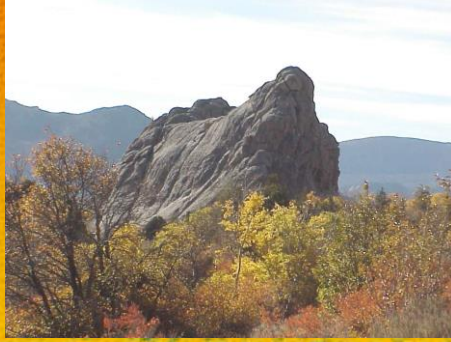




The Do's and Don'ts of Successful Praying, Part I & 2



- **We Must Be a Praying Church, a House of Prayer—**
Jesus: “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations.” —Mark 11:17; Isaiah 56:7
- Definition of “to pray” in Hebrew/Greek – our “righteousness” in prayer must exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees – 3 set times of prayer
- Luke 19:46--“It is written, ‘My house shall be a house of prayer.’”



What Matt. 6 and other passages from the Bible tell us about prayer:

Jesus expects His disciples to pray—“When you pray...”. (Matt. 6:5)

A high bar: “Pray without ceasing.” 1 Thess. 5:17



- **There are wrong ways to pray** – Jesus gives two in Matt. 6 (later)
- **There are right ways to pray** – “Pray, then, like this...” Matt. 6:9 – introduces Lord’s prayer
- **There are many kinds of prayer** – petition, supplication, intercession, warfare, contemplative, authoritative (commanding), lament, inquiry, with the spirit (tongues), corporate agreement. A general term for prayer that produces results: “effectual prayer” our focus today

DEVOTED

Prayer can be expected to produce seeable results.

James 5: 16-18 --“The effectual prayer...accomplishes much. example: Elijah—prayed to stop and to start rain

Ineffectual praying produces a misrepresentation of God and Christianity. Praying to God without praying with the right elements in place produces unanswered prayer, frustration, distrust and/or hatred of God, and often theological justifications for why God does not answer prayer.

Our prayer effectiveness can be hindered/blocked by human and demonic issues

Human Hindrances—Spousal discord-- 1 Peter 3:7

'Husbands, treat your wives with consideration as you should so that your prayers will not be hindered.'

Persisting in (strongholds of) sin – Isaiah 59:1-2—“The Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save...but your iniquities have built barriers between you and God; your sins have hidden His face from you so that He will not hear.”

NT references to “devotion to prayer”

Inadequate faith level—Matt. 17:14-20—“Why couldn’t we cast out that demon? Because of the “littleness” (insufficient amount) of your faith.”

Demonic Hindrance—”Daniel 10:13—Gabriel: “But the prince of Persia was blocking my way for 21 days until Michael came to help me.”

Acts 16:16-18 Paul and Silas and the demonized Philippian slave girl—followed them, presumably hindered their ministry.

Jesus' Two Don'ts in Prayer: Matt. 6: 5-8

1. Don't pray like "the hypocrites" (religious leaders of the day) in order to receive praise and be uplifted in the sight of other humans.
2. Don't pray like the pagans--using meaningless, repetitious words, ritualistic but not heartfelt-- trying to earn God's favor or convince Him to answer you by your prayer performance-- (different from praying in tongues)

To pray is an action verb – it is asking God for something or commanding something in His name.