

## Why Pray?

### James 5:13-16 (NIV)

Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise. 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. 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. 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.

When we were discussing how we the deacons and elders might better encourage the spiritual growth of the congregation, one of the ideas was to encourage more prayer. Me and my brilliant ideas...I thought that one of us should give a testimony on how prayer has benefited our lives...and here I am!

□ Byron Mulhall, husband of a dear friend of mine, was diagnosed with advanced liver and colon cancer. At the time of his first chemotherapy treatment his liver was covered in tumors, was twice its normal size and the tumor marker count in Byron's bloodstream was 441 (the normal count is 0-5). Byron & Hilary shared with their situation with their congregation and I also asked our church to pray for him for healing. After two chemotherapy treatments his liver was back to normal size and his tumor marker count was down to 77.6. According to Byron's doctor this is completely unheard of. Normally it takes 6 full months of treatment to even begin to show these kinds of results. Byron has now had 5 chemotherapy treatments and his tumors are shrinking and disappearing. 3 out of 4 of his tumor counts are totally normal and the other is on its way there. Tell me prayer doesn't work!

□ As I read before in James 5:15 & 16 - ***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. 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.*** Last year was by far the hardest and most painful one of my life. I know that most of you were aware that I was going through marital troubles and I could tell that you wished there was something you could do. For the most part, I think you just prayed. I know I prayed...most of the time with the sinking feeling that there was no hope for me. I would read the bible and desperately seek wisdom and answers, but I was so lost. I was too far down to hear the answers. Thank heavens I had other righteous people praying for me. The Lord picked me up by my bootstraps (since there was no way I could) and set me back on the right path. Your prayers helped heal our family and marriage. I don't think my life has ever been this healthy...emotionally, physically, mentally and especially spiritually.

□ A challenge – Since I understand first hand just how miraculous it can be in my life to have people pray for me...I have decided to sit down every night with our Church directory and pick a family or member to pray for that night. It doesn't matter if I know them or not...I am going to shower them with prayers. This congregation is my family and they deserve every blessing I can think to ask for on their behalf. I challenge you to do the same. I know that we all will benefit from each other's prayers...and we will doubly benefit from being in such close contact with the Lord.

Conclusion –

Job 42:10 (NIV)

After Job had prayed for his friends, the LORD made him prosperous again and gave him twice as much as he had before.

Philippians 4:4-7 (NIV)

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

The preceding bible passages indicate just a few of the immeasurable benefits you will gain by praying. There are no guarantees that the Lord will answer your prayers in the way you have requested...but there is a guarantee that he will answer your prayers in a way that best suits his plan for your life. My life is a living testimony to that fact!

Thank you and God bless you all!