

Praying With Power

James 5:14-18

Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. 15. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. 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. 17. Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. 18. Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.

Introduction

- Example from Scripture, from history, from today
- The importance of prayer that is answered. - *God's reputation is at stake!*
- My house shall be called a house of prayer - prayer changes things, prayer works.

I. The Problem of Powerless Prayer

- Unfamiliarity with God - Daniel 11:32
 - ◇ Haphazard Nature - Round to it = round tuit / vain babbling
 - ◇ Uncertainty - wishing well Fatalism - que sera, sera
 - ◇ Lack of it - little if any, sporadic, as needed (boot-strap Christian-Humanism)
- Unbelief - Mark 6:5 And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed *them*.
- Ungodly Motives - James 4:3

II. The Pattern for Powerful Prayers

- He Knew God by Spending Time with God - Elijah / Elisha
- He Prayed in the Will of God - George Mueller
- He Believed God for Great Things - Jn 14:12

Conclusion

God is calling every one of his children to enter the promised land of blessing and fullness. He is not a child-cheater. He does not willingly hold back blessings, provisions, protection, healing, and answers to prayer. He is GOOD.

1. Spend time alone with God (walk with God)
2. Plunge into His Word (Get to know his word and will)
3. Believe God for Great Promises & Great Answers to Prayer

PRACTICAL EXERCISES

- Deal with sin, guilt, and doubt
- Pray about everything - pray first, pray always, pray hard
- Write down every significant prayer request you make before God.
- Find a promise in the Word of God for each request - believe God!
- Expect God to move on your behalf -

ILLUSTRATIONS OF ANSWERED PRAYER

- George Mueller - bread and milk
- Mom - bread, Steve's eye,
- The Flask - 70 Years of Miracles
- Our Home - Aimee's arm, my healing, finding lost money,
- God would you do a miracle? _____
- Kreg Vaughne - Perspectives Class - miracle healing of cerebral edema on Mt Everest

John 14:12-14

I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

God still moves mountains!

Praying with Power - We all secretly wish we could pray with power, but 99 and 44/100s of us fall far short of being men and women of powerful prayers. The Bible speaks of powerful prayers. Powerful prayer, or power filled prayers, are believing prayers, or better known as faith filled prayers that are effective. Hebrews 11:6 makes it clear what it takes to pray with effective power. James 1 clarifies that real faith does not vacillate and James 5 assures us that the same power of Elijah's prayers is available to every single one of us.

The Problem

The problem most of us face in prayer is our lack of it. We are strangers to the throne room of God and are infrequent visitors there. We have been disappointed in prayer. God did not answer according to our wishes so we gave up. We became fatalistic, Christian humanists. Our prayers at best are like throwing coins into a wishing well and hoping something good is going to happen. For many prayer is not much more than a good luck charm. For many Christians it is used but not much is expected to come of it. Like Huck Finn - ain't nothin' to it. We are an army of humanistic self-help Christians believing at best that God only helps those who help themselves. That is Benjamin Franklin theology, not the Bible!

The Pattern

Jesus gives us a pattern for power-filled praying.

The first pattern is that he knew God by spending time alone with him. He walked with God, talked with God, and lived in intimate communion with the Father. He prayed about every little thing and every big thing in his life. He believed, and knew, God was intimately concerned even about the number of hairs on his head. Knowing God is essential to having a powerful prayer life.

The second pattern Jesus gave us for powerful praying was that he lived for the will of God. He did not live for his own consumer mentality. He did use prayer as a way to get stuff for himself. He lived for God's glory and God's kingdom. *"Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth (in my life) as it is in heaven."* Most of us pray to get stuff - we are sick, we have a crisis, we need money, etc. We pray more when we are in a crisis than at any other time. Every prayer ought to be examined to see if it is for God's glory or for our greed. We ought to ask ourselves what we intend to do with the answered prayer when we get it. How will we glorify God in it? Will we glorify God at all? Will we tell others of his miracles? I dare say most are like the 9 lepers Jesus healed, they did not even turn back to give thanks to God. (ie) George Mueller (ie) John Stewart (ie) Dottie Cress

The third pattern Jesus gave us for powerful praying was his faith. He believed God. Hebrews 11 tells us emphatically that if we do not have real faith we can expect nothing from God. Is that why so many of us receive nothing from God? In Nazareth (Mark 6:5-6) Jesus could do no mighty miracles as he did elsewhere. The reason? Their lack of faith - "because of their unbelief." Make no mistake faith is powerful, but un-faith, disbelief is just as powerful. Jesus affirms to us the power of believing prayer - but will we believe it?

Matthew 17 and Matthew 21 both affirm that if we believe and doubt not we shall be able not only to pray about a matter but speak to the mountain and it will be removed. Jesus promised us greater works than even he experienced because he was going to the Father. Why don't we see those works? Unbelief. Skepticism.

NIV SCRIPTURES

Daniel 11:32

but the people who know their God will firmly resist him.

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.

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. 7. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; 8. he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.

James 5:14-18

Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. 15. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. 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. 17. Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. 18. Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.

Matthew 17:20

He replied, "Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you. "

Matthew 21:21

Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and it will be done. 22. If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer."

John 14:13-14

And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. 14. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

John 16:24-26

Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete. 25. "Though I have been speaking figuratively, a time is coming when I will no longer use this kind of language but will tell you plainly about my Father. 26. In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf.

James 4:3

When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

Luke 12:32

But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well. 32. "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.