

January 27, 2019

## Prayer That Avails Much

By Michael Hickox

# Olney Church of Christ

220 North Van Street  
Olney, IL 62450

217-218-0803

[www.olneychurchofchrist.org](http://www.olneychurchofchrist.org)

## Services

### Sunday

Bible Study	9:30 am
A.M. Worship	10:20 am
P.M. Worship	2:00 pm

### Wednesday

Bible Class	7:00 pm
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**Elders:** Mike Gerber, Travis Hall

**Deacons:** John Frost, Dave Goff,  
Roger Sholders

*Visitors are welcome*

*We offer Bible classes for all ages*

*We also offer in-home Bible studies*

We have Bible lessons on the radio  
(92.9 FM) Sundays from 8:00-8:30 a.m.

**James 5:16 (KJV):** *Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.*

**James 5:16** is comforting for the faithful Christian. The words “**availeth much**” stress the power of prayer.

It is significant to note that there are some qualifiers placed around the prayer that avails much though. Notice that **James 5:16** does not say “prayer availeth much,” but rather “**the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.**” For our prayers to be effective, there are some things needed on our part.

For instance, for our prayers to be effective, we must *live righteously*.

This point is brought out strongly in **1 Peter 3:12**, which says, “**For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears open to their prayer; but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.**”

God does not promise the unrighteous that their prayers will be effective. In fact, His face is against the unrighteous.

Part of living righteously involves becoming a Christian as God commands. This takes place when a repentant believer is baptized “**into Christ**” for the remission of his or her sins (**Gal. 3:27**; cf. **Acts 2:38**). Being righteous involves more, though, than becoming a New Testament Christian. It involves living in obedience to God’s

# Prayer That Avails Much

(Continued)

commands (**1 Pet. 3:8-16**). This is needful for God's ears to be open to our prayers.

Something else that is needed for our prayers to be effective is to pray *with the right motives*. Notice **James 4:3**: **You ask, and don't receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it for your pleasures.**

A different application of praying with the wrong motives is seen in **Matthew 6:5**. There the Lord said, "**When you pray, you shall not be as the hypocrites, for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men.**"

Some in Jesus' day were hypocritical when praying. They prayed to "impress" others with their words. **Matthew 6:7** continues this thought. There Jesus said, "**In praying, don't use vain repetitions, as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their much speaking.**" The point here is not that it is wrong for others to hear us when we pray, or that we cannot repeat words in a prayer. Rather, the point is that we must be sincere and *mean* the words we pray.

In addition to sincerity and purity of motives, prayers that avail much are also prayed *with faith*.

Notice what is said in **James 1:5-7**: **But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach; and it will be given to**

**him. But let him ask in faith, without any doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven by the wind and tossed. For let that man not think that he will receive anything from the Lord.**

Whether praying for wisdom or something else, one who prays without faith should "**not think that he will receive anything from the Lord.**" We must trust God's power and promises when we pray.

If we trust what God says about the power of prayer, we should pray *with frequency*. Prayer should be a continual practice of ours in good times and bad.

How wonderful is it to know that God *wants* us to cast our cares on Him (**Phil. 4:6-7**; **1 Pet. 5:7**)? It is sad when such a privilege is ignored. As the hymn *What a Friend We Have in Jesus* says, "O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear, All because we do not carry Everything to God in prayer."

An important thing to keep in mind when praying is that God answers prayer according to *His* will (cf. **2 Cor. 12:8-9**). An attitude to have when praying is, "**not my will, but yours, be done**" (**Luke 22:42**).

So it is important to consider the high value Scripture places on prayer, but it is also important to consider what is needed from us in order for our prayers to be effective. May we live righteously and pray properly, and thus fully enjoy the blessing God offers of prayer that avails much.

## Area Gospel Meetings

Hazel Church of Christ:  
January 25-27 (with Jarrod Jacobs)  
F-Sat: 7:00; Sun: 9:30, 10:30, 5:00

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### God’s Plan for Saving Man

God’s Grace	Ephesians 2:8
Christ’s Blood	Romans 5:9
The Holy Spirit’s Gospel	Romans 1:16
Sinner’s Faith	Acts 16:31
Sinner’s Repentance	Luke 13:3
Sinner’s Confession	Romans 10:10
Sinner’s Baptism	1 Peter 3:21
Christian’s Work	James 2:24
Christian’s Hope	Romans 8:24
Christian’s Endurance	Revelation 2:10

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### Words to Consider

***“Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, outcry, and slander, be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving each other, just as God also in Christ Jesus forgave you.”***  
–Ephesians 4:31-32

## Prayer List

Holly G  
Barb A  
Sandy S (Foot Injury)  
Betty P  
Mabel H  
Norma’s Grandson, Ryan (Head Injury)  
Cheryl S (Breast Cancer)  
Norma C (Injuries from fall)  
Jerry G (Throat Cancer)  
Mattie B (Leukemia)  
Tom B (Hospice) & Family  
Linda & Family  
Dody G  
Joe B (Lung Cancer)  
Allen S (Cancer)  
Jeanette & Family  
Raymond B  
Lovetta D (Knee Replacement)  
Mike D (Broken Neck)  
Andrew A (Foot Injury)

### Daily Bible Reading

Jan. 27 – Exodus 4-6; Matt. 14:22-36  
Jan. 28 – Exodus 7-8; Matt. 15:1-20  
Jan. 29 – Exodus 9-11; Matt. 15:21-39  
Jan. 30 – Exodus 12-13; Matt. 16  
Jan. 31 – Exodus 14-15; Matt. 17  
Feb. 1 – Exodus 16-18; Matt. 18:1-20  
Feb. 2 – Exodus 19-20; Matt. 18:21-35

***“How I love your law! It is my meditation all day.”*** –Psalm 119:97

### **Prayer Leaders**

Sunday, January 27, 2019

Bible Study: Travis

Worship: Dan D

Evening: Joe

Wednesday, January 30, 2019

John

### **Cleaning Building**

Debbie (Jan.) / Donna (Feb.)

### **Prepare Communion**

Debbie (Jan.) / Donna (Feb.)

### **Upcoming Reminders**

Feb. 23: Ladies' Bible Class @ 9:30 a.m.

### **Assignments**

Sunday, February 3, 2019

Reading: Dave

Announcements: Steve

Table: Travis

Serve: Harold

Carlyle

Mason

Mark

Wednesday, February 6, 2019

Invitation: Dave

### **Anniversaries**

### **Birthdays**

February 2 - Travis

February 5 - Mike P

February 8 - Betty

February 13 - Darrell

February 15 - Dan D