

## How To Kill Your Prayer Life Study Guide

### Relationship 2.2

We've talked about how much God wants us to pray. We've talked about the price He paid through the death of Jesus in order to give us the privilege of approaching him in prayer. So, after all that he's done so that we can pray, what kinds of things keep Him from listening?

Here's three ways to kill your prayer life ...

First, active disobedience to God.

God says, "Live like this,"

We say, "No", I'm going to live however I want."

God says, "I'm hanging up now."

Listen to what God tells Israel about His response to their prayers after they've gone their own way:

**Isaiah 1:15** When you spread out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood.

**Isaiah 59:1** Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear; **2** but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear. **3** For your hands are defiled with blood and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies; your tongue mutters wickedness.

It matters to God how we live!

**Micah 3:4** Then they will cry to the LORD, but he will not answer them; he will hide his face from them at that time, because they have made their deeds evil.

**Psalms 66:18** If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.

Let me give you an example from being a pastor. A lady asks me to pray that God gives her a husband. But it turns out that the man she's dating is married. It turns out she's sleeping with him. In essence then, she's asking God to cause this man to be divorced and she's committing adultery with him. God doesn't give her what she wants because what she wants and what she's doing goes exactly against how God has told us to live. While she prays for a husband, she's actively slapping God in the face by being involved in adultery and breaking up a marriage. She should not expect God to answer her prayer.

Footnote: are you out there asking God for a spouse? Don't move in together. Don't sleep together. God will never honor sin. Keep yourself pure. Keep trusting Him. Keep waiting. That's where the blessing is. It might take longer. It might be more of a struggle. But the spouse the Lord sends you will be from Him. Ultimately your life will be much happier. You'll have the one God has chosen for you and you'll live under the blessing of obedience to Him.

Another way to kill your prayer life? Listen to this:

**James 4:3** You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

"God, I'm not asking for what YOU want. I'm asking for what I want. And I'm not asking for what I want so that I can better serve YOU. I'm asking for what I want because that's what I want and you're God and you're supposed to give it to me so that my life can be what I want it to be."

WRONG!

Remember when Jesus taught us to pray? He said we should pray, “Your kingdom come – YOUR will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

We’re taught to pray for what God wants, not for what we want. The selfishly motivated prayer is one God won’t answer.

Perhaps you’ve never thought about this last way to kill your prayer life. Look at this:

**1 Peter 3:7** Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

Did you catch that? Treat your wife poorly, your prayer life can become hindered.

- 1) active disobedience
- 2) selfish motivation
- 3) treating your wife badly

These are three ways to kill your prayer life.

So you say, “Pastor what should I do now?” If we’ve killed our prayer life through our disobedience or our selfish motivation, or our bad behavior in relationship, how do we restore it before God?

- 1) Repent – we confess and turn away from the things we’re doing that God hates:

**2 Chronicles 7:14** if my people who are called by my name 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 heal their land.

- 2) Start praying in a way that yields to what God wants:

**1 John 3:22** and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him.

**1 John 5:14** And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.

- 3) Seek God with everything you have:

**Jeremiah 29:13** You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.

God responds to us when we seek Him with everything we have. God is willing to listen to us. He always answers when we seek Him, forsake the evil in our lives, and follow Him. His desire is to listen to us, love us through relationship with Jesus, and answer our prayers. With a privilege like that before us, how could we dare hinder our prayer life through our evil behavior?