

# Removing 15 Hindrances to Prayer

As we begin a new year, taking stock of our prayer life can be a good thing. How can we improve? In what ways can our prayer times become more dynamic? Are there weaknesses in our prayer life we can ask God to help us overcome?

One of the biggest deterrents to effective prayer is sin! That is why we recommend taking a few minutes and praying through this list of 15 items that the Scriptures say hinders prayer.

As you do so, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any blockages in your prayer life. Then confess them, repent, and be free to have a more productive prayer life!

1. **Rejecting Truth** (Prov. 28:9) "If anyone turns a deaf ear to the law, even his prayers are detestable."
1. **Pride** (2 Chron. 7:14) "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."
1. **Hard-heartedness** (Zech. 7:12-13) "They made their hearts as hard as flint and would not listen to the law or to the words that the Lord Almighty had sent by his Spirit through the earlier prophets. So the Lord Almighty was very angry. 'When I called, they did not listen; so when they called, I would not listen,' says the Lord Almighty."
1. **Lack of Compassion** (Prov. 21:13) "If a man shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and not be answered."

1. **Unconfessed Sin** (Ps. 66:18) "If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened."
1. **Wrong Motives** (Jas. 4:3) "When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasure."
1. **Unbelief** (Mt.17:20-21) "He replied, 'Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, "Move from here to there," and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.'"
1. **Not Seriously Asking** (Jas. 4:2) "You do not have because you do not ask God."
1. **Broken Relationships** (1 Pet. 3:7) "Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers."
1. **Sinful Lifestyle** (Is. 59:2) "But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear."
1. **Vain Repetitions** (Mt. 6:7) "And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words."
1. **Lack of Forgiveness** (Mt. 6:14-15) "For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."

1. **Hypocrisy** (Lk. 18:9-14) “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: “God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evil doers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.” But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, “God, have mercy on me, a sinner.” I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”
1. **Double-mindedness** (Jas. 1:5-8) “If anyone lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.”
1. **Idolatry** (Ezk. 14:3) “Son of man, these men have set up idols in their hearts, and put wicked stumbling blocks before their faces. Should I let them inquire of me at all?”

Jonathan Graf from *The Power of Personal Prayer* (PrayerShop Publishing). List was originally developed by Dr. Joseph Winger for *Pray!* magazine.

**If you would like additional help on removing any hindrances to prayer in your life, I highly recommend purchasing a copy of Issue 17 of *Prayer Connect* magazine: “Roadblock Ahead: Removing the Hindrances in Your Prayer Life.” Click the Buy**

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