

Hopeful Prayer

Series: A Hopeful Life

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Scripture: James 5:13-18 (New International Version)

Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise. 14 Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. 16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

17 Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. 18 Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.

Group Session

Opening Questions

How much time do you believe most church members spend in prayer each week? Do we really believe in the power of prayer based on this?

Discussing the Scripture & Life

1. We need prayer personally. What are some things in your life that you need prayer about?
2. Read the focus passage above. What truths do we learn from this passage?
3. Are there any conditions on God answering prayer? (Talk about being righteous and about praying for one another.)
4. We also need prayer as a church. What are the things we need to be praying for our church?
5. One of the goals Satan has is to keep people from praying. Have you seen this in your life? Why would Satan be concerned about our prayers?
6. Elijah prayed and it didn't rain three and a half years. Do you ever feel like your prayers aren't being answered? What are some possible reasons we feel that way? What can we do about it? (Spend more time with Him so that "the sheep know His voice")

It was recommended that we pray until God gives you an answer or tells you to stop praying. Is there a situation in your life that this needs to be the case? Has anyone ever had a situation of praying for something for months or years and finally seeing God answer?

Closing Challenge

There are a number of things we can do to have a fruitful prayer life. Suggestions are listed below. Share one of these with the group that you will work on this week.

- a. Pray expectantly.
- b. Pray persistently.
- c. Pray earnestly.