

Keys to Effective Prayer

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[0:00] How to pray. How to pray. That's important to know isn't it? The power of prayer this morning.! And we're going to go to the book of James, chapter 5 verse 16. James 5 verse 16.

Confess your faults one to another and pray one for another that you may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain. And it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

And he prayed again and the heaven gave rain and the earth brought forth her fruit. We all want to have the kind of prayer that works, don't we? The kind of prayer that works.

This is the kind of prayer we're talking about here in James 5. And as we read in that second part of verse 16, James 5 verse 16, it reads, The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

[1:12] So note that it is firstly prayer with power. It tells us here that prayer that works is effectual fervent. And this word effectual fervent is really translated from one word and it is energeo.

We get our word energy from this word effectual fervent or energeo. Effectual fervent. So it's talking about power, isn't it? Energy, power. It means to be active, to do, to be mighty, in, to work.

And it's interesting, the same word is used twice in Philippians 2 verse 13 that underlies the English translation. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

The word worketh and the word do is this energeo as well. So it's like God's working, God's activating, God's energizing. That's prayer. It's effectual, it's fervent, it's energeo.

It's got that sense of power, the power of prayer. Think of the power of prayer. What do we tap into when we pray? The power of God. That's the power of prayer.

[2:20] And this kind of prayer, it's described here in this verse as being present tense in continuous action. So it isn't a single act of prayer, it's not just one prayer, it's a prayer life, it's praying.

It's an ongoing act of prayer, an ongoing attitude of prayer. And friends today we do believe in the power of prayer, don't we? We believe in the power of prayer and that prayer is effectual.

We tap into that supernatural power of God beyond our own power and strength and energy. And when you think of that communication link with the energeo, the power of God himself, when you think of it, that communication link that is prayer.

Our communication line carrier is not Optus or AAPT or Telstra. It isn't some saint or Mary even. The communication line is direct to the almighty God through the mediator, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

He is that communication line, isn't it? We've got that direct link with heaven as we pray. And he intercedes for us likewise in prayer. So there's tremendous power, brother, sister, tremendous power for you that is in prayer.

[3:40] Tremendous power that we can tap into. And the Lord Jesus, we know, speaks often of prayer. It tells us in Matthew 19 verse 26, it reads, But Jesus beheld them and said unto them, With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.

Think of the possibility of the power of prayer, the possibilities of prayer. Just as you might get that tiny electrical plug as you plug it into your wall socket, and I know there's some experts in that department here today.

As you get that electrical plug and you plug it into the wall socket, it's like beyond that wall socket there's this massive power grid that that little plug plugs into.

And think of it really for your little prayer that you're tapping into, the power grid of the ultimate power, the unlimited power of God himself. And when we pray, when you pray, you access that one who can accomplish the impossible.

It's within his ability because he is able to answer prayer. And when we pray, we access the one who can accomplish the impossible.

[4:54] Here's what someone said about prayer. Prayer is the most powerful form of energy one can generate. The influence of prayer on the human mind and body is as demonstrable as that of secretion glands.

Prayer is a force as real as terrestrial gravity. When you drop something, it's as real as gravity, the power of gravity.

It supplies us with a steady flow of sustaining power in our daily lives. So said Alexis Carroll. He was a French surgeon and biologist.

He said there's something physical that happens with prayer. There's something that happens in the very fibers of the body, of the mind. There's an energy there. There's a sustaining.

There's a power that's demonstrable in the human mind and body. Something about prayer goes beyond what we can humanly know. We can underestimate the power of prayer, brothers and sisters, can't we?

[5:58] It tells us about our Lord. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us.

Interesting the word worketh here is that energy again. God's power is working in us. It's that effectual. It's that fervent. It's that prayerfulness. It's that power. It's God's power who is able to do abundantly above, exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or even that we think.

So even before we pray, before we ask, he's able to do. God is able by his great power to work in us and especially more so as we pray, even more so.

Another quote. One of the great failures of the church is that we often try to accomplish with human systems what only God can do. You know, we might try in our own failing human effort to do this or that and as a church we might plan this or that but unless God's in it, it's in vain.

It's empty, isn't it? And we can't accomplish through our own human invention or effort what only God can do. We must tap into that, that awesome energy, the power of God.

