**SERMON OUTLINE**

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| **SERMON TITLE:** | How to Pray for Friends and Influence People |
| **SERMON REFERENCE:** | James 5:16-18 |
| **LWF SERMON NUMBER:** | #0525 |
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1. INTRODUCTION
	1. James 5:16-18
	2. There is no way to overstate the importance of prayer.
	3. Andrew Murray stated that it is in prayer that we change our natural strength for the supernatural strength of God.
	4. It has been said that when we depend upon prayer, we get what God can do.
		1. What this world needs is not what education or organization can do, but what God can do.
		2. Our homes need what God can do.
		3. Our churches need what God can do.
	5. We do not have a need in our lives but what earnest, persistent, believing prayer can supply the answer for that need.
	6. A recurring theme in the book of James is the power of prevailing prayer.
	7. James is speaking in these verses about prayers of intercession; not just getting our needs met (as he spoke of in James 4), but helping our friends to have their needs met.
		1. James 5:16
2. THE confession we must make (James 5:16)
	1. We want to conceal our faults rather than confess them.
	2. Historically, great revivals are marked by confession of sin, not only to God, but to one another.
		1. Where God’s people are broken, God seems to move.
	3. Several things take place when we confess our faults to one another.
		1. There is restoration.
			1. James 5:16
				1. The word “healing” here does not merely refer to the healing of the body, but it may also refer to the healing of the soul or spirit.
			2. Whether there is physical brokenness, emotional brokenness or spiritual brokenness, restoration is needed.
			3. When we begin to confess our sins, God begins to move in and work.
				1. Psalm 51:17
		2. There is reconciliation.
			1. Matthew 5:23-24
			2. When a wrong is done, there can be no reconciliation until there is confession.
		3. There is revival.
			1. Revival happens when we confess our faults.
			2. It will be a great day in the churches of America when confession replaces criticism and compassion replaces condemnation.
	4. James does not say that we are to broadcast our faults or display our faults.
		1. We need to be careful because the devil will use anything to his advantage, even confession.
		2. Jesus warned about casting our pearls before swine.
			1. Matthew 7:6
		3. The circle of confession needs to follow the circle of sin.
			1. Private sin means private confession between you and the Lord or with a trusted prayer warrior.
			2. Personal sin needs personal confession.
				1. If you have sinned against me or I have sinned against you, then we need to confess one to the other.
				2. We don’t talk about it to other people.
			3. Public sin means public confession.
				1. If we publicly dishonor the Lord, then we need to publicly repent and publicly get right with God.

Even though our hearts have changed, those around us may not know it.

1. the command that we should mind (james 5:16)
	1. God commands us to pray for one another.
		1. Luke 18:1
		2. 1 Thessalonians 5:17
		3. 1 Samuel 12:23
	2. Prayer is the greatest Christian privilege.
		1. The omnipotent God has invited us to talk with Him.
	3. Prayer is the greatest Christian power.
		1. More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.
	4. Prayer is the greatest Christian failure.
		1. We have not because we ask not.
		2. James 4:2
	5. Prayer is not just getting ready for Christian service; prayer is Christian service.
		1. We are serving God when we pray.
		2. We can do more than pray after we pray, but we can do no more than pray until we pray.
	6. Those who are sick need more than our pity; they need our prayers.
	7. Those with faults need more than our condemnation; they need our intercession.
		1. Galatians 6:1
		2. We are not to criticize, but we are to help and to encourage.
2. the conditions we should meet (James 5:16)
	1. Not all prayer is answered prayer; not all prayer gets to God.
		1. James 1:6
			1. We are to ask in faith; nothing wavering.
		2. James 4:3
			1. We are to ask for the right things.
	2. In James 5, James adds two more conditions we should meet for answered prayer:
		1. The intensity of the asking
			1. James 5:16
				1. The words “effectual, fervent prayer” are a translation of one Greek word that literally means “stretched out”.

An illustration of this is the idea of an athlete running for the finish line, and he stretches himself out for the goal.

James says that this is the way we are to pray.

