

Pray Like It Works

Message Notes

Tension:

- I want to talk to you about your prayer life.
- **Many of us struggle in our prayer lives.**
- Top reasons people don't pray
 - Guilt
 - Hebrews 4 tells us that we can boldly come before God's throne.
 - Doubt
 - 1 John 5 tells us that he hears our prayers
 - Disappointment
 - James 5 tells us that the fervent prayer of a righteous person has much power
 - Flesh
 - Matthew 26 tells us that the spirit is willing

Text:

James 5:13–18 (NLT) — 13 **Are any of you suffering hardships? You should pray. Are any of you happy? You should sing praises.** 14 **Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord.** 15 **Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make you well.** And if you have committed any sins, you will be forgiven. 16 **Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.** 17 Elijah was as human as we are, and yet when he prayed earnestly that no rain would fall, none fell for three and a half years! 18 Then, when he prayed again, the sky sent down rain and the earth began to yield its crops.

You should pray! - Like a doctor that recommends the same medicine for every ailment

1. Lesson #1 - Pray at all times

1. Verse 13: **Are any of you suffering hardships? You should pray. Are any of you happy? You should sing praises.** 14 **Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord.**
2. There's no question, the Bible teaches ceaseless prayer
3. Verses on ceaseless prayer:
 1. 1 Thessalonians 5:17 (NLT) — 17 Never stop praying.

2. Luke 18:1 (NLT) — 1 One day Jesus told his disciples a story to show that they should always pray and never give up.
3. Ephesians 6:18 (NLT) — 18 Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.
4. Colossians 4:2 (NLT) — 2 Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart.
4. It means again, and again, and again. **#Persistence**
5. It means living in the light of his presence. **#Dwelling**
6. Why does praying at all times work?
 1. It puts you in a posture of faith
 2. It puts you in a posture of intimacy
 3. It puts you in a being spirit-led

2. Lesson #2 - Pray in faith

1. Verse 15: **Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make you well.**
2. What it is not:
 1. Pray, don't whine
 2. Pray, don't talk to yourself
 3. Pray, don't argue with God
3. What does praying in faith mean?
4. Turn it towards Jesus
 1. Faith is the currency of the Kingdom **"be it done to you according to your faith"**
 2. Faith that He's the source - Source
 3. Faith that He's able - Able
 4. Faith that He's willing - Willing
 5. Faith that I can come - Approach

3. Lesson #3 - Pray with one another

1. Verse 16: **Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.**
2. The point here is corporate prayer
3. Jesus modeling corporate prayer:
 1. Jesus taught them "Our Father" - Lord's prayer
 2. Jesus is with His disciples as He prays in John 17 - Last prayer
 3. Jesus prays for Peter that his faith would not falter - Prayer for Peter
 4. When praying in Gethsemane, he wanted them with him. - Gethsemane
4. Why is prayer together powerful?
 1. Like a signed petition
 2. Strengthened by the faith of another believer
 3. God works in unity and agreement

4. Lesson #4 - Pray in righteousness

1. Verse 16b: **The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.**
2. The point here is praying from a place of right standing

1. 1 Peter 3:12 (NLT) — 12 The eyes of the LORD watch over those who do right, and his ears are open to their prayers. But the LORD turns his face against those who do evil.”
2. Psalm 66:18 (NLT) — 18 If I had not confessed the sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.
3. Why does God listen to the prayers of the righteous:
 1. Prayers being heard in heaven is a gift from God.
 2. God bestows that gift upon people in right standing with Himself.
 3. If two nations are friends, requests flow freely, if nations are at odds, requests are non-essential, the only communication needs to be about how to get on the same page.
5. **Lesson #5 - Pray with passion**
 1. Elijah was as human as we are, and yet when he prayed earnestly that no rain would fall, none fell for three and a half years
 2. The point here is the energy that goes into the prayer
 3. "en-er-GOO-men-ay"
 4. Why does praying with passion have an effect?
 1. The alignment of emotions, intellect, spirituality, sincerity, and trust = effectual prayer

Practical

- Let's start the year strong!
- If you need prayer, let's do it now