[7:12] And we need to pray church. We must not neglect the power of prayer. And I know the psalm, have that discipline of prayer. I know we could all do better. Couldn't we?

I know I could. To have that discipline of prayer. To have that devotion to prayer. That time slot of prayer. That attitude, that heart of prayer. That prayerfulness. And we need the power of God.

And that prayerfulness can only come as we truly learn to pray and act prayerfully too. It's not just, as I say, little token prayers here or there. It's having that mindset to pray. As he tells us, pray always.

It tells us, pray without ceasing. It's almost like, wow, that should be how we live. We should live by prayer. We should live prayerfully with that heart of prayer. And we know in the context here of James 5, it tells us about one who prayed, Elijah.

And Elijah prayed and what happened? Powerful things. The rain got stopped and then the rain got started. That's powerful, isn't it? Something that we can't affect by our own effort.

[8:15] Even all the weather technology of the day can't affect that kind of change. But the power of God can. And Elijah prayed and he saw these powerful results. It was the power of faith.

And we see that in 1 Kings 18, 41, where he addresses Ahab the king and he says, get thee up, eat and drink for there is a sound. There is a sound of abundance of rain.

Even though there hadn't been rain for that long, long time. He says, I can hear it now. I can hear it by faith. The sound of abundance of rain. He prayed and he believed that the rain was coming.

By faith, he knew that his prayer was answered already. Before the rain started to fall. Think of prayer. What can prayer achieve? Here's a good quote.

If a church wants a better pastor, it can get one by praying for the one it has. So I know there's room for improvement right here in this skin. There's room for improvement in this pastor. So pray for a better pastor, please.

[9:13] That you might have a better pastor. Amen. Pray for the one that you have. Pray for me. Pray for the church. Pray for the outreach. Pray for the families, the church ministries, the children's ministry, the youth ministry.

Pray for the music ministry. Pray for the everything. Every aspect. The ladies ministry. The Bible studies. Pray for one another. There is power in prayer.

Amen. There is power in prayer. And I love this quote too. Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees. We don't realise that power of prayer can have an effect in a spiritual dimension in times of conflict with our devoted enemy.

There is a sense that Satan trembles when we pray. There is a sense where we have power beyond our own power and his protection and health and strength. To battle on.

Spiritually so. Prayer is powerful because it is heard in heaven. Because it is heard by God. We see that in Psalm 65 verse 2.

[10:22] O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come. One of his descriptions here is the one who hears prayer. The one who hears prayer. Amen.

Dear saint, know that he hears your prayer. Even when it seems like the sky is brass, he hears your prayer. The Bible says he's the one who hears your prayer. And believe it.

Believe it. He does. God hears the prayers of his people. And he is always listening. You don't have to wait to come to church to pray. Don't think that prayer is about a place or even a posture.

Or your own kind of machinations. It's that God is always listening. And you can pray when you're at work. You can pray when you're on route to work.

Or at home with your family. Or on your own. You can pray. And what matters is he is always, always listening. And there's amazing unsat power there in prayer.

[11:19] Effectual prayer. Powerful prayer. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man. Availeth much. So much. So it is prayer with power.

Number one. It availeth much. It's also, secondly, prayer with passion. This kind of prayer, it says it's fervent. Fervent. This means it's burning with passion.

It's a heartfelt plea. When we pray, we can pray with a fervency. With a fervent spirit. It's passionate prayer. It's white hot. Prayer, real prayer, is not just a passive request.

There's a passion in it. And it could encompass, we could reckon, of intense pleading. Of, by faith, pleading before that throne of grace.

It's prayer from a heart that's burdened for others. When you pray for one another, they come on your heart, don't they? They come to your mind. People that think, oh, I should pray for this one, that one. About this or that.

[12:18] That you know is happening for them. And we can do that. We can deliberately so set our mind to pray for different ones. They come to our mind and heart. And name them in your prayer.

Have a list of names and pray. I know someone had the idea of our little booklet with names on it to pray through. My sister Shirley had the idea.

We're taking that list of names, members, adherents that is in our little booklet. And work through page by page. So that you cover a page or so every so often when you pray.

It's a good practice to have that heart that is burdened to pray. Have a passion for others. Because sometimes we get passionate about our own prayers, our own needs. But we should be passionately praying for others.

