



## Sermon Notes—Perfecting Prayer: **Prayer and Faith**

Pastor Mike Bayer VillageAlive.com © Village Alive Ministries

### Prayer and Faith at Work In the Church

*"Without faith it is impossible  
to please God."*

Hebrews 11:6

This is a model for prayer **IN** the church. The model does not limit prayer from reaching beyond the church but James focuses on prayer that **STARTS** in the church community!

James also focuses on purpose in prayer and does not cover all the aspects of prayer such as:

- Intercession
- Spiritual Warfare
- Fasting
- ...others

#### **A. Prayer Within the Church** *James 5:13-16*

James reveals three primary purposes for prayer within the church.

##### **1. Praying For Self** *James 5:13*

- When we go through suffering, James says we should first pray for ourselves.
- The principle here is simply that we 'should' pray for ourselves when we are in need.

##### **2. Elders Pray for the Sick** *James 5:14-15*

- Person must ask (want) prayer
- These are probably bedfast people (pray over—raise up)
- Must be anointed with oil
- Prayer must be 'Prayer of Faith'
- Lord will raise up
- Both healing and forgiveness of sins

##### **3. Pray for Each Other** *James 5:16*

- This would include all forms of prayer for others
- Prayer meetings and small groups
- Distance praying
- Includes but not limited to healing

#### **B. What Kind of Prayer Is Needed?**

When I pray for myself, for others and when the elders pray for the sick, 'faith' is required. Two kinds of 'faith and prayer' are revealed in the Bible: Praying in Faith and the Prayer of Faith.

**Faith:** The source of Faith...

#### **Saving faith (Gift)**

**Eph 2:8** For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

#### **Growing faith**

**Rom 10:17** So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

#### **Gifted faith**

**Rom 12:3** For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.

##### **1. Praying in Faith**

Praying in faith is prayer that 'demonstrates' faith. It is also prayer that will 'manifest' faith—in other words, see the answers to our prayers come to pass according to His will.

*Mark 11:24; John 16:24; Mat 7:7; Phil 4:6*

##### **All believers are called to pray in faith**

*Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.*

*Mark 11:24*

##### **All have been given a measure of faith for giftedness**

*...as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. Rom 12:3*

##### **We need to ask the Lord to increase our faith**

*And the apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith."*

*Luke 17:5*

##### **How do you know you've prayed in faith?**

You won't know it by sight until the "substance" and "evidence" of faith, which isn't visible at first, becomes visible at the arriving of the answer. *Heb 11:1*

# What is the Prayer of Faith?

## 2. The Prayer of Faith

James 5:15

- This is the only place in the Bible where the term “prayer of faith” is found.
- When this prayer is exercised it is ALWAYS answered.

**The prayer of faith is an empowerment of faith by the Holy Spirit:**

We have in Mark 11:23-24, 1 Cor 12:9, and 13:2, James 5:15... an unbroken line of teaching about a gift of faith that enables a person to pray a completely assured prayer because God has given extraordinary assurance.

**This is why the "prayer of faith" in James 5:15 WILL heal the sick person. It is certain because this faith is God's special gift of assurance about what he intends to do.**

- But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all...to another faith by the same Spirit... 1 Cor 12:7, 9
- ...and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains... 1 Cor 13:2
- All believers and especially elders-shepherds are to be 'zealous' for spiritual gifts 1 Cor 14:1
- Just as a message of wisdom (or any other spiritual gift) is given to meet the need for a specific issue, so the gift of faith is an impartation of faith to meet a need (move a mountain). Often it is simply to raise the level of faith in a person or group for the manifestation of the answer to prayer.

**Authority:** It may be that elders-shepherds-leaders are needed in some cases of prayer for needs that require both faith and the 'position' of authority.

### Glory in Works and Prayer

The Father will continue the work of His Son through His disciples. After His return in resurrection power the Son will manifest Himself through these who are united with Him in faith. Their works will glorify the Father in a continuing harvest.

It is only as these disciples pray in the name of Jesus, in union with Him, that glory will come to the Father. And the mighty work begun in Jesus will continue and expand. The test of all Christian prayer is whether it is in the name of Jesus, offered out of our life in Him, and gives glory to the Father. Can we be trusted with the name of Jesus as He was with the Father's name? So much of what we do in the church is temporary and frenzied. It may win compliments and approval from other church people, but it does not give glory to God, nor does it last.

(The Preachers Commentary John 14:12-14)

***"Only those who see the invisible can attempt the impossible."***

Dick Eastman

See John Piper Desiring God [desiringGod.com](http://desiringGod.com) for support of this view. "The Elders, the People, and the Prayer of Faith" March 11, 1990

### Authority Connection!

People ask: Why should not the sick person, bedridden at home, ask for the healers to come instead of the elders. The answer is twofold.

First, there is no evidence in the NT that there were any so-called healers in the churches. God gives "gifts of healings" not THE gift of healing. And he distributes these gifts of healings variously as he wills, now to one person, now to another. Some people might receive a gift of healing more regularly than other people. But that is not guaranteed for every church and so it can't be the basis of James' instruction for the churches.

The second part of the answer is found in who the elders are. They are shepherds (Acts 10:17, 28; 1 Peter 5:1-2). Whom does a sheep need when it is wounded or sick? Answer: It needs a shepherd.

John Piper (see above citation)