

PRAYER'S PRACTICE

- I. What are the CONDITIONS for POWERFUL prayer? (James 5:16b)
 - A. It must be EFFECTIVE, meaning, “that which WORKS” (cf. John 16:23-24)
 1. The Father is under no OBLIGATION to do what we WANT
 2. He is INCAPABLE of doing anything CONTRARY to His own WILL
 3. Therefore, prayer must be according to the WILL OF GOD.
 - B. It must be FERVENT, or “SINCERE and SERIOUS” (cf. James 2:15-16)
 1. We must not ask GOD to do something WE should do
 2. When we ask God to ACT, we should expect to be INVOLVED
 - C. It must be offered by a “RIGHTEOUS man”
 1. RIGHTEOUSNESS requires OBEDIENCE to God’s will
 2. It requires REPENTANT FAITH when sin is recognized (1 John 1:8-10)
 - D. It can “ACCOMPLISH MUCH”
 1. Does not mean it will DO what I DEMAND
 2. Includes the FORGIVENESS of SINS (James 5:16; 1 John 1:9)
 3. Includes the SATISFACTION of God’s DISCIPLINE (James 5:13-15; Heb. 12:5-11)
 4. Includes making YOU more intimately ACQUAINTED with GOD (Phil. 1:9-11; 3:8-10)
 5. Results in your being STRENGTHENED in your spiritual WARFARE (Eph. 6:10-18; Mark 14:38; Luke 22:46; 2 Cor. 13:7).
- II. WHO Should Pray?

- A. EVERY Christian should pray
- B. Christian FAMILIES should pray
- C. CHURCHES need to pray TOGETHER
 - 1. Included both MEN and WOMEN (Acts 1:14; Luke 8:1-3)
 - 2. Included both MATURE Christians and NEW CONVERTS
 - 3. Included the RESPECTED and the OBSCURE

III. Is It Ever WRONG to Pray?

- A. When God's INSTRUCTIONS are CLEAR (Josh. 3:7-17)
 - 1. Prayer for COURAGE to OBEY can be appropriate
 - 2. Praying for INSTRUCTION can amount to UNBELIEF
- B. When your RESPONSIBILITY is KNOWN (Joshua 1:1-9)
- C. When prayer is a SUBSTITUTE for OBEDIENCE
 - 1. We must not ask God to make EXCEPTIONS to His instructions
 - 2. We must not ask God for guidance while FAILING to obey
 - 3. We must not BLAME God for our problems while TOLERATING sin in our lives or the lives of those for whom we are responsible

IV. Summary

- A. Maintaining our relationship to OTHERS and to GOD
- B. Fulfilling our responsibility to HONOR God, FURTHER His kingdom, and DO His will
- C. Submitting our requests to GOD'S WILL
 - 1. To help us GROW in Him (Col. 1:9; 2 Thes. 1:11-12)
 - 2. To help us COMMUNICATE with Him (1 Thes. 5:17; 1 Tim. 2:8)
 - 3. To help us DEPEND upon Him (Luke 18:1-8; John 14:13-14; 2 Thes. 3:1)