

October 24 Adult Spiritual Growth Class Synopsis

Unshakable Hope: Chapter 5: Your Prayers Have Power

Do you struggle with the idea that your prayers could be powerful? Why or why not?

Since you are a Person of the Promise, what kind of prayer life do you hope to have?

James, the brother of Jesus, teaches us that the prayer of a righteous (believing) person is powerful and effective (James 5:16). He uses Elijah's prayer life as a case in point: "Elijah was a human being, even as we are. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. Again, he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops" (James 5:17-18)

Elijah was a great prophet who lived in the 9th century BC during the reign of King Ahab. King Ahab married Jezebel, a Phoenician princess, who brought 800 Baal prophets to Israel and subsequently murdered many prophets of Yahweh. It was during this dark time in Israel's history that God used Elijah and his great faith and complete dependence on God. Elijah prayed boldly for God-sized miracles. He called on God with enough faith to believe God would answer even the most audacious prayer. And, without fail, God answered those audacious prayers. He poured out His power repeatedly, giving Elijah opportunity to proclaim God's greatness. Elijah's prayers pointed the world back to God. Through Elijah's prayer, God subjected a terrible drought upon Israel, which had had fallen away from God. In a direct showdown with the prophets of Baal, God answered Elijah's prayer, "Answer me so these people will know that you, O Lord, are God and that you have brought them back to yourself." (1 Kings 18:37) God delivered with fire from heaven to consume the water and the sacrifices so all would know that Yahweh is God and there is no other God in heaven or earth. To end the drought, Elijah climbed to the top of Mount Carmel and prayed fervently and persistently. After seven times, a little cloud arose from the sea, which led to a terrific rainstorm that replenished the thirst of the land (1 Kings 18:44-46).

So how can we tap into God's power? How can we, ordinary people, just like Elijah, experience the power of God moving in response to our prayers? James says to "confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed" (James 5:16).

The Apostle Paul tells us that "we are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are." (Romans 3:22 NLT)

Jesus says in John 15:7 (The Message) "if you make yourselves at home with me and my words are at home in you, you can be sure that whatever you ask will be listened to and acted upon.

We are told: "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him." (1 John 5:14-15 NIV)

As believers we pray in the powerful name of Jesus who is our mediator (1 Timothy 2:5 NIV), whose name is above all names. "Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:9-11). We pray in the name of Jesus because "He is able to do immeasurably more than

all we ask or imagine” (Ephesians 3:20). We can also find comfort for “when we do not know what we ought to pray for, the Holy Spirit intercedes for us in accordance with the will of God” (Romans 8:26-27).

We are to pray, fully claiming and expecting, that *“with God all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26),* believing beyond all doubt that *“Christ is all and in all” (Colossians 3:11).*

Corrie ten Boom: “You can never learn that Christ is all you need until Christ is all that you have.”

Prayer Resource: [Jesus Christ's Names, Titles and Characters - Study Resources \(blueletterbible.org\)](https://www.blueletterbible.org)

A song to reflect and pray on:

[Casting Crowns - Only Jesus \(Official Lyric Video\) - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

Looking ahead – Sunday October 31

Chapter 6 – Grace for the Humble

God's Promise

1 Peter 5:5 (NKJV)

God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.