

PRAYING FOR ONE ANOTHER

James 5:16

God's Word tells us that we should pray for one another

I. JAMES' INSTRUCTIONS - James 5:16

A. THE REGULATIONS

1. Confess your sins to one another
 - Acknowledge personal guilt and specific sins within a circle of believers
2. Pray for one another
 - a. Intercession on behalf of one another
 - b. Demonstrating a concern for each other's well-being
 - c. We should be willing to ask those around us if we see or suspect sinful behavior - See I John 5:16

B. THE REASON: "Therefore"

1. Because prayer is powerful (see vs. 13-15)
2. Because prayer is not limited to the church elders (14)

C. THE RESULT: "So that you may be healed"

1. The type of "healing" here seems intentionally vague
2. Confession and prayer cleanses the wounds and allows the healing process to begin

D. THE REALITY

1. "The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much"
2. There is power in prayerful people!

E. A RESPONSE (Application)

- Be involved in or develop a small group of people with whom you can be transparent and accountable

II. PETER'S ENCOURAGEMENT - I Peter 4:7

A. THE SITUATION: "The end of all things is near"

1. The times are more evil
2. Christ's return is closer

B. THE SUMMONS

1. Be Sensible (Have sound judgment)
 - a. Properly assess the situation
 - b. Be in your right mind and respond in a responsible way
 - c. Don't be crazy or overreact!

Over please >

2. Be Sober
 - a. Self-controlled and spiritually observant
 - b. Clear-headed and decisive > No fuzzy thinking
3. Be Prayerful
 - a. A calm and collective spirit is conducive to prayer
 - b. The restless, anxious or fearful Christian seldom prays well
 - c. Stay engaged with God for the godly! - See Eph. 6:18 and I Tim. 2:1 & 8

C. TWO SUGGESTIONS (Application)

- Because time is short ...
- 1. Pray for those facing judgment (4:3-5)
- 2. Be prayerfully prepared to live out a genuine faith (1:6-7)

III. PAUL'S EXHORTATION - Colossians 4:2

A. THE MESSAGE: Devote yourselves to prayer

1. Persist in prayer
2. Hold fast ... Don't quit! (Consider I Thess. 5:17)

B. THE METHOD

1. With vigilance: Keeping alert in it
 - a. Awake: Not sleeping
 - b. Aware: Noting the people and needs around you
2. With thankfulness
 - Under the influence of thankfulness (See I Thess. 5:18)

C. A MODEL: Epaphras in Colossians 4:12-13

1. Epaphras' Determination (12a)
 - He was putting intense effort into his prayer for them
2. Epaphras' Desire (12b)
 - a. Godly conduct > Standing perfect
 - b. Sturdy convictions > Fully assured in all the will of God
3. Epaphras' Devotion
 - Intervening for many Christians in the tri-city region

D. A MINDSET (Application)

- Will you be consistently committed to passionate prayer for the people of our church?

CONCLUSION: Let us commit to helpful, fervent and persistent prayer for one another