



I CAN PRAY POWERFUL AND EFFECTIVE PRAYERS!

In the pages of the Bible, we encounter men and women of great faith whose prayers moved the heart of God in amazing ways. We can easily see them as “Bible heroes” and forget that they were ordinary people just like us, calling on a holy God. We read about how the sun stood still at Joshua’s request and how God answered Gideon through a fleece. We read about how Hannah was barren but became pregnant when God heard her cry and how Daniel was visited by the angel Gabriel himself as he cried out to God. Elijah’s prayers called down fire, ended a drought and brought a dead person back to life. Yet, when the Bible describes our heroes, we read about real people with flaws and not superheroes. Describing Elijah, James says “he was a man just like us” (see James 5:17)! We have the *same* Holy Spirit living in us who raised Jesus from the grave and who has moved in **every** single miracle of history — and he wants us to learn to pray and declare in faith because the prayers of redeemed sons and daughters who know their identity are powerful and effective! Ask Jesus, as the disciples did, to *teach* you how to pray in a way that moves heaven and earth...and get ready for the ride!

“The prayer *offered in faith* will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is *powerful and effective*” James 5:15-16 – Emphasis added.

“Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For *everyone who asks receives*, the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, *the door will be opened*” Matthew 7:7-8 – Emphasis added.

“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a *rewarder of those who diligently seek Him*” Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV) – Emphasis added.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. *The power of our prayers as believers is in some way directly related to our faith — that is, if we actually believe what we are praying. Be honest before the Lord: do you pray bold prayers with confidence for God to work miraculously, or are you tentative — playing it safe so you won’t be disappointed? Why?*
2. *Have you ever prayed boldly for something that seemed to go unanswered? What instances come to mind? How did it affect you? Take a few minutes to be honest with God and ask him to heal your heart and restore your faith in prayer.*

3. It is said that the difference between **requesting** something in prayer and **commanding** it to be done by the blood of Jesus is our level of certainty on God's specific will in a situation. When we don't know, we ask and listen (see James 1:5). But when we know God's will in a situation, we are to stand boldly without wavering until we see what God said he would do (1 Kings 18:1, 41-46; Matthew 6:10). What is a "big" prayer need in your life right now? Is he calling you to request or command? How will understanding the difference between these two change the way you pray?

PRAYER:

Father, teach me to pray! I pray for your Kingdom to come and your will to be done in me and in my circumstances here on earth as it is in heaven. I thank you, Lord, that your Spirit helps me pray even when I don't know how. You are always with me, leading me and praying through me. Heal my heart in the places I haven't seen you answer in the way I expected. Open the eyes of my spirit to know your goodness and power and show me the power my prayers really carry. Show me where to request and wait upon you and where to boldly command until I see you move. I choose to walk by faith and not sight today, and I receive that I can pray effectively by your Spirit!

LISTENING TIME:

Stop for a few minutes and ask the Lord what he wants to say to you. He might bring to mind a picture, a word, a song, an encouragement, a Scripture or an answer to a burden in your heart. Don't rush or feel pressure to figure out the meaning of your impressions. Just invite him to speak and draw or write down what you sense. Afterward, ask God to help you discern and understand what he is saying to you. You might want to ask other trusted friends in the Kingdom for their input as well.

USE THE FOLLOWING SPACE TO RECORD WHAT GOD IS SAYING



TOOLS FOR FAMILY DEVOTIONS:

Spent some time with everyone going around and sharing as many answered prayers as you can think of. Thank God for each. Next, ask, "What needs should we bring before God now?" You might even want to consider starting an "answered prayer" jar or coffee can and adding slips of paper every time a prayer is answered! Decorate your prayer jar/coffee can as a family together.

TOOLS FOR PRAYING FOR OTHERS:

Ask the Holy Spirit to move upon your hearts about a need within your community. What is it? Pray persistently and fervently for that need. Ask God the role he would have you play in him meeting that need. Then, take some practical steps to put your faith in action and watch God answer your prayers.