That we would love our brothers and sisters so that we'd get a heart burden for them. And it's persevering prayer. Think of times where our Lord demonstrated prayer. Of course he's the ultimate model for everything.

[13:18] And to think that our Lord Jesus prayed so. What a testament it should be to us. When we read for example in Luke 6 verse 12. It tells how it came to pass in those days that he went out into a mountain to pray.

And continued all night in prayer to God. That's something isn't it? To continue all night in prayer to God. That he would have such a devotion to prayer. That it was such a persevering of prayer.

And our Lord tells about prayer in Luke 18. It tells, our Lord tells of a widow who kept coming to a judge. And bothering him, pestering him, troubling him.

Over and over was the sense of it here. She kept coming to the judge to plead her case. And our Lord compared that to persistent prayer. That we would have a heart to persist in prayer. To persevere in prayer. To pray and keep on praying on. And our Lord calls us to that. He commends that. That earnest, persistent prayer. Prayer with passion. It's fervent, isn't it? There's a fervency there.

[14:21] There's something, yeah. We really take this seriously. We have this heart to pray. It just bubbles up within us. That wanting to pray. We're called to be such a people.

And of course the word of God commands fervency. For example, Romans 12, 11. Not slothful in business. But fervent in spirit. Serving the Lord.

To have that fervency of spirit. Fervent. In other words, keep that zeal of prayer. We see an example when Jacob was feeling down and scared in Genesis 32.

And then it tells how he wrestled. I know we've got some wrestlers in our midst here this morning. I can imagine this wrestling match of Genesis 32. But really it was very one-sided because it was the angel of the Lord on the one side.

And it was Jacob here. And it tells how as they struggled, the angel of the Lord says, Let me go, for the day breaketh.

[15:23] And Jacob said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. So there's a sense of passion there, isn't there? As he wrestled, as a picture of praying. As a picture of wrestling of prayer. As a picture of laying hold of God and cleaving unto him.

Jacob cried, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. God blessed Jacob for his perseverance. His passion. What a picture of prayer. A picture of prayer.

Someone has said, when we don't pray, it's primarily because we don't sense our need for God. Some people don't pray. It's not even in their thoughts to pray. Because they don't perhaps have that sense.

We actually depend upon God. We actually rely upon him. And we need him. And that passion can grow dim. We can lose that passion, that love, that boldness to seek our Lord.

And rather refresh that. Refresh that zeal. That fervency. That yearning for the Lord. That love relationship. Which is that true passion that we have for him as our Lord.

[16:26] We need to pray in faith. We need to pray more earnestly. Here's another example of our Lord's prayerfulness. Of course, in the garden. The ultimate place of pressure and stress and trouble.

And being in agony, he prayed more earnestly. More earnestly. And his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Think of what our Lord was going through in Gethsemane's garden. And it was you and me that was on his mind as he so prayed. And he prayed more earnestly.

We can give up too soon when it comes to prayer. We can not have the persevering of prayer. We can get so easily distracted or discouraged to not pray.

And then sometimes our prayers can be just maybe flowery prayers. That don't really have that passion that we need.

[17:30] Moody said this, Some men's prayers need to be cut short at both ends and set on fire in the middle. You know, we shouldn't have such prayers that are maybe passionless prayers, but prayers that are full of that passion.

For our love, for our Lord. Passionate prayer. Our Lord urges us to such prayer. Prayer with passion. Where's the fire? So have that fire of prayer. That fervency.

That boiling hot, white hot praying. Prayer doesn't need to be lengthy, wordy or fancy, but let the prayer be from the heart. Let that be what matters. From your heart.

Out of your heart, love for him. Ablaze with love for your Lord. With love for souls. With love for his truth. That that would so fire you up to pray.

To pray with passion. And here is prayer with intensity that comes from that deep desire to see God move. For example, you can look at Psalm 63 and really could look beyond this first verse.

[18:33] Psalm 63 is titled, A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah. Here was David in the wilderness. And it says, he

cried, O God, thou art my God.

Early will I seek thee. My soul thirsteth for thee. My flesh longeth for thee. In a dry and thirsty land. Where no water is.

We could think of the dry and thirsty land of Australia, couldn't we? I've heard it said it's the driest continent in the world. South Australia is the driest state in the driest continent apparently.

