

## When Prayers Seemingly Go Unanswered - Colossians 4:2-4 - September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019

- I want to talk to you today about prayer, specifically as it relates to those times when it seems that God is not answering them.
- Woven into the fabric of the text that we have before us today, are specific reasons as to why it seems prayers go unanswered.
- While not exhaustive, what follows are some of the reasons that our prayers can be hindered or seemingly remain unanswered.

### **1. We're not consistent or persistent (Verse 2a)**

- When Paul says "devote yourselves to prayer," what he's saying is we are to be devoted and committed to continue earnestly.
- I think of the parable of the persistent widow in Luke 18, which Jesus taught concerning always praying, and never giving up.

### **2. We're not watchful or thankful (Verse 2b)**

- Here, Paul is saying our devotion to prayer needs to come packaged with both vigilance, diligence and an attitude of gratitude.
- I would suggest that often times our prayer life can be hindered by virtue of the fact that we don't thank God for all He has done.

### **3. We're praying the right way for the wrong thing (Verse 3-4)**

- I have to confess if I were the Apostle Paul I would have asked for prayer that God would free me from the prison that I was in.
- Thankfully, Paul knew God could open more doors for him behind bars, than He ever could were Paul not where God had him.

- There are other reasons for unanswered prayer, and I think I would be grossly remiss were I not to quickly mention just a few.

### **4. Unbelief (Matthew 17:19-21)**

Matthew 17:19-21 - 19 Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" 20 So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. 21 However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."

### **5. Unkind Husbands (1 Peter 3:7)**

1 Peter 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.

### **6. Willful Disobedience (Proverbs 28:9)**

Proverbs 28:9 - If anyone turns a deaf ear to my instruction, even their prayers are detestable.

### **7. Selfish Motives (James 4:3)**

James 4:3 - When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.