

The Prayer of Faith

James 5:13-18

James was writing to believers who had fled, fled from persecution for their faith in Jesus Christ and their sharing of the good news of Christ. They were facing real challenge and all that goes with it, they were worried, anxious, fearful and meeting in secret regularly. Though we are not facing that in this country we are facing a real challenge in which many people feel the same as those early Christians, full of worry and fear.

James' instruction to them though was PRAY and specifically, mentions the prayer of faith. But what is it?

James uses it in reference to healing, though this is correct and good, the prayer of faith is not just for healing. The prayer of faith is for any challenge we face in life no matter what situation we are in or what we are facing we can pray into those things.

Hebrews 11:6 - without faith it is impossible to please God.

Can we pray without faith? Yes

There are a few things that can stop us praying in faith - religion, distraction and others but a big one is fear. Fear can squash our faith - faith and fear cannot co-exist in us; we are either in faith or in fear.

Know this - that perfect love cast out all fear, that same love that put Jesus on the cross (JOHN 3:16) is now in us as believers so we don't need to listen and succumb to fear because God is love and He lives in us.

This brings me to first point

1. The prayer of faith is not first about what we pray but who we pray to.

Hebrews tells us that Jesus is the source and perfecter of our faith.

Prayer is communication with God for fellowship and relationship. God wants us to know Him. If we come to Him with requests all the time we miss out on the richness of fellowship with the creator of all things. As we learn more about God and grow closer to Him our faith and confidence grows to.

I encourage you to study and learn all the names and characteristics of who God is because this is the God we pray to.

2. Prayer of faith in accordance with His Word

James used Elijah as an example of someone who prayed in faith when he prayed for a drought and then rain 3 and a half years later.

1Kings17:1

Elijah had stood before God; Elijah had spent time standing in God's presence hear from God and acting according to the Word. He did not call a drought because he felt like it or because he was angry but because He had been with God and knew the will of God for that time. When Jesus died the bible tells us the veil separating the people from the place where God's presence was in the temple tore from top to bottom. Through the sacrifice of Jesus we have access into the presence of God and can hear from Him.

1Kings18:1

The LORD said it would rain - Elijah had the Word of God it would rain; however the rain didn't come straight away.

V42 of chapter 18 tells us that Elijah got onto his knees and placed his head between them and prayed constantly without ceasing until he saw the cloud as small as a man's fist, even then the rain did not come but the cloud was a sign that the rain was coming the prayer had been answered.

People of God get a Word from God for whatever you are facing and pray continually with determination a until you get your answer and know that God answers our prayers. Don't give up.

3. The prayer of faith is proactive not reactive.

James tells us the urgent request of a righteous person is very powerful in its effect. Once we know who we are praying to and have a word to stand on then pray with urgency like our lives depended on it for some people their lives do depend on it especially if your praying for someone who does not know Christ.

Let's be proactive and not wait for someone to be ill before we pray but let's pray that those we love would not know sickness or become ill. Lets not wait for the government to pass something we can't agree with then start praying but lets pray for them that they would do the righteous thing and that our brothers and sisters in parliament would have the courage to bring the Word of God to our leaders.

Let's pray constantly, consistently, urgently for one another and with one another know that the prayer of faith is effective.

