

Power in Prayer

Impurities in Our Prayers

I. Introduction

- If we are not careful, we can introduce elements into prayer that hinder our prayers.
- I intend to do a lesson later concerning hindrances to prayer, which I feel is different from this topic. These are contaminants that creep in and pollute our prayer life and must be guarded against. These may hinder, but they also poison the very act of prayer.

II. Lack of Faith – James 1:6-8

- Faith is the catalyst for prayer to be answered.
- Even when our faith is weak, we can still cry out to God to strengthen our faith – Mark 9:24

III. Infrequency – I Thessalonians 5:17

- When we call on God we shouldn't feel like we should have to reintroduce ourselves to Him because its been so long since we last prayed.

IV. Performance – Matthew 6:5

- Who is our audience when we pray? If it is the eyes and ears of those around us we are praying in the wrong direction.

V. Rote Repetitions – Matthew 6:7

- When we pray, God wishes to hear the words from our heart and not something memorized or read.
- Albert Barnes on the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9-13 – "This prayer is given as a "model." It is designed to express the 'manner' in which we are to pray, evidently not the precise words or petitions which we are to use. The substance of the prayer is recorded by Luke, Luke 11:2-4. In Luke, however, it varies from the form given in Matthew, showing that he intended not to prescribe this as a form of prayer to be used always, but to express the substance of our petitions, or to show what petitions it would be proper to present to God. That he did not intend to prescribe this as a form to be invariably used is further evident from the fact that there is no proof that either he or his disciples ever used exactly this form of prayer, but clear evidence that they prayed often in other language."

VI. Vengeance – Luke 9:54-55, Romans 12:19-21

- When we step into the roles of judge, jury, and executioner, we are trespassing on authority that God claimed for Himself.

VII. Selfishness – James 4:3

- Prayer is not haggling with God to better ourselves.

VIII. One-way conversation

- "Prayer is not monologue, but dialogue; God's voice is its most essential part. Listening to God's voice is the secret of the assurance that he will listen to mine."
- Andrew Murray
- If we focus only on what we do or say in prayer, that shows that our faith is in ourselves and not in the God we claim to be calling on.