So we could do some prayer, couldn't we? It's a dry and thirsty land. We could think of that spiritually so. Of the wilderness times. My soul thirsteth for thee. My flesh longeth for thee.

In a dry and thirsty land. That we'd have that passion to pray. With that intensity of passion. Prayer that comes from that deep desire to see God move. We want God to move in this dry and thirsty land.

[19:34] To revive us again. Bunyan said this, in prayer it is better to have a heart without words, than words without heart. Now sometimes it's not so much about the words that you say.

It's about the heart. Some say I'm a bit, you know, wary about praying in public. And that's not maybe something everyone feels comfortable about. But whether you're praying in public or in private.

It's not so much the words that you say. It's the heart behind the praying, isn't it? That's what counts. And so we read, of course, in the context of James 5 of Elias, Elijah. Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are.

And he prayed earnestly that it might not rain. And it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. It says Elijah prayed more earnestly. He prayed earnestly.

And it's interesting when you hear about Elijah, as it's put here, that he was a man of like passions as we are. So it's really in the sense of human weaknesses.

[20:34] He's just a frail human being just like the rest of us. And we're just like him. But we could reflect that the passions of Elijah included a passion that we would do well to have, the passion to pray.

Something that stands out about Elijah was Elijah had the passion to pray. So as much as he was subject to the like passions that we are, human weaknesses and lack and inadequacy, the passion that he had was to pray.

We can have that passion that Elijah had, I put to you. When Peter was put in prison, the early church faced a great trial. They prayed earnestly for him. Think of it as the really the leading minister.

Peter was in this prison cell and the church prayed. They prayed together. They prayed corporately. That's important. That's why we have corporate prayer. It's good when the church prays together. This was an awful difficult time for God's people. But the Bible says that they prayed earnestly for him. We read that in Acts 12 verse 5. Peter therefore was kept in prison, but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.

[21:52] So when we hear those situations, there's a need for prayer. Pray without ceasing. Pray together. Pray for these needs that God would work. And that prayer did work.

It was passionate prayer. It was fervent prayer without ceasing. They were passionate to pray and keep on praying. So they got the answer. We should be passionate for others. Passionate in our prayers for others.

We should pray for their needs, their hurts, their struggles. Have that heart to pray. It's a passion of love, of God's love, isn't it? God's passion, God's compassion. And our verse tells us of the effectual prayer of a righteous person.

One who is made just in the sight of God. We know that we are made just. We are justified. The Bible talks about justification. We are made just, declared just, declared righteous, made righteous through the blood of our Saviour.

And we need to live like it. Another meaning, of course, of the word just is barely enough to get by on. Sometimes it can be a bit of a tendency that we pray like that.

[22:58] Lord, we just ask you that you bless this food. Father, just, we just ask you that you protect us as we travel. And it's almost like, don't we believe what we're praying?

That we're just, you know, it's almost like we're downplaying the power of prayer. That we say just this or just that. It becomes a habit and it almost sounds like a lack of faith or a lack of trust in God's power.

When we say just over much when we pray. Just a thought. How can we get more passion that we won't be just praying like a weekly, a week kind of prayer.

Or a prayer of faith, a prayer of believing, a prayer that's passionate. Bold prayers, prayed by just men and women of God. And he wants us to pray. He wants to hear those prayers from you, Saint. He wants to hear those prayers, those effectual, those effective prayers that make a difference, not only in your lives, but others. So we must pray and pray through. We must pray until our heart is fully tuned in with the heart and will of God.

[24:00] Because we know some things that we pray for are not his will. We have to have that heart of submission that we humbly accept what God sends. That can be hard. But we know that his heart is for the best.

His best that he knows beyond what we can see in the present. It's possible also to have a passion that's wrong. It's possible to have zeal without knowledge. Of course, we know there's much error abounding.

I see some of the things lately on the internet. It's like, where did that come from? You know? And we know where it comes from. You know, one of them was, one of the latest things is vomiting in the spirit.

Well, some, you know, they bring the bucket to the altar and everyone's got to vomit up the demons that are in them. Now, there's madness out there, people. There's madness out there on the church scene. I don't even want to talk about it.

But there's much error abounding. Let me tell you, there's lots of errors out there. There's lots of falsehood out there. There's false teaching after false teaching about demons, about various signs and wonders.

