

Billy Graham was going out to mail his letter ^{30. Nov - July 6, 1969 A.M.} ^{3:40 PM 74 WXR I}
and Boy on St. Way to Post office.
Told Boy after info. Thanks, son you come to crusade tonight
& all will ~~thrive~~ ^{thrive} ~~upon~~ ^{upon} ~~that~~ ^{that} way CRY FOR REVIVAL ~~of~~ ^{of} Heaven -
Boy replied, and go on = The prayer God answers -
James 5:16-18

INTRODUCTION:

I wish to speak to you this morning on these verses -- confess your faults one to another and pray one for another that you may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elijah was a man subject to things like we are. And he prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and it rained not on the earth for the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again and the Heavens gave rain and brought forth fruit.

In view of the fact that we have a cry all across the world today searching for a lead and an answer to the human heart. I submit to you that it is here in this text today that we will find the answer to the cry of the needs of the world, through prevailing prayer.

Now tradition tells us that when James died his friends who had come to prepare his body for burial discovered great callouses on his knees. They examined these callouses and having made inquiry discovered that here was a man who had spent so much time in prayer that his knees had worn hard. Now when I read this account, I discovered here in James that he was a man that indicated that the Christian prays a great deal. What does he say about prayer? In this wonderful passage which I have read for you, I want you to note that James says that here is a law that gives an illustration. Here is a proposition. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. To illustrate this, James uses Elijah, for his subject. And he says that Elijah was a man of like passion as we are.

I. The Effectual Fervent Prayer Of A Righteous Man, Verse 16.

Now this is the challenge that it is exclusively for a certain group of people -- righteous men and women. Who is a righteous man. Well, according to James, Elijah was a righteous man. Not man God will not hear "sinner" - A Righteous man more likely put proper energy into his prayer.

First, he says, Elijah was an ordinary man. The first thing that I learned from looking at this passage is that Elijah was an ordinary man, a man subject to (like passions) as we are. Now although he had been the man who climbed Mt. Carmel and who stood on the top of that hill and won one of the great battles for God, and put down the paganism of that time, he came down from the mountain to flee from Jezebel, only a woman. Because she frustrated the Prophet. And she was like a yoke around his neck. And the next time you see this man, he is seated beneath a juniper tree wishing to die. *Like Passions - means like us - He prayed - we ought to pray*

Now as a Pastor, (many times) I have probably been there with Elijah and I am sure that (you) have been there at certain times, and you have sat under a tree and wanted to die. And don't say that you haven't, because you have. This man was an ordinary man just like you here today.

3rd He Was An (Obedient Man.)

But more than that, Elijah was an obedient man. Now you might read his record in I Kings 17-5 where he (went and did) according to the (word) of the Lord. He was an obedient man. And (you) dear friends will never be what you ought to be, or you as a man today will never be a man of prevailing prayer (until) you are an obedient man. A righteous man is a man (who) is right with God and right with his neighbor.

This is perhaps the reason why people today find so much trouble about getting the message, and the communication from God. But you (show) me the individual who is seeking God's face, and I will show you a man who has a message, and who knows the truth of what God is doing in the world through his church and in midst of the message. There is (no question) as to what is wrong today in the world. And it is this -- obedience is defective.

I think this was one of the most solemn things that (Jesus) said, as he spoke of the done and the undone. In his (last) public discourse before he went to the cross, he charged those who were self-righteous and insistant on the law, that (they) had left some

of the matters such as mercy and faith undone. Now this word undone certainly disturbs me. Jesus indicates that anything that we do that is right is rightfully done. But peace-meal Christianity is one of the most treacherous things that confronts the disciple of Jesus in this 20th Century. For we can use negative as the proof of quality even in our relationship with Christ. We say we don't do this, we don't do the other -- but Jesus said there were (some things) that we needed to do. And to be a Christian is a total experience. We must all agree. It (claims all) that I am and all that I have. There is nothing that could be plainer than this. This you ought to have done, and this I ought to have done if Jesus Christ is the Master. So long as we spend our energies and our time on inadequate social actions, we are going to miss the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ to produce a new man. Because it is only as we look to the (cross) that we will discover this. Now this was the last appeal that Jesus made to his religious enemies. And surely they needed to search their hearts as to how much they loved God.

I want to point out something that challenges me to the depth of my being. Partial disobedience in the last analysis constitutes total disobedience. If I disobey in one point, I am guilty of all the law, and all the will of God.

I remind you today that (I. Samuel 15:22) states, to obey is better than sacrifice. And to harken then the fat of rams. God is pressing upon my heart that what he wants of me is not just a pulpit man or a counselor, or any other thing. But what God wants of me is that I should be a holy man. Therefore when I pass on, my wife, my children, could speak of me and say that he reminded me of Jesus. What matters most today is that you are obedient. Elijah was a righteous man for he went and did according to the word of the Lord. I Kings 17:5.

