

5th week of September

James 5:13-20

“The Answer is Prayer”

Your Story

Talk to your family about times when prayer has helped you.

My Story and the Bible Story

I’m a worrier. It’s who I am. I worry about test results, about family members and close friends, about the future, etc. Sometimes my worry feels overwhelming. And so I pray. Every time I worry, I pray. I pray for friends who are traveling. I pray for family members who are sick. I pray for my future. I pray for whatever I’m worried about. And although my prayers are not always answered with “yes,” they are answered with peace. Prayer is powerful because it reminds us that we are not in control, but that God is bigger than any of the things we worry about.

Read James 5:13-20. From *The Message*: “*Are you hurting? Pray. Do you feel great? Sing. Are you sick? Call the church leaders together to pray and anoint you with oil in the name of the Master. Believing-prayer will heal you, and Jesus will put you on your feet. And if you’ve sinned, you’ll be forgiven—healed inside and out. Make this your common practice: Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you can live together whole and healed. The prayer of a person living right with God is something powerful to be reckoned with. Elijah, for instance, human just like us, prayed hard that it wouldn’t rain, and it didn’t—not a drop for three and a half years. Then he prayed that it would rain, and it did. The showers came and everything started growing again. My dear friends, if you know people who have wandered off from God’s truth, don’t write them off. Go after them. Get them back and you will have rescued precious lives from destruction and prevented an epidemic of wandering away from God.*”

However you feel, God wants you to pray. If you’re sad, God wants you to talk to Him about it. If you’re happy, He wants to hear about that too. No matter what it is, God wants you to talk to Him about it. God already knows what’s happening in your life, but He wants to hear about it from you. And when you tell God about the scary things in your life, they don’t seem quite so scary. When you tell Him about the great things, they seem even better. And when you tell God about your worries, He gives you peace. We pray for healing and people don’t always get better. We pray for things that we don’t always receive. But God always promises to listen, to give us peace, and to be there with us, walking beside us through the hard times and the

good times. Whenever we don't know what to do, we should pray, asking God to help us know what the right thing is. And God will show us the way.

Prayer is powerful. It has the power to change our lives and the lives of those around us. So even when it seems like your prayers aren't being answered, don't give up. Keep on praying! And who knows, your prayers, like Elijah's in our Bible passage, might be answered in an amazing way!

Discussion and Action

- Ask your children about times when they feel like God answered their prayers
- As a family, talk about any favorite places to pray anyone has: it could be outside by a lake, or inside in their bed
- Talk about specific things to pray for this week and commit to praying each day for those things

Prayer

Thank God for always wanting to hear from us. Ask Him to help you not give up when you feel like He doesn't answer your prayers.