

# What Stops God's Blessings? by Joyce Rhoads

If we understand 'blessing' to mean 'help and approval from God', it follows that His blessings rest upon those whose conduct is approved by God.

Genesis 49 records Jacob's final words to his sons. In his remarks concerning Joseph (vv. 25-26) he acknowledges the source of our blessings. ***"May the God of your father help you; may the Almighty bless you with the blessings of the heavens above, and blessings of the watery depths below, and blessings of the breasts and womb. May my fatherly blessings on you surpass the blessings of my ancestors, reaching to the heights of the eternal hills. May these blessings rest on the head of Joseph, who is a prince among his brothers."***

Receiving God's blessings is not contingent upon living a perfect life, ***"for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God"*** (Romans 3:23). Repentance and God's grace are the only way we as sinners are cleansed from wrongdoing as baptized believers. When we sin, the only way to come back to God is through His grace.

The Bible reveals many obstacles to God's blessings.

One obstacle is revealed in Isaiah 59:1-3, it says ***"Surely the arm of the Lord is not too short to save, nor His ear too dull to hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear."***

Sin separates man from God. He hates sin because of how damaging the consequences are to us and those we love. We cannot be forgiven of sin on our own merit. God's grace through His Son's sacrifice on the cross is the only means to forgiveness.

We are separated from God by our disobedience. Ephesians 4:17-19 tells us, ***"So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, and they are full of greed."***

Deuteronomy 28:1-3 tells us, ***"If you fully obey***

***the Lord your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. All these blessings will come on you and accompany you if you obey the Lord your God: You will be blessed in the city and blessed in the country."***

Our attitudes can separate us from God. Some of these attitudes are selfishness, contempt and pride, just to name a few.

1 John 2:16 says, ***"For everything in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--comes not from the Father but from the world."*** Paul writes in Galatians 5:19-21, ***"The acts of the flesh are obvious: ...hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy."*** Proverbs 16:18 says, ***"Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall."***

We are to imitate Jesus' qualities. Philippians 2:5-7 tells us ***"..Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to His own advantage; rather, He made Himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness."***

David is described in Acts 13:22. ***"..He made David their king. God testified concerning him: 'I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.'"***

Even though God thought of David this way, David still allowed his attitudes to cause sin in his life. David wrote in Psalm 32:3 & 5, ***"When I kept silent my bones wasted away, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night, Your hand was heavy on me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. Then I acknowledged my sin to You and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord.' And You forgave the guilt of my sin."***

We, as sinners, often lose sight of our goal—Heaven. Many times it takes trauma or heartbreak to allow us to regain that focus; and He is quick to forgive us!

None of us deserves God's blessings. They are ours because of His unmerited, undeserved and unearned favor toward us.