I wonder how many of you meet God everyday in the light of the word and I am not talking now about just studying a few commentaries but how many of you could honestly say, I never neglect to meet my God. Yet this is one of his demands. Our Saviour never missed his quiet time. Isaiah says - Verse 4 through 5, morning by morning, he wakens

mine ears. I was not rebellious. Mark 1:35 tells us that he went out to pray as was his deliberate habit.

I want to tell you my friends that you have cancelled out your effectiveness in prayer if you are disobedient. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. Psa. 66:18.

If I look with approval on anything in my life which is out of adjustment in the will of God, the Lord will not hear me. That is Heaven will become as brass. You can say your prayers - link them together - whether in public or in private, but you don't even touch the ceiling. You really don't pray. Therefore, you must come and be an obedient man.

He Was An Observant Man.

In the next place, I want you to notice Elijah, that he was a man of vision because he communicated with Heaven. He could look into the face of a king and say, "Thou and Thy Father's house have forsaken the commandments of the Lord and Thou hast followed Baalim. I Kings. 18:18.

A man who is totally obedient to God is always aware of what is happening around him. His life and intercession will help him to observe the things about him. Mine eyes affected my heart said Jeremiah in the book of Lamentations 3:51. And the reason why many of us do not know how to pray is because we cannot see. I wish that somehow we could see and feel the wrongs in this country at this hour, in which we live. And we need to become concerned about the paganism that is seeping into this country. One great scholar has said the central neurosis of our time is emptiness.

Now who would doubt because there is emptiness in hearts, there is no authority. They say the church has not the answer today. Someone has said the questions of all time have been why, why not. And men have always turned to the church to get those answers, and get those questions answered. But manytimes there are people in the church today who are asking the questions. Why not? Why not paganism. Why not let

materialism take over. As one of the world's great economists of the world has declared. The necessary thing for spiritual things some people believe is the acquisition of that which is material. And it has become (a philosophy with us.) If you don't feel this in this beautiful country in which we live, then you have but to walk the streets of the city and go into some of the places of suffering and sin, and settle down in the middle of a big city like New York.

There are (signs of our times that we are growing (anti-God.) And the thing about anti-Godism is accepted by about 40% of the population throughout the world today.

You remember (last Christmas) when you turned on your radio and you listened to the astronauts read the passage from God's word in their flight around the moon. Now I don't know how the reading of that word affected you, but it was enough to bring tears to the Christians eyes. Just to pause and thank God for a witness that was world-wide. And then the (next day you heard that (Madalyn Murray O'Hair) dared to lift up her voice to attack one of the greatest things that perhaps happened in history. As the Bible was read, the word of God. It should have been a time that every Christian, man and woman, should have congratulated these men on what they did. And it is about time that we as Christians should stand up and should speak, and should become observant men as to what is happening in the world today.

School graduation - prayer, bible

IV. The (Immortality Of Our Day.)

The dishonesty, the breaking of pledges between men and between families, and between nations. We have delinquency all about us. (J. Edgar Hoover) tells us that the taxpayers probably pay about 25,500 dollars a minute just for crime. (More) is spent on crime and combating it, than on all our schools and universities in our land. Now we were told that since (1950) crime has risen 56%.

Now I am concerned. You begin to read the pages of history at the time in history when the church began to pray. What happens? Great things take place. And one of the great stirring examples is the time of Pentecost when as the result of prayer, we discover the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. The righteous

Many Times We have heard People pray for Rain in a Prayer meeting & Rain came in answer.
root of trouble is lack of trust in God -7-

fainting, one simple way of preventing it, is to put his head between his knees.

Elijah prayed. And his praying was focused. The Word said that Elijah prayed that

1K. 17:11
it might not rain. He prayed again unto Heaven, and it gave rain. Verse 17-18. Elf Eliph
could pray about the weather surely God people not hesitate to pray for things in heaven,
And when you have prayed for what you know to be the will of God, and you have

taken this up to Heaven, then my friend, you have really prayed. What God would have us to do, is if we are going to have Revival, we must pray. And there must be prayer by the Preacher. Not just simply as a beauty of his, or a profession of his, but as a privilege and a necessity.

Jonathan Edwards once said, if some Christians that have been complaining of their ministers, had said and acted less before men and had applied themselves with all of their might to cry to God for their ministers, and if they had lifted up their souls to Heaven and stormed Heaven with a fervant and insistent prayer for them, they would have been much more in the way of success. The holier man is, the more does he estimate prayer. The clearer he sees what God wants him to do.