* + - 1. We are to be eager, earnest, fervent and impassioned in our prayers.
				1. Prayer is to be intense.
				2. We give without sacrifice, we pray without fasting, we witness without tears; is it any wonder that we sow without results?
			2. It is not so much about the position of the body when we pray (whether we are on our knees or face down), but the intensity of our desire.
				1. Half-hearted, lukewarm and indifferent prayers don’t get through.
		1. The integrity of the asker
1. the character that we ought to manifest (james 5:17-18)
	1. In this passage, “Elias” literally means Elijah.
		1. James says that we can be like him.
			1. We can manifest the same character that Elijah had because he was a man of like passions as we are.
	2. James references Elijah’s prayer recorded in the Old Testament.
		1. The character that we should mimic and manifest is found here.
		2. 1 Kings 18:42-45
			1. This is the episode that James chose to use as an illustration of the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man.
	3. We need to notice the integrity of the asker:
		1. Elijah was God’s man.
		2. He was a man of integrity, and he was a righteous man.
			1. If we want our prayers answered, then we must be righteous.
			2. The reason why most of our prayers go unanswered is because of sin.
				1. Proverbs 15:29
				2. Psalm 66:18
				3. Isaiah 59:1-2
		3. The righteousness that James references is both positional and practical righteousness.
			1. There is positional righteousness.
				1. Have you been saved?
				2. Is Jesus Christ your personal Savior?
				3. There is no possible way we can be righteous apart from Jesus Christ.
			2. There is practical righteousness.
				1. Are you obeying God’s commandments?
				2. Are you living day by day quoting His promises?
				3. Are you living a pure, clean life?

Psalm 66:18

How foolish we are to not relinquish our sins so that we might have the blessings of God upon our lives.

* 1. There are several things we should notice about Elijah’s prayer in 1 Kings 18:
		1. The person of the prayer
			1. 1 Kings 18:42
			2. It was Elijah who prayed.
			3. Elijah was a man of like passions as we are.
				1. James 5:17
			4. The same God who answered Elijah’s prayer will answer our prayers.
				1. Many ask, “Where is the Lord God of Elijah?”
				2. We should be asking, “Where are the Elijah’s of God?”

Where are the people who are willing to believe God like Elijah did?

* + - 1. Elijah was not perfect; he made mistakes.
				1. 1 Kings 19:1-4
				2. Elijah knew what it was to be depressed.
				3. Elijah knew what it was to fail.
			2. Elijah was an ordinary man.
		1. The place of the prayer
			1. 1 Kings 18:42
			2. Elijah went to the top of Mt. Carmel.
				1. He went off by himself.
				2. Matthew 6:6
			3. Elijah sought a place where he could be alone with God.
				1. The secret of our success as teachers and ministers will not be measured by how well we prepare or teach in public, but how well we prevail in private.

The effect of our teaching and ministering is measured by the power of Almighty God upon our lives because we’ve been alone with Him in prayer.

* + 1. The posture of the prayer
			1. 1 Kings 18:42
			2. Elijah was a man who was bent over; he was broken.
				1. He stretched out before God with his face between his knees.
			3. Elijah was such a bold man when he stood before the wicked King Ahab because he had spent time with God in prayer.
				1. No man needs fear any earthly king when he’s just had an audience with the King of kings.
				2. The person who can kneel before God can stand before any other man.
			4. Elijah was a humble man.
				1. James 4:10
		2. The passion of the prayer
			1. 1 Kings 18:42
				1. Elijah cast himself down upon the Earth.
			2. With great intensity, Elijah came before God.
				1. He prayed a passionate prayer, and therefore, a powerful prayer.
			3. Hebrews 5:7
				1. The Lord Jesus prayed with strong cryings and tears.
			4. Genesis 32:26
				1. When was the last time you said to the Lord as Jacob said, “I won’t let You go except You bless me”?
			5. Colossians 4:12
			6. Prayer is hard work, and Elijah prayed passionately.
		3. The persistence of prayer
			1. 1 Kings 18:43-44
				1. Elijah was praying for rain.
				2. He prayed and sent his servant seven times to look for a cloud.
			2. Matthew 7:7
				1. In the Greek language, this passage says to keep on knocking, keep on seeking and keep on asking.
			3. Luke 18:1
			4. Galatians 6:9
			5. Colossians 4:2
			6. Isaiah 30:18
				1. Sometimes God does not answer right away because He has a gracious purpose.
			7. God’s delays are not God’s denials.
				1. Elijah knew this, and he persistently and passionately prayed the same prayer seven times; and he found the answer.
				2. May God enable us to find a holy purpose and to continue with God in prayer until that purpose is answered.
		4. The power of prayer
			1. 1 Kings 18:45
			2. Elijah prayed, and God sent a great rain.
			3. A Bible preacher once said that nothing lies beyond the reach of prayer except that which lies outside the will of God.
1. CONCLUSION
	1. Our lives, our homes and our churches need the unmistakable stamp of God upon them, and that comes through prayer.
	2. Our homes can be blessed by prayer.
	3. Our weak wills can be strengthened through prayer.
	4. Our needs can be met by prayer.
	5. We can have victory over the world, the flesh and the devil by prayer.
	6. We need to pray for one another.
	7. Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can come to Him today through prayer.
		1. Pray to Him and ask Him to come into your life.
	8. Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
		1. Romans 3:23
		2. Romans 10:9-10
		3. Romans 10:13
		4. Acts 16:31
		5. John 3:16