

Perfecting Prayer—Praying Through [Lesson 4-a]

Are We There Yet Sermon Notes: Pastor Mike Bayer VillageAlive.com

I want to thank and acknowledge **Barbara Lardinais**, of **Hannah's Cupboard** hannahscupboard.com for her teaching and insights on prayer which I've used in this series.



Are we There Yet?

"The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force." Matthew 11:12

A. Checking for Signs of Victory

Some spiritual battles are **LONG** — way longer than we ever anticipated. The first thing to understand in a long term spiritual battle is **WHY** it is long term!

- The devil (your enemy) wants you to give up and lose!
- If you WIN, he loses ground.
- You are in a battle for the kingdom!

1. Taking the kingdom by force! *Matt 11:12; Luke 16:16*

- The phrase "suffereth violence" is from the Greek word "biazo" and means "to force, to crowd oneself into, to be seized, press and suffer violence."
- During the time of John the Baptist the people were "pressing in" to the kingdom of Heaven--overcoming any obstacle or opposition posed by laws, traditions, unbelief, or any power Satan threw at them, in order to receive the message that John preached.
- We must likewise be willing to 'press in' with **PRAYER** and **PRAY THROUGH** till we see the manifestation of answered prayer. (Praying through Satan's last ditch efforts).
See Exodus 14:13 The enemy behind a sea in front!

B. When You're Stuck at a Stop Light: Unanswered Prayer

There are three main reasons for unanswered prayer:

1. God — His timing and His sovereignty

a. *Ecc 3:1* Times and seasons

Ecc 3:1 To everything *there is* a season, A time for every purpose under heaven:

b. *1 Samuel 1-2:11* Hannah's prayer

1Sa 1:10 And she *was* in bitterness of soul, and prayed to the LORD and wept in anguish. **1Sa 1:11** Then she made a vow and said, "O LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head."

c. *Gal 4:4* The sovereignty of God

Gal 4:4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,

Luk 16:16 "The law and the prophets *were* until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it.

Exo 14:3 For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, 'They *are* bewildered by the land; the wilderness has closed them in.'

Exo 14:13 And Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever.

See the side bar teaching "Ready for Answered Prayer?"

Sovereignty: God's sovereignty which means his absolute and supreme authority to do whatever he chooses, whenever he chooses to do it. For instance, God created the heavens and the earth by his own sovereignty; no one prayed that he would do so because no one existed. Certain things are set by God's own authority. The timing of the coming of Jesus to the earth was set by God. The scripture says he came; **"in the fullness of time."** (Galatians 4:4) No one could have changed that and no one can change the timing of the Second Coming of Christ. It will happen right on schedule.

2. **Satan — his blocking and demonic influence**
a. ***John 10:10* Satan is out to steal our blessings**

Joh 10:10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.

b. ***Luke 4:5-7* Satan's authority in the worldly realm**
See Daniel 10

Luk 4:5 Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. **Luk 4:6** And the devil said to Him, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for *this* has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. **Luk 4:7** Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours."

Satan continues to command a limited authority through a hierarchy of evil beings assigned both to territories and to people carrying out his orders all over the world.

Dan 10:12-13 Then he said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. **Dan 10:13** But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.

Authority: Authority here is 'exousia' which means the 'right' or 'power' to exercise authority. As opposed to 'dunamis' which is the manifested power that results from exercising 'exousia.'

Satan stole (deceived) Adam and Eve out of the 'dominion' (exousia) that God had given them. Jesus restores it at the cross—here the enemy ties to deceive Jesus as he did Adam and Eve.

c. ***Luke 10:19* The good news is that our authority through the name of Jesus is greater than the power of Satan.**

Luk 10:19 Behold, I give you the authority [**power exousia**] to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

If you are sitting at a stop light because of demonic activity it is possible to clear the blockages through spiritual warfare which may include fasting, heightened intercession and taking authority over Satan in the name of Jesus. If this is the case, the light can now turn green and on we go.

3. Ourselves — we can hinder our own prayers

This is the area where we have the most control to turn our STOP light into a green light.

a. Unforgiveness *Mark 11:25*

Mar 11:24 Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive *them*, and you will have *them*. **Mar 11:25** "And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. **Mar 11:26** But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses."

b. Sin *Psalms 66:18*

Psa 66:18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear. **Psa 66:19** But certainly God has heard *me*; He has attended to the voice of my prayer.

c. Wrong Motives *James 4:2-3*

Jam 4:2 You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. **Jam 4:3** You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures.

d. Not knowing God's heart before asking

1 John 5:14-15

1Jo 5:14 Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. **1Jo 5:15** And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

e. Broken relationships-lack of respect *1 Peter 3:7*

1Pe 3:7 Husbands, likewise, dwell with *them* with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that **your** [both husband and wife] prayers may not be hindered.

f. Being double-Minded *James 1:8*

Jam 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. **Jam 1:6** But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. **Jam 1:7** For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; **Jam 1:7** For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;

Weaker Vessels. It is a simple fact of life that the *average* woman is **weaker** than the man physically.

But the fact that a woman is **weaker** in some ways does not mean that she is inferior to man; the Bible never suggests this. Neither does it mean that she might not actually be stronger, or more competent in some areas.

Women are generally more devoted to Christ than men.

The (wife) woman enjoys equal standing before God, receives and operates in the gifts of the Spirit, and shares equally the gift of everlasting life. Also she is more than her husband's equal in bringing new physical life into the world.

When a husband fails to treat his wife according to the Word, prayers are hindered. Biggs says: "The sighs of the injured wife come between the husband's prayers and God's hearing."

Also it is very difficult for a couple to pray together when something is disrupting their fellowship.

If you are currently sitting at a STOP light and have been there too long, you might want to use the time to find out why the light won't change. Is it God and his timing? Is it Satan? Is it something on your end? Take some time to pray specifically about discerning the hold up. **No matter what is going on or how long it takes, KEEP ON PRAYING. Do not give up. Prayer makes a difference and God answers prayer!**