Paul gives an illustration of these things. If any man could have extended the Gospel by personal force or by brain power, or by culture, it would have been Paul. But Paul unites prayer and he calls upon the Christian people not only to prayer, but to pray for him. He said to the church at Corinth once, ye also help together by praying for us. On another occasion speaking to a church, finally brethren, pray for us that the world of the Lord may have free course. He impresses the Phillipians that he has opposition but he needs their prayers. Now this is the thing that Christians everywhere need to be doing today. They need to be praying. Praying for the ministers of the Gospel, pray for the evangelists in the world - Billy Graham and the others, that the word may have free course. We must forget our own dignity and influence and reputations. And we must pray. And we must pray for the church. We must pray for the preacher. We must pray for the spiritual needs of the church and the world today. There is so much that is sapping the spiritual foundations today. The blight has reached almost the roots. And sapped the spiritual life from us. The back-sliding of people today, many who have a superficial piety. Spiritual work now becomes treachery and hard

man as I have pointed out is just an ordinary man. He is just an obedient man. And he is going to be observant of the things of his day and time.

V. The next thing I want to say to you is that -- what about the effectual prayer in Verse 16. There is something about the kind of praying (which is different) from the praying which we hear so often in our churches. (It is a fervant prayer.

In Verse 17, we read that Elijah prayed earnestly. I want to say that fervant prayer is nothing more than the handing over of our whole total life -- spirit, soul, and body as I pointed out to you last Sunday morning. The body was the be presented -- to become an instrument of the Holy Ghost in praying. We don't know how to pray as we ought. But when a (man is given over entirely) to the mighty spirit, he, the Holy Ghost prays in him and in us, and through us -- the will of God with groanings that cannot be uttered. Oh, how we need to come back to this kind of praying. There is reward in preaching. You get an applause of your congregation, or congratulations -- sometimes you get an encouragement, other times you may get a discouragement. But the greatest time that any one can have is when he is in prayer.

I remember many years back reading (Robert Murray McCheyne) a man who died in his 30's and who made a bigger impact on Scotland than anyone else probably, except John Knox. There was only one reason for his strength and his mighty power. It was that prayer life was his. Some of the old saints used to tell how he groaned in his study at times until his wife wondered whether or not he was ill.

The big question is are you prepared to hand over your body, your mind, and your spirit until they become instruments for Heaven-born prayer.

The manner of prevailing prayer is not only fervant -- (it) must be frequent. Elijah prayed again. Verse 18 Jesus said men ought always to pray and not to ~~think~~. Luke 18:1.

As we observe Elijah as he prayed on Mt. Carmel, he cast himself down upon the earth. And he put his head between his knees. I Kings. 18:42. When a man feels like

work instead of a joy. We can curtail our praying but soon we will discover that the foundations are gone. Henry Martin said once, I have dedicated too much time to public menacerations and too little time to private communion. And in his records we find that he spent one day in solemn prayer, he said, 2 hours.

Wilbur Force said, I must secure more time for prayer and devotions. I have been living far too public for me. The short private devotions have starved my soul. I have grown lame and faint. I have been keeping too late hours. Of a failure in parliament he says, let me record my grief and shame, and all, and that probably I have been distracted because I have not contacted God. And God let me stumble.

More time and early hours to prayer must be found. A holy life would not be so rare or so difficult a thing if our devotions were not too short and hurried. If we would lengthen them and intensify them. We make nasty visits to the prayer closets. We are not only deluted but we are the losers. And we will never have the revival in the world. We are taught that the greatest victories came as men cried unto God. We cannot do too much of real praying. We must learn the worth of prayer. Few men there are who really pray. As Elijah who could pray and the Heavens were locked up. And they were not unsealed, until prayer was made again.

We must become a generation of praying saints. I do not mean that men are going to accomplish a sensational novel device or using attractions or entertainment, we will never stirr this world for God. We will never have the revival. God can work wonders if he can get suitable men. And men can work wonders if they can get God to lead them. Now that which has been done in spiritual matters can be done again. Because Christ says verily, verily, I say unto you - he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also. And greater works than these shall he do because I go unto my Father.

VI. The Miracle of Prevailing Prayer.

Our text informs us, because in Verse 16, it says, it availeth much.

And God worked this through Elijah's praying.

There was triumph over darkness. Observe his triumph over the power of darkness. This was when Elijah on Mt. Carmel made an open show of the powers and the Prophets of Baal, triumphing over them. And when the glory of God broke through, he prayed. Let it be known this day, that though art God. I Kings. 18:36.

And everybody knew that God was God!

Whenever revival comes, God is glorified. And what we need in this country today is an indication of the glory of God. The miracle happens when we carry the battle and build an altar and prevail in prayer. No prayer offered in our own virtue will accomplish or be answered.