[25:00] There's much misguided passion out there. There's stuff that's not biblical that's going on. And people are swallowing all of that stuff. Because there is a passion. There is a zeal that's without knowledge.

As Paul tells of such in Romans 10 verse 2, I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge, not according to the scriptures. Some people are fervent.

They have zeal. Now you see them knocking the streets in their zeal. But it's wrong. They're misled. We need to pray that we have a zeal that is according to knowledge, that is according to the word of God, according to the knowledge of God.

Pray no matter what the difficulty, no matter what the discouragement. Pray on. Pray on, sister. Pray on, brother. No matter what. And pray with that scriptural understanding that you'll have a zeal for God.

You'll have a passion for God that is scriptural. That is according to godly wisdom and the word of God. So let's not be distracted from praying in faith and trusting in the promises of God.

[26:03] Let's hang in there in prayer. Pray. Pray through. Prayer with power. Prayer with passion. And thirdly, we see prayer with purity.

It says the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. There's a sense where part of the equation is that it's a righteous one who is praying.

Our verse talks of a righteous man. The prayer that works will be the prayer of the righteous. We are to be righteous. A righteous man is one who is right with God. He is in right relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ.

We are called to be righteous. It talks about right living. Do our lives line up with our lips? Or does our life honour our Lord and line up with his will?

Righteousness is something we should want to have by God's grace. And so the prayer with power, prayer with passion.

[27:08] Thirdly, prayer with purity. Our purity before God affects the effectiveness of our prayers. How do we get that?

Prayer is a closeness. It's a relationship with the Lord in living right, in following him. There's times when it does not always pay to pray. Here's a bit of a funny example.

In British Columbia, a man was accused of setting a forest fire. And they apprehended him. He was left alone in a room at the police station. And he fell to his knees and he prayed, Oh God, please let me get away with it.

And the prayer was picked up by the closed circuit television camera. And it was ultimately admitted into evidence and used against him. And the prayer was against him. So that wasn't the prayer of a righteous man.

Let me tell you. It was a prayer of a man who wanted to get away with it. As such. So some people can pray, but they're not righteous. It's just they might pray when they're in the lifeboat after the ship goes down.

[28:19] Or the atheist in the foxhole might pray for a season and then it's not real. So some people pray who are not saved and who do not know the Lord.

It tells how our Lord rebuked the Pharisees for their worship and prayer. You could say that their prayers were useless.

It tells as he rebukes them, it says, He answered and said unto them, Well, have Isaiah prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

How be it in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. He says they honour him with their lips. It's lip service. That's where you get the expression lip service.

Blah, blah, blah. I'm a Christian, but their heart is far, far from him. It's not real. They don't know him. Their prayers are vain. They claim to be righteous, but actually they're not.

[29:22] Thank God on the other side, our hearts can be made right with God. David knew all about that and he testified. He cried of that in Psalm 51. Of course, read the whole thing, but in particular, verse 17, David cries, The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, O God, that wilt not despise.

He knew what it was to be broken up in his heart over his sin of conviction, of contrition, of seeking God's forgiveness and grace, and he found it.

What is a righteous man? What is a righteous man? This means a person who has received the righteousness of God by faith, given by God's grace, the righteousness of God.

God has declared him righteous because of the work of Christ at the cross. Through faith he has received the finished work of Christ. A righteous man is one whose sins are forgiven by faith in Christ.

And he has that realisation of his sin, the overwhelming need for God's awesome grace, and the Holy Spirit brings him to his knees to trust the Saviour for his saving.

[30:40] And the blood washes away all sin. And then the righteousness of Christ is given. He's wrapped in it. He's clothed in it. The new man, the righteous man.

It's not by any virtue of his own doing. To the contrary, despite everything that he does, it's only the grace of God that can save a man from sin, and give him a home in heaven.

Give him a new heart, a new spirit. A new life. To make him a new creation in Christ Jesus. And like David, we've got to come as a needy one, and place our trust in him to save us.

And then we can access the righteousness of Christ, to plead our case before the throne of God. And friends, what a privilege we can know that.

We have that kind of prayer that works. So the Bible tells us how there's a great barrier to such prayer. Without a purity of heart, our prayers are in vain.

[31:48] As our Lord rebuked the Pharisees, perhaps well-meaning as they might have been, they missed the point that their heart wasn't right. Blah, blah, blah, but their heart wasn't right.

