

## **REASONS FOR UNANSWERED PRAYER**

1. Text: James 4:1-3
2. Notice in verse 3. "You ask and do not receive."
3. Petitions go unanswered. Is this God's fault? There are some other reasons that come back to us.

### **I. The Person Who Prays**

1. When one is not a child of God.
  - A. Ephesians 1:3 says "all Spiritual blessings are in Christ."
  - B. Proverbs 28:9 "The man who turns from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination."
  - C. Whatever we ask we receive of Him because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing to Him. (I John 3:22)
  - D. Cornelius (Acts 10:2) and Saul (Acts 9:11) were both praying to God and heard by Him, but that is all that is said.
  - E. We do not urge sinners to pray for salvation.
2. When one is not living the life of a Christian.
  - A. I Peter 3:12 The Lord's ears are open to the righteous, but His face is turned against those who do evil.
  - B. James 5:16 The prayer of a righteous man avails much.
  - C. The erring Christian must repent before his prayer (Acts 8:22)
3. When there is a wrong attitude toward others
  - A. Matthew 6:12 We are forgiven as we forgive others.
  - B. Matthew 5:24 Jesus taught reconciliation with brethren before approaching God.
4. When one prays with an unbelieving heart.
  - A. James 1:6 "Ask in faith."
  - B. The same verse tells of wavering in doubt.
  - C. Faith is the keystone of all we do as Christians.

### **II. The Prayer That Is Prayed**

1. Is it in harmony with God's will? I John 5:14 If we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.
2. Are we praying something that would be harmful to us? He would withhold what would be detrimental to us. Frankly, many folks "don't know what is good for them."

### **III. The Purpose Of The Prayer**

1. James 4:3 You ask and do not receive because you ask amiss for your own pleasures.
2. Are our prayers purely selfish. Ask "why?"

Conclusion: Blaming God for unanswered prayer is foolish. "We need to examine ourselves, our prayers, our motives."

**A Sermon preached by Monte Ginnings  
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