

some time with the couple it became clear that these husbands had been sinning against their wives. When this is the case, the Word of God tells us clearly that God will not answer us! As these men have repented and began to love their wives in a sacrificial way their prayer-lives have been renewed dramatically.

The last circumstance that I will present to you is from 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.”* God has revealed His will to us in His holy Word so the only way to pray according to His will is to know the Scriptures. The only way to know the Scriptures is to be an avid student of the Bible.

Now I want to conclude with a warning. If you are reading this and you are thinking that when I am a good boy or girl God loves me and hears my prayer and when I am a bad boy or girl he doesn't love me as much and refuses to hear me you are misunderstanding what is going on. When God comes to you in Christ He blesses you with His perfect love. This love cannot be improved for it is perfect. His love never retracts when we have blown it. What God

requires from us to get right with Him is faith in Jesus Christ to save and give new life. When you have blown it for a season you need to know that you can come to Him and have His forgiveness. If you believe that God is not hearing your prayers then read and heed this verse: *“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).* Come to Him and be forgiven by faith. If you are enjoying a wonderful prayer-life with God my prayer is this pamphlet has been helpful in sustaining this blessed position.

*Pastor Rick Anderson*

### Tri-State Community Church

This pamphlet is an excerpt from one of Pastor Rick Anderson's sermons. If you have benefited from this message please come and visit us at Tri-State Community Church.

We meet for worship and Bible study at the Chester City Building, 600 Indiana Ave., Chester WV. Our Sunday service time is 10 AM. Thursday bible study is 7 PM. Feel free to contact Pastor Anderson at 304-387-3882. For more information visit us at [www.tri-statecommunitychurch.org](http://www.tri-statecommunitychurch.org)

## When God Doesn't Answer

I have often heard people say that they have prayed to God but He never answered them. Did you know that there are circumstances upon which God will refuse to answer prayer? The same Bible that tell us God hears prayer also tells us that there are a number of circumstances upon which God promises not to hear prayer. Let us be sure that our prayers are not wasted by taking a look at a few of these.

The first circumstance upon which God will not hear our prayers can be seen in Proverbs 15:29: *“The LORD is far from the wicked, but He hears the prayer of the righteous.”* The big question here is, who are the wicked and who are the righteous? According to Scripture, the only way to become righteous is to come to Jesus and receive the righteousness that He is offering in the gospel. When you trust in Jesus, He takes your sin upon Himself on the cross and He gives to you His perfect righteousness. Only through this exchange can fallen human beings like you and me become righteous. We have a tendency to limit the wicked to those who

murder and rape but the Bible says that the wicked are everyone who are not in Christ. So if you are not in Christ you should not expect God to hear your prayers—“*The Lord is far away from the wicked.*” If your prayers are to be heard you must first come to Christ and be brought right with God.

In counseling all the time I hear folks say, “I have prayed for years and nothing!” I then ask them about their faith and very often their belief in Jesus is nothing more than they believe Jesus exists. This is not saving faith. Saving faith is more than believing Jesus exists, it involves trusting in Jesus with every detail of your life! Over the years I have watched numerous folks surrender their lives to Christ and begin to enjoy a wonderful prayer-life. If your prayers are to be heard, you must trust in Jesus.

Ok, you trust in Jesus, what circumstances could you fall in that would cause God to not hear your prayers?

Isaiah 59:2 answers: “*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.*” Living and flirting with sin causes our prayers to be wasted. God will

not continue to answer the prayers of His children while they embark in unhealthy living. He hides his face from them to alert them something is wrong. As Christians, we should steer well clear of unhealthy situations, places, things, and company so that we avoid this pitfall. If you are flirting with sin, do not be surprised if God refuses to answer your prayers.

Proverbs 21:13 reveals another circumstance in which God will refuse our prayers: “*Whoever closes his ear to the cry of the poor will himself call out and not be answered.*” Refusing to help those less fortunate can cause God to refuse to help us.

A fourth circumstance comes from Proverbs 28:9: “*If one turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination.*” In other words, living in a way that picks and chooses out of God’s word what to live by and what to ignore will cause God to turn away from hearing prayer.

A fifth circumstance comes from James 1:5-7: “<sup>5</sup> *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.* <sup>6</sup> *But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who*

*doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind.* <sup>7</sup> *For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord.*” Here we see that double-mindedness can cause our prayers to be wasted. Prayer that influences God is prayer that believes!

A sixth circumstance comes from James 4:2-3: “*You do not have, because you do not ask.* <sup>3</sup> *You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.*” Prayer that is always self-serving will not be answered. If you make honoring God the driving principle in your prayers you will not fall into this sin.

A seventh circumstance speaks to husbands. 1 Peter 3:7 charges you: “*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.*” Let my married male readers notice that Peter uses stronger language than simply God will not hear. He says that if you do not treat your wife properly, your prayers will be hindered! Many times, while counseling couples, I have heard the husband say “I have prayed to God for years and He has done nothing!” After spending