14:37,38
  - 1 Corinthians 16:13
  - Ephesians 6:18
  - 1 Thessalonians 5:4-8
  - Colossians 4:2
  - 1 Peter 4:7