Let me remind you, that we are fighting against principalities, against the roots of darkness against this world. Against spiritual wickedness in high places. Now the only way we can deal with that situation is not with weapons of carnality but with the mighty weapons that pull down strong holds. Eph. 6:12, 2 Cor. 10:4, 5. Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God. And bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

Are we seeing the glory of God in the church today. Are we seeing the glory of God in the neighborhood in which we live. Are people talking about God. The people you associate with.

In Elijah's life there was also the triumph over drought. The power which he had, the call of Elijah brought down refreshing showers upon a dry land. Now if over coming the powers of darkness illustrates the glory of God, then surely this illustration, the revival of the saints amidst a barren earth.

I believe with all my heart that God is seeking to do a work in our day and in our land. Over 100 years ago a man started a prayer meeting in New York City. He put

✓ a little poster in a window and he invited all who were interested in revival to come in and pray. The first night six joined him. Little by little that prayer meeting grew until it became a great prayer meeting. Not only in New York but in Philadelphia. At noon time 2,000 people came together to pray. In Chicago, 3000 came together to pray. And revival broke out. From New York City, it moved to New York Station, then across the country and it travel to Nebraska -- all the way to Mass. And wherever Charles Finney was the preacher, and testified that in every city that he had visited, he had found prayer meetings going on. At the height of the revival, 50,000 souls were saved every week. There was no publicity, no organization, just God moving in. It happened!

In 1857 that happened.

In 1859, the revival broke out in Ireland. Four young men praying in an old school house. They asked God to come down from Heaven and to send Revival upon them. And revival came.

In 1904 in Wales, a man prayed, oh God, bend to me. And God bent him and revival broke out and the whole nation was moved by the Spirit of God.

Dr. Edwin Orr just finished a book at Oxford in which he shows with evidence and documents that the revival of 1904 was not restricted to Wales but it swept inland to Ireland. It came over to America. It hit India and it broke out in South America. And South Africa.

✓ James Campbell tells the story of the Hebrides revival. How a good pastor with six of his deacons met in a barn. And they began to pray for revival. Day after day and sometimes on into the night season. One memorable night, one of these young deacons picked up his Bible, turned to Psa. 8 and read, who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, or who shall stand in his holy place. Ye that hath clean hands and a pure heart, who have not lifted up his soul unto vanity - V. 3 and 4.

He closed his Bible and prayed - Oh God, make my hands clean. Oh God, purify my heart. He hadn't finished that prayer when God swept through that barn and caught these men up in revival. And as a result, the churches were opened. And every place was packed with people seeking Christ. Fishermen, out on the sea, dropped their nets. They came back to the shore without any sort of advertisement or publicity crying, God have mercy upon us. Dr. Campbell was led to preach to the fishermen in the streets. And throughout the whole area there was a significant moving of the Spirit of God. This is what we need again.

In closing, triumph - there was Elijah who prayed in triumph over death. He raised the life again, the widow's son. And it is an illustration of quickening sinner. It is a miracle of regeneration. I Kings. 17:21 - when Elijah, before this child prayed, oh Lord, my God, I pray Thee, let this child's soul come into him again.

Here then my friends, the ministry of prayer - prevailing prayer. And a fervant prayer. Do we really desire to see the glory of God. Do we really desire to see the revival of saints. Do we really desire to see the quickening of sinners. Then let us give ourselves to such prayer.

Remember God calls ordinary, obedient, observant men and women to engage in such prayer. Will you be one of them. If so, tell God you are willing to pay the cost to be a servant and to focus your prayer. Because Verse 16 says, the effectual fervant prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

Tennyson wrote: "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of,
 Wherefore, let Thy voice rise like a fountain for me night and day.
 For what are men better than sheep or goats
 That nourish a blind life within the brain,
 If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
 Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
 For so the whole round earth is every way
 Bound by gold chains about the feet of God."

James - Six Basic Principles For Prayer

1. Praying People Must Pray - 4:2 → "Ye have not, because ye ask not. Saying prayers rather than praying.
2. Praying People Need Not Be Perfect People - Elijah - like us. Excuse making if I was like Abraham I would pray more. (Passion)
3. Praying People Must Be Believing People - 1:6 - Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering". Not routine - Believe God will hear.
4. Praying People Must Be Single-Minded People, Loyal To God - 1:8. "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways."
5. Praying People Need To Be Unselfish ^{4:3} - Prayer is often under the direction of our own spirit - lusts, pleasures, how many of our prayers are Thanksgiving? Intercessions? Petitions? Yielding?
6. Praying People Must Be Right With God - Righteous avails much - sin separates.

5:13 - Individual Prayer

14 - United Prayer

15 - Believing "

16 - Intercessory "
Fervent "

Rain - Error -