



TRANSFORMED

DEVOTIONS CONNECTING TEENS TO CHRIST

The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. 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 5:16-18

The power of habit: prayer

Why we don't pray more? I can only speak for myself, but I sometimes don't pray more because I think I can get more done if I actually "do" it than if I pray about it first. I think that my thinking, my working, my worrying, and my planning are more powerful than actually praying about it.

When I write it down it sounds pretty foolish, doesn't it? But our lack of prayer says just that. Our lack of praying says to God that our activity and our working is more important than asking him to act and work and do.

James inspires us to believe that prayer is a powerful thing. He tells us that our prayers are powerful and effective. Our prayers matter. Our prayers change things. Our prayers make a difference.

If you believed that something was powerful, would you do it? Of course. If you thought something would make all the difference in the world, you would make sure it happened. If you thought something mattered, you would make time for it, intentionally, purposefully, regularly. That's what we do for things that make a difference and matter to us.

James gives an example of an effective prayer. He reminds us of the story of Elijah in 1 Kings 17 and 18. Elijah prayed that it would not rain—and it didn't rain. God withheld rain for three and a half years because of Elijah's prayer. Then Elijah prayed again that it would rain—and God sent rain.

Prayer works. Prayer matters. It is powerful and effective, not because of the person who is praying, but because the person praying invokes God's powerful name and humbly relies on God's gracious promises and saving will. The story of Elijah—and many other stories throughout the Bible—show us that this is true.

So pray. Make a habit of it. Your Father in heaven loves you. He has forgiven all your sins, and he now invites you to call on him in prayer. In his love for you, he hears your prayers and works powerfully for you and for the world.

Prayer: Lord God, you teach me that prayer is a powerful thing. In your grace, Father, you invite me to pray. Help me to understand how powerful prayer is so that I make it a part of the very fiber of my life. Yes, Lord Jesus, teach me to pray without stopping. Amen.