



The Power of Prayer

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Introduction:

Two men were talking together. The first challenged the other, "If you are so religious, let's hear you quote the Lord's Prayer. I bet you \$10.00 you can't." The second responded, "Now I lay my head down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep. And if I die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take." The first pulled out his wallet and fished out a ten dollar bill, muttering, "I didn't think you could do it!"

Source Unknown

Today we are going to look at the power of prayer. God has given us powerful tools to use for advancing His kingdom. He has given us the power of speech, the message of good news, and this morning we are going to focus on the power we have in prayer.

All too often we go to many sources, like our spouse, our neighbors, friends, work acquaintances, but we don't take time to go to God about things that need His attention, direction, and help. Then we wonder why things turn out the way they do.

Prayer is a powerful tool that God has given to us and every one of us needs to understand the tool we have, and how to use it. We should be using it every day, and sometimes several times a day.

TEXT: [James 5:16](#)

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

I. Prayer is powerful when offered from righteous people.

Righteous means to be innocent. There is no possible way we can be righteous or innocent on our own. All of us have broken the law of God so we are all guilty and stand condemned. We can not make ourselves innocent, nor can we reverse our guilt.

So how do we become righteous people so our prayers are powerful? We are made innocent – or righteous when by faith we accept Jesus' death as the punishment for our sin.

Then when we pray, we are praying out of a relationship that has been justified or brought in line with God's original design for us.

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.

God sees and hears the righteous and hears our prayers. Some people may ask why we need to pray. If God sees and hears our prayers, then why do we even need this tool?

I believe when we pray it reminds us that He is God and we are His children. It reminds us that we have

certain things which we are responsible for, and others that He is responsible for. When we pray it reminds us that we do have a purpose on this earth, and God does want to use us.

II. Prayer is powerful when mixed with faith.

Mark 11:24 – “Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.”

The word “believe” here is to trust, to have faith. There has to be a confidence when we use the tool of prayer that God is listening, and that He will respond. God’s word tells us that we don’t have because we don’t ask. At times we ask but don’t believe that God is listening, or that God can do what we ask, or that God has heard. Prayer is a powerful tool that God has given us to seek His purpose fulfilled and His name glorified.

I spoke about this verse a couple of weeks ago. God wants to answer our prayers. The purpose for which we pray is that His will is done. *The answer which we seek should be that His purpose is revealed and His name given glory.*

God is under no obligation to answer prayers that are selfish, that promote something which is not in line with God’s will or God’s purpose. There are times prayers are not answered because we pray out of a passion for self or our own lust. We pray with the wrong motive. We pray with the wrong end in sight. Prayer is not to see whether I can get God to do things for me, to join my agenda, the way I want, when I want. Prayer should be “can I capture the mind, intent and will of God, and seek Him to make real His will and plan in any situation.”

James 1:6-8 - But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. ⁷That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.

Prayer that is powerful is mixed with faith.

Hebrews 11:6 - And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

III. Prayer is powerful when we forgive.

Mark 11:25 – “And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.”

If we exercise the choice to forgive those who do anything against us, we have chosen to make our prayers powerful. In the same light, if we choose to hold forgiveness we set up a whole cycle of weakening the power and effectiveness of prayer in our lives. First of all we put ourselves in the place of God by condemning that person for their sin. As a result we do not find ourselves in a place of righteousness because we can not receive God’s forgiveness for our own sin. Then when we pray, our prayers go unanswered.

If you want the tool of prayer to be powerful, be sure that you are not granting forgiveness to someone who has wronged you. We literally tie the hands of God from moving, when we keep something in our heart against someone.

IV. Prayer is powerful when we respect our wife.

This last point is directed toward men who are married. Husbands, your prayers can be hindered by the way you treat your wife. God knew it was not good for you to be alone so he gave you your wife. Look at her as a gift from God. Respect her by speaking kindly to her. Treat her with gentleness. Shower her with love. Do you respect her enough to refrain from drunkenness? Do you respect her enough to not verbally abuse her? Do you respect her enough to not watch pornography? Do you respect her enough to not put her down?

You are one with her in body and spirit. Why would you not treat her with respect?

1 Peter 3:7 - Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

William Barclay wrote this in his book entitled “Prodigals and Those Who Love”.

When we pray, remember:

1. The love of God that wants the best for us.
2. The wisdom of God that knows what is best for us.

3. The power of God that can accomplish it.

Several weeks ago, in my devotional time with the Lord, I was in the Book of I Kings chapter 8. The

story surrounding this portion of scripture is where Solomon has completed building the temple of God. His prayer is recorded in verses 22-53.

Conclusion:

The central significance of prayer is not in the things that happen as results, but in the deepening intimacy and un-hurried communion with God at His central throne of control in order to discover a “sense of God's need in order to call on God's help to meet that need.”

E.M. Bounds, [The Weapon Of Prayer](#)