Thank God, God changes hearts by faith. And we can know that we're born again, as the Word tells us. We can know. Made righteous, declared righteous by his saving power.

But unless we are righteous, the Lord will not receive our prayer. It's like this blockage that he cannot hear our prayer. It says, Psalm 66, 18, If I regard iniquity, sin in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.

When the heart is not right, God cannot hear our prayer. When there's that lack of purity, our hearts need that cleansing.

It's like just as dirty lenses in your glasses might distort the view, sin can be that lack of purity that distorts and taints our connection with God.

[32:53] It blurs everything. But when we confess, when we turn to him, we can know his cleansing. Those lenses get cleared. Our prayers will then be unhindered.

And God's blessings can flow. Of course, we know that salvation, all our sins are paid for and cleansed. But I suppose there's that walk aspect where sin can interfere with that communication link.

The static gets in and God seems distant because sin can interfere with our relationship with God, our fellowship with God.

So we see, for example, Isaiah 1. It reads, It reads, And when you spread forth your hands as in prayer, I will hide mine eyes from you. Yea, when you make many prayers, I will not hear.

Your hands are full of blood. Wash you. Make you clean. Put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes. Cease to do evil. Then it reads on, Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord.

[33:56] Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. That sense where we should make ourselves clean.

We should let God cleanse and take away our sin. And there's that barrier there. It's talked about, for example, again in Isaiah 59. The barrier that gets in the way of our prayers reaching God.

Isaiah 59, it tells, Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save. Neither is he heavy that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated between you and your God.

And your sins have hid his face from you that he will not hear. Prayer that works has to be prayer from the righteous. And thank God we can be made righteous.

Whose are the prayers that will get heard? It says that the Lord hears the prayers of the righteous. It reads for 1 Peter 3 verse 12, The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and his ears are open unto their prayers.

[34:59] But the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. So here's a promise for you, brother, today. The eyes of the Lord are over you if you're saved. The eyes of the Lord are over you and his ears are open to your prayers.

His ears are open to your prayers. So we call to pray. We call to pray. An old time preacher said, As it is the business of tailors to make clothes and of cobblers to men's shoes, so it is the business of Christians to pray.

Something that we should want to do that we should routinely have that prayer life. And as God's righteous people, we'll want to pray.

We'll want to communicate with our Heavenly Father. And thank God there's an open invitation always for you that believe. It tells you, Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.

It reads on, Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having a heart sprinkled from an evil conscience. Having boldness, it says.

[36:06] Having full assurance, it says. Let us draw near. There is a way we can become righteous. It's by faith in Christ. And if you are yet to trust Him, I would urge you to that.

To trust Him as your Saviour. And then to grow in your faith. To follow on. To learn to pray. To pray through. Because prayer changes things. When just men and women pray, The Lord makes His tremendous power available to them.

So, as we've read, we can see prayer has power. Prayer power. Prayer that is effectual. It's fervent. It's got the energy. It's got God's power behind it.

And it's from righteous people. So, believe God this morning. Believe God and pray. Don't neglect to pray. Be like the woman who sought after the Lord. She drew near to Him.

It says in Mark 5, 27. Of a woman who had the issue of blood. And it says, When she had heard of Jesus, she came in the press behind. So, through the crowd. And she touched His garment, it says.

[37:10] For she said, If I may but touch His clothes, I shall be whole. If I may touch but His clothes, I shall be whole. Touch the hem of His garment by faith this morning.

Touch the hem of His garment by faith. And He will make you fully whole. Our verse tells us that this kind of prayer availeth much. It's interesting.

The words availeth means can do. Can do. There's a sense where when we pray, We can know God can do what we ask Him. Of course, it's according to His will.

There's that realm of His will. That He can do that which is in His will to do. The word availeth means that He can do. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth means.

The same word availeth is can do. It's the same word that's translated here. The word availeth also means to be strong. And it's a present tense verb. It's for the here and now.

[38:09] That prayer availeth is the prayer that God can do. What He will do for us. And it's His wonderful resources that He gives to us through prayer.

And when things are difficult, we can pray. That's the point. And we can pray effectually, fervently. Paul tells Timothy that he wants to see men of prayer.

He says this was his heart. He says, I will, I won't. Therefore, that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and disputing. Now some people emphasise with this verse, the physical, the posture here, the lifting up of hands.

