

How You Can Discern the Hindrances to Your Spiritual Breakthrough

One of the most challenging things that we will continue to face throughout our Christian walk is dealing with cycles and seasons of resistance, opposition, persecution, temptation and unseen obstacles. It seems that when we are close to the finish line, life trips us up by creating stumbling blocks.

It is the plan of the evil one to disqualify those who are called to run and finish their spiritual race with endurance and momentum (see Hebrews 12:1). The Lord wants His people to pay attention when they are gaining spiritual traction and growing in their faith in Him. The devil looks for opportune times such as those to break their stride.

Types of Resistance

There are types of resistance that come in unexpected ways when we are living life on purpose. These types of oppositions or hindrances that we face commonly include health scares, betrayal, toxic relationships, bad sleeping patterns, unhealthy eating habits, inconsistent dieting and financial hardships. These natural challenges seem as if they are overwhelming and too hard to overcome. We also struggle with emotional and physical challenges, such as depression, stress, oppression, anxiety, paranoia, lust, ungodly thoughts and desires, fleshly temptations and appetites, sickness, disease, unexplained illnesses and other bodily difficulties.

Whether it is seen, unseen or supernatural, we must understand that resistance does exist. In one way or another, we will face it. Dealing with resistance from a spiritual and biblical perspective is needed if we are going to have the faith and courage to conquer it. It is not a coincidence that when we

are accomplishing the Father's will and purpose, we go through sudden trials, resistance, persecution, opposition and life challenges. You must, however, remain faithful to the Lord in spite of what is working against you in the unseen. You must not choose your will over God's will.

There is no doubt that tough times will come. The first-century believers experienced them, and those living in the last days will as well. Terrible days, however, often come to build believers' character and faith in God. When you go through difficult life circumstances and situations, you must take and leave your burdens at the feet of the Lord (see Psalm 55:22). He will sustain you and help you to break through any unseen barriers and obstacles that are out of your control.

The Bible says, "You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore" (Ps. 16:11, ESV). In God's presence, there is joy and He will reveal to you the path that leads to life and success.

The enemy knows this, and he will do anything in his power to make it difficult for you to achieve your life's goal and spiritual success.

Lord of the Breakthrough

The Lord wants to bless those who are His and bring them into a place called breakthrough. He is the Lord of the breakthrough and He will fight for you when breakthrough seems unreachable. If He is called the Lord of the Breaker (see Micah 2:13, AMP), the Breach (see 2 Samuel 5:20 AMP, CEV) and the Breakthrough, then He is the War General in battle that can accomplish that for you.

How many spiritual battles and victories have we missed because we did not take the time to seek God on a matter in spiritual warfare resistance?

King David addressed the resistance to his breakthrough by inquiring of the Lord. The Lord gave him a strategy against the Philistine army that ultimately facilitated a breakthrough that was like a gushing river. David made this statement of what God did for him in two different battles against his enemy: "The Lord has broken through my enemies before me like the breakthrough of waters" (2 Sam. 5:20, NASB). We should seek the Lord first to find out exactly what we are up against and how we should conquer those places, people and things that are blocking us.

Every resistance or setback is not created by the enemy, but things such as wrong relationships and alignments can hinder us. Also, certain geographical locations can be environments of hindrance if they are not conducive for expansion, growth or success. Even places of employment or places of worship can work against us if the Lord is requiring us to go in a new direction. There are many factors to consider when it comes to natural and spiritual hindrances.

Believers often over-spiritualize hindrances by blaming every setback on the enemy. But could it be that we become our biggest hindrance by assisting the enemy when we disobey the Father's instructions and wisdom for our lives? It is easier to blame-shift than to take full responsibility over our spiritual growth and decisions.

It is wise to ask the Father what specific, unseen things are delaying your breakthrough. Do not allow the enemy to dupe you into believing that God does not want you to experience His blessings. They only can happen, however, through the act of obedience.

Discern the Hindrance

Anything that is restraining or restricting you from prayer, fasting, reading and studying the Word of God, spending time with the Father or going to the next level in your

relationship and communion with the Holy Spirit will require spiritual breakthrough. Believers must be able to locate and discern where they are experiencing their greatest setbacks or resistance. They must then determine what necessary steps and plans of action are required to receive breakthrough in those areas.

Do not take matters in your own hands. Seek the wisdom and timing of God. Paul and Silas encountered a hindering spirit through a fortune teller on their way to prayer (see Acts 16:16–18). It took several days for Paul to discern what was the source of her powers. He did not assume that he knew, but he discerned accurately with the help of Holy Spirit. Later, Paul rebuked the spirit in the name of Jesus and commanded it to come out of her. He needed the power and authority in Jesus' name to address this preventing spirit.

Discerning of spirits is needed vitally in the body of Christ to deal with spiritual backlash, retaliation, setback, opposition, resistance or demonic hindrances. To embrace and encounter spiritual breakthroughs, we must first discern spiritually what invisible hindrances are present. Spiritual discernment is required to recognize and deal with spiritual matters (see 1 Corinthians 2:14). No matter what attacks the enemy decides to send your direction to break you down, you will achieve breakthrough by the power of God through the Holy Spirit in you.

\When trials and setbacks come unexpectedly to put a hold on your life, the Bible says to rejoice.

“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, when you encounter trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Allow perseverance to finish its work, so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything” (James 1:2–4 BSB).

This sounds like a hard thing to do when subtle or blatant

obstacles continue to show up. These hidden agendas and setbacks that force delays can cause us to lose all hope and confidence. We must understand that God will provide His power to overcome all that comes our way, which is why we can have joy. We often misread what Paul wrote in Corinthians. “No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear” (1 Cor. 10:13).

This verse, spoken by Paul, means that the strength of the temptations that believers face will be proportionate to the strength that God gives His people to resist them. We often misinterpret this verse to mean that the Father will not permit unfortunate things to occur in our lives that we cannot bear. Such an interpretation contradicts Paul’s later writings, where he goes into detail about the hardship and great pressure he encountered in Asia. These hardships were far beyond his ability to endure, to the point that he despaired of hope and life itself (see 2 Corinthians 1:8–9). God will allow us to experience difficulties in life that are too much for us to bear so that we can learn to depend on His supernatural strength and not rely solely on our own strength (see 2 Corinthians 1:10).

He knows what worldly temptations or works of the enemy we are able to overcome by the help of the Holy Spirit. God never said that we would not have problems. We should arm ourselves with God’s Word by humbling and submitting ourselves to it and to God.

If we do that, we can resist the devil and he will flee. {eo}

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