

PRAYER LESSON 209

Prayers of Confession

“I pray and pray and nothing happens.” “I wonder if God even hears me.” Have you ever thought that? I certainly have. There are things I have prayed for that I think are important, yet God does not seem to answer. I find some comfort in the idea that God may be working things out in ways that are not obvious to me, but still I wonder if he will answer.

Lately I have been coming upon verses in scripture that may hold the key to my dilemma. I don't want to believe that the reason my prayers are not answered is me, but it may be the case.

Peter writes in 1 Peter 3:12 **For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.** Could my behavior be the reason God fails to answer? Could I actually be unrighteous in God's eyes? David had also written in Psalm 66:18 **If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.**

Maybe it is time for some real soul searching to see if there is any unrighteousness in me, to see if there are sins that I cherish in my heart. When I start to look at my life very carefully, without my blinders on, I find that I have not lived up to God's expectations. There are sins that I cherish, there are lots of little imperfections that I ought to deal with, lots of things to confess.

I might suggest this as a worthy exercise for each of you. Before you ask God for anything else, ask him to show you where you need to adjust your behavior, then confess your sins and ask him as David did in Psalm 51:10, to **Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.**