

Does Prayer Really Work?

We can be assured that when we pray – God listens. He will answer our prayers. If one only knew of all the good accomplished - & the evil averted through prayer – I think we would be even more diligent in our prayer. The Bible attests that prayer works. Do we pray w/the expectation that our prayers will be answered?

I. Prayer works for the Christian.

- A. Jesus testified to the power & effectiveness of prayer.
 - 1. Mt. 7:7-11 – God will give what is good to those who ask Him.
 - 2. John. 14:13-14...
- B. Paul testified to the power & effectiveness of prayer.
 - 1. Eph. 3:20 – power of prayer implied here as Paul encourages Ephesians.
 - 2. Phil. 4:6 – we can share everything with Him!
- C. Heb. 4:16 – draw near w/confidence. See also 10:22-23; 11:6

II. A concentration on Js. 5:16b.

- A. Focus upon “effective/fervent” in 5:16b.
 - 1. Strong’s: *to be mighty in; to work (at)*.
 - 2. Thayer: *to be operative; be at work; put forth power*.
 - 3. Prayers that are effectual are:
 - a) Sincere & earnest.
 - b) Hearty & persevering
 - 4. Not listless and indifferent.
- B. Consider also that prayer is mighty in what it is able to do.
 - 1. In other words: *prayer of a righteous man is very powerful in its operation*.

III. Who are the Righteous with Effective Prayer? See 5:16b.

- A. Righteous seek for God - Heb. 11:6; Mt. 5:6; Isa. 55:6; Jer. 29:13
- B. Righteous keep God’s commandments - 1 John. 2:1; 29; 3:7-12; 22; 5:2-3
- C. When righteous pray – their requests are:
 - 1. According to God’s will – Mt. 26:39; 1 John. 5:14-15
 - 2. In the name of Christ – Eph. 5:20; Col. 3:17
 - 3. Humble – Psa. 10:17-18
 - a) Lk. 18:9-14 – Pharisee/publican
 - 4. with thanksgiving – Phil 4:6
 - 5. Unceasing – 1 Thess. 5:17; LK. 18:1-8
- D. Righteous are those who have been forgiven – Rom. 4:7-9

IV. Js. 5:16b - The Prayer of the Righteous Will Accomplish Much.

- A. Opposite: *Prayer of unrighteous will accomplish little*. See Isa. 59:2; Prov. 15:8-9; 29
 - 1. Principle taught by Peter in 1 Pet. 3:12
 - 2. If living sinful life – how can one expect to call upon God to help – while continually rejecting Him at other times?
 - 3. Can the sinner expect God to bless Him/reward Him for his actions?
- B. If living righteously – we can expect our prayer to be heard/answered.
 - 1. 1 Kings 18:41-46 – Elijah’s prayer for rain
 - 2. Ex. 32:11-13 – Moses’ prayer for Israelites

Conclusion:

- A. Bible teaches that there is power in prayer for the righteous person who prays to God in faith.
- B. Do you live by faith? Are you forgiven? Do your prayers accomplish much?