But really the point is not so much the lifting up of hands. It's the emphasis of the holiness of the hands. It's the holiness of the hands. It's the lives that are holding forth those hands.

That they're without that anger, without that disputing, without that doubting. It's that heartfulness, that spiritualness of heart. And our prayers can avail much, it says.

[39:12] Our prayers can avail much for the Kingdom of God. So it's important to pray and to work. To be activated. The Energeo. There's a sense of activation behind praying.

Because we not only pray, but we live out our prayerful aspiration. We pray for souls to get saved, then we go and tell them.

We're activated to be the answer to our own prayer. William Booth said this, Work as if everything depended upon your work, and pray as if everything depended upon your prayer.

So you don't just pray and then do nothing. You get busy and working and activated and pray while you're being such. While you're working. Prayer is not some cop out from service.

A cop out from being an obedient servant, a faithful servant. Prayer is activating yourself. Prayer availeth much.

[40:09] Because God works when we pray. Not that we always get what we want. There's a time where a preacher tried to illustrate this by telling a story of going with his young son, shopping.

And they were going down the aisles with this shopping cart. And the young lad saw a toy truck. And he yelled out, Mum! A truck! Can we buy it please?

And his fifth birthday was only 11 days away. We'd used our money to purchase his first bicycle.

The one item he wanted more than anything else in the world. So I said no to the truck.

And the boy said, You never say yes to anything. And he was moaning and whinging. And then putting on his pity face.

And as the preacher reflected on this situation, he thought, Well, that's just like me sometimes. My childish behaviour. When I pray and God withholds something from me.

[41:15] God says no. God says wait. God says not now. And the preacher says, I haven't stopped to think that his no today might be a prelude to unimaginable blessings tomorrow.

Sometimes God says no. Or wait. Not now. And he's got something just around the corner that's better than what we wanted to have. So the point is that prayer availeth much.

Amen. Prayer availeth much. We've got the very resources of God that he bestows on us through prayer. It avails for us.

It avails what God sees as best for us too. And so we've got to accept from his hand what happens as much as it can be hard.

It may not always be what we want. But then God's workings are bigger and brighter. And beyond what we can see in the present.

[42:21] So believer, pray. Pray in faith. Pray trusting. Pray knowing God's provision for you. Pray that he knows what he is going to affect in the days to come.

And know that the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. May we have a like passion to Elijah. He had a passion to pray.

It was effectual. There was power there. There was energy. It was fervent. There was passion. And he was a righteous man. Made righteous by God. And so can we be.

If you've yet to trust him this morning. You can be made righteous. You can have right standing in the sight of almighty God. By faith in Christ. And then. Prayer.

Such prayer. Availeth much. Let us pray. Lord we thank you that prayer works. That such prayer works. That is effectual. That's fervent.

[43:21] That is from a righteous one. Lord make us such a people. By faith. That we might trust you more. That we might pray more. That we might have a heart to pray.

A passion to pray. Knowing that prayer is powerful. Beyond our own understanding. Even before we ask or think it. Or pray it. We know that you're able to do it.

To give it. To bless. And yet you want to hear your prayers. Of your people. You want us to pray. You command us to pray. You expect us to pray. Lord help us not to neglect to pray.

Help us Lord to intend to pray. To intentionally pray. Help us Lord that we might be more. Such a people that will count prayer as important. As you yourself did.

In the person of your son. That you would be such a one. To pray. Earnestly. More earnestly. Help us to be such a people too. Lord we do pray for our loved ones.

[44:18] People on our hearts. Give us a burden to pray. A passion to pray for others. Not just ourselves. Give us that heart. That is your heart. That prayerful heart. Lord and.

Do our work. We do pray Lord. In this dry and thirsty land. That we'll be such a people. That will hunger and thirst. We'll be a people that is longing for you. To minister.

To revive us again. That you might. Visit us. With your blessings Lord. Minister. We pray for any hurt. Any heartache. Lord.

Knowing that you are the one. Who heals the broken hearted. And binds up our wounds. We thank you for that. Healing. That wholeness that comes. That we might be like that woman. That just reaches out.

And touches. Touches even if it be. Even if it be. The hem. Of your garment Lord. Lord. That we would reach out. To you. In Jesus name. Amen.

[45:13] Amen.