

Prayer Meeting – July 28th, 2019

In today's teaching on prayer, let's start out by reading **James 5:13-17**; *“13 Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. 14 Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. 16 [a]Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, [b]fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.”*

Are you suffering today? Pray. Are you cheerful today? Sing psalms. Are you sick today? You need to call for your elders in your church to pray for you. Elders need to be accountable to what the Bible says here, as it's their duty to pray for you and anoint you with oil. Even if you have committed sins which have led to the sickness in your body, you will be forgiven as you confess them. Confession of your trespasses (sins) is required to receive your healing. A word to the elder, the righteous man, when you're called upon to pray for the sick, make sure they repent of their sins and confess their trespasses so that when the prayer is offered, the person will be forgiven and healed.

Why is it today that the elders are not being called upon anymore in some churches? Why? Why don't they believe in praying for the sick any more, or for operating in the gifts of the Holy Ghost? Did the word of God change? Has it? Or could it be that they've changed? Maybe their forefathers used to believe this scripture, but somewhere along the line, someone has convinced them that it doesn't apply for today. If so, that would be a lying spirit in the church. Probably because someone was not willing to confess their trespasses. Probably somebody in the pulpit.

Let's read what Jesus says in **Luke 18:1-8** about prayer in the parable of the persistent widow; *“18 Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, 2 saying: “There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor [a]regard man. 3 Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, [b] ‘Get justice for me from my adversary.’ 4 And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, ‘Though I do not fear God nor regard man, 5 yet because this widow troubles me I will [c]avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.’ ” 6 Then the Lord said, “Hear what the unjust judge said. 7 And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? 8 I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?”*

Verse 8 is the key scripture. When Jesus returns, which could be at any moment, will He find faith in you? Do you call for the elders of the Church to pray for you when your sick or have you lost faith in Jesus to heal? And if you were to call, would they show up to pray or have they lost faith in Jesus to heal? If we don't believe that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are in operation today, how can we expect to be healed.

I'd like to share what [Matthew Henry's Commentary](#) says about this verse; *“ (4.) It is foretold that, when Christ comes to plead his people's cause, he will find but little faith in comparison with what one might expect. That is, [1.] In general, he will find but few good people, few that are really and truly good. Many that have the form and fashion of godliness, but few that have faith, that are sincere and honest: nay, he will find little fidelity among men; the faithful fail, [Ps. 12:1, 2](#). Even to the end of time there will still be occasion for the same complaint. The world will grow no better, no, not when it is drawing towards its period. Bad it is, and bad it will be, and worst of all just before Christ's coming; the last times will be the most perilous. [2.] In particular, he will find few that have faith concerning his coming. When he comes to avenge his own elect he looks if there be any faith to help and to uphold,*

and wonders that there is none, [Isa. 59:16](#); [63:5](#). It intimates that Christ, both in his particular comings for the relief of his people, and in his general coming at the end of time, may, and will, delay his coming so long as that, **First**, Wicked people will begin to defy it, and to say, Where is the promise of his coming? [2 Pet. 3:4](#). They will challenge him to come ([Isa. 5:10](#); [Amos 5:19](#)); and his delay will harden them in their wickedness, [Matt. 24:48](#). **Secondly**, Even his own people will begin to despair of it, and to conclude he will never come, because he has passed their reckoning. God's time to appear for his people is when things are brought to the last extremity, and when Zion begins to say, The Lord has forsaken me. See [Isa. 49:14](#); [Isa. 40:27](#). But this is our comfort, that, when the time appointed comes, it will appear that the unbelief of man has not made the promise of God of no effect."

Regardless of how much you may be walking in unbelief, or no faith, it will not change the coming of Jesus again.

Jesus gives another parable about prayer in **Luke 11:5-8** and it has to do with two friends. It says; "5 And He said to them, "Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; 6 for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; 7 and he will answer from within and say, 'Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you'? 8 I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs."

It's interesting that when the man got up to give him the bread, it had nothing to do with his friendship with him, but with his friends' persistence. When praying for the needs of others above your own needs is the priority, you're guaranteed to hear from God. This man didn't ask bread for his own needs, but for the needs of others. So when you pray, don't do it for your benefit but for the benefit of others. In your persistence in prayer, God will hear you.

Jesus continues talking about prayer in **Luke 11:9-13**; "9 "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. 11 If a son asks for [a]bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? 12 Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? 13 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

I'm convinced that the #1 hindrance to unanswered prayer is the rejection of the gift of the Holy Spirit. I'm not talking about being born again of the Holy Spirit, but rather Baptized in the Holy Spirit as found in **Acts 2:1-4** where it says; "2 When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all [a]with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 Then there appeared to them [b]divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

If you have no faith to receive the promised Gift of the Holy Spirit now, will Jesus find faith in you if he were to return today?

If your prayers are not being answered, could it be that having rejected the baptism of the Holy Spirit has been a hindrance?

It would be like you inviting me to your house for Christian fellowship and requesting that I leave my wife at home, because she's too radical as a Christian; that wouldn't work would it? A husband and wife are one flesh. The Holy Spirit, Jesus the Son and the Father...are one. You take them ALL, or nothing. You can't split them up, or take one and leave the other two or take two and leave one out, can you? It's the same in rejecting the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues.

I believe that God is offended with Christians who have been born again, but have requested that the Gift of the Holy Spirit stay at home. They are willing to be born again and have fellowship in Jesus name, but as for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, they have made it very clear that it is not welcome in their lives or in their Church, and yet they can't figure out why their prayers are not being answered, why they're not overcoming sin, why they're continuing in sin, why they're not seeing healing. It's simple, if you reject the healer, how are you going to get healed?

James 4:6 in the Amplified Bible says this; *"6 But He gives us more and more grace [through the power of the Holy Spirit to defy sin and live an obedient life that reflects both our faith and our gratitude for our salvation]. Therefore, it says, "God is opposed to the proud and haughty, but [continually] gives [the gift of] grace to the humble [who turn away from self-righteousness]."*

James is talking to Christians here referencing their proud and haughty heart. Those who reject the work of the Holy Spirit and His baptism, those who reject the gift of tongues. To make it clear, God resists you when in your pride and self-righteousness, when you tell the Holy Spirit to stay at home, and that you don't need Him.

When you humble yourself, that's when you experience grace to live an upright life. That's when the 'grace card' can be used. There are many Christians who throw up the 'grace card', but are not living out their Christianity, because they continue to walk in pride and self-righteousness by resisting the work of the Holy Spirit who empowers them to overcome sin in their life and live an obedient life according to the Bible. So, self-righteousness is the root at resisting the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

In closing, let's read **Jude 20-21** in the Amplified Bible; *"20 But you, beloved, build yourselves up on [the foundation of] your most holy faith [continually progress, rise like an edifice higher and higher], pray in the Holy Spirit, 21 and keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously and looking forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ [which will bring you] to eternal life."*

You can't pray in the Holy Spirit unless you're baptized in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues. Praying in the Holy Spirit IS praying in tongues. If you know you've been living in pride and haughtiness towards God and man, it's time to repent and ask for forgiveness. It's time humble yourself and repent of self-righteousness. Remember that God opposes self-righteousness.