

Pray for One Another

James 5:16

Introduction

Believers ought to encourage fellow believers in the Lord. Two important ways that we do this is through confession and intercession. Confession is our willingness to be transparent with one another by admitting our shortcomings and acknowledging where we struggle. When a Christian is willing to be transparent, fellow believers can take heart that they are not alone in their struggles. As a result, both believers can support each other as they move forward in their desire to walk in righteousness. Intercession is our willingness to take the concerns of others before the Lord in prayer. Every believer has the authority to take the concerns of their brothers and sisters to God the father because of the righteousness already provided through Christ. Our intercession for others becomes 'effective' as we utilize God's Word and seek God's glory in our prayers on behalf of fellow believers. When we do this we will not only see God answer our prayers, but we ourselves will be healed.

Getting Started

1. *Have you ever been encouraged because of someone else who was willing to share a struggle or area of weakness with you? How did their confession help you?*
2. *Share a time when someone else prayed for you and it made a difference in your life. How did God answer the prayer? How was God glorified?*

Let's Get Personal

1. None of us are perfect, but we often try to hide our weakness because we are ashamed or because we don't want others to know that we struggle. However, in concealing our shortcomings we also limit our ability to give help and receive help from others. While we must use wisdom in what we share and with whom we share, we should be willing to confess to one another for the benefit of the body of Christ. *Are you currently harboring any unconfessed sin? Do you feel led to share with your group an area of personal weakness for your own encouragement or for the encouragement of others?*
2. Prayer is a spiritual discipline. A believer's commitment to regular and ongoing communication with God is vital to their faith. *What is the state of your prayer life? Are you committed to interceding for the needs of other believers? Be honest in sharing with your group the priority that you give prayer in your life.*

Take the Next Step

1. *Are you walking in an area of unconfessed sin? If you did not share that in your group, what kept you from doing so? Spend time this week asking God to give you the strength and courage to share with another believer for the benefit of your own healing and the wisdom for whom to share with.*
2. *For whom do you need to pray? Will you commit this week to regularly and consistently take their requests to the Lord? One practice that can enrich our prayer lives is to have a friend with whom we commit to pray on a regular basis. Do you have a 'prayer partner' to encourage you in the discipline of prayer?"*

Renew Your Mind

Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much. James 5:16 (NASB)
