

EFFECTIVE PRAYER

Effective prayer is something that needs to be understood by many Christians. If their prayers were more effective, then more would be answered and consequently, we would see more of the miraculous in our everyday lives. A key to effective prayer is in the book of James:

James 5:16

“Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.”

Notice, then, that there are effective and ineffective prayers, according to the NAS version (the KJV uses the terminology effectual fervent prayer). Many people try many different ways and techniques in an attempt to make their prayers more effective. However, the word to emphasize in this scripture is not effective, but righteous. What is really being said here is that the righteous man’s prayer is more effective - that’s why sins should be confessed before you pray for one another.

One of the most quoted scriptures regarding prayer seems to substantiate this.

2 Chronicles 7:14

“and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”

This verse states that when Christians (those called by His Name) humble themselves and repent (turn from their wicked ways), then the Lord will both hear and respond with an answer to what was prayed. So, the righteous person can touch God’s heart, whereas the not-so-righteous person cannot.

It’s not surprising then that: the elders with idols didn’t get the response they are looking for from God in Ezekiel 14; the people’s prayers in Sodom were not heard in Isaiah 1; husbands who treat their wife without respect and honor will have their prayers hindered as in 1 Peter 3.

The recipe for effective prayer seems to be this: the more righteous the life style, the more apt God is to respond to a prayer need. This could be because God says that those who truly love Him will be obedient, which means they will adhere to righteous standards.

Luke 14-15

“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.”

Matthew 22:37

“And He said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’”