

March 7, 2021

Prayer That Avails Much

By Michael Hickox

Olney Church of Christ

220 North Van Street
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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 says, “**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.**”

This verse 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*.

1 Peter 3:12 brings this point out strongly. This verse 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* them.

Part of living righteously involves becoming a Christian as God commands. (i.e. when a repentant believer is baptized “**into Christ**” for the remission of his or her sins (**Gal. 3:27**; cf. **Acts 2:38**)).

Reaching this point, though, is just the beginning of living righteously. Such is a lifestyle of obedience to God’s commands

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(Continued)

(cf. **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. 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 Almighty 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

Casey Westside church of Christ:
March 17-21 (with Tim Stevens)
Wed-Fri: 7:00; Sun: 10:30, 6:00

Hazel Dell Church of Christ:
March 21-26 (with Ron Griffin)
Sun: 9:00, 10:00, 6:00; Mon-Fri: 7:00

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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

“But thou, O Lord, art a God merciful and gracious, Slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness and truth.” – Psalm 86:15

Prayer List

Holly G
Sandy S
Mabel H
Cheryl S
Norma C
Raymond & Maxine
Barbara G (Cancer)
June H
Lyla B (Leukemia recovery)
L.A. S (COVID recovery)
Justice G (Perthes disease)
Robert C

Daily Bible Reading

March 7 – Genesis 1-4; Matthew 1
March 8 – Genesis 5-9; Matthew 2
March 9 – Genesis 10-13; Matthew 3
March 10 – Genesis 14-16; Matthew 4
March 11 – Genesis 17-19; Matthew 5
March 12 – Genesis 20-22; Matthew 6
March 13 – Genesis 23-24; Matthew 7

“Let not kindness and truth forsake thee: Bind them about thy neck; Write them upon the tablet of thy heart:” – Proverbs 3:3

Prayer Leaders

Sunday, March 7, 2021

Bible Study: Larry
Worship: Carlyle
Evening: John

Wednesday, March 10, 2021

Darrell

Assignments

Sunday, March 14, 2021

Reading: Darrell
Announcements: Dan D
Table: Mike
Serve: Roger
Dave

Clean Building

Patty

Prepare Communion

Julzy

Wednesday, March 17, 2021

Invitation: Mike

Upcoming Reminders

*For the adult class on Wednesday evenings:
we are ready to begin with the doctrinal
purpose of 1 Corinthians (page 51)*

Anniversaries

March 22 – Raymond & Maxine
March 28 – John & Cynde

Birthdays

March 13 – Harold
March 15 – Anna
March 23 – Patty