**1 – When Prayer Doesn’t Work**

James 5:13-18

2 - **Prayer Is Meant To Be Effective**

Prayer can ***“accomplish much”***. (James 5:16)

W. E. Vine defines as “to be of force, to be effective, **capable of producing results**.”

Why pray?

* Is that proven true every time?
* If not, who or what is the cause?

God’s word addresses reasons why prayer sometimes doesn’t accomplish what God said it could.

3 – **Prayer Is Not Effective When…**

**It’s not used at all.**

* Tools don’t have to be used.
* Why do we seemingly prefer to worry, stew and fret? (Matthew 6:31-34)
* That’s not God’s plan. (1 Peter 5:7)
* Is it…
  + A **lack of humility**? (“I can handle it myself”)
  + A **lack of a spiritual mindset**? Colossians 3:1-2
  + **Too busy** or too many distractions?

4 - **Prayer Is Not Effective When…**

They are **infrequent** or **sporadic**

* They are to be *“****unceasing****”* (1 Thessalonians 5:17)
* They are to receive our “***devotion***” (Colossians 4:2; Romans 12:12)
  + “to persevere, be constantly diligent”.
* Requires **purpose and planning**. (Mark 1:35;   
  Matthew 14:23)
* **Persistence** is an essential quality. (Luke 11:5-8; 18:1-8)

5 - **Prayer Is Not Effective When…**

**We lack faith.**

* Not praying at all, praying sporadically, or giving up all are indicative of a lack of faith.
  + ***“If you can?”*** *(*Mark 9:22-23)
* What do you **expect**? (James 1:5-8)
* We’ve got to believe it makes a difference. (Mark 11:24)

6 - **Prayer Is Not Effective When…**

**We don’t pray according to God’s will.**

* The comfort of 1 John 5:14-15
* What are our **motives**? (James 4:3)
* **What is the purpose** to our prayers? Please self or Him?
* **Do we know God’s will**?
* Do we appreciate God’s will? (2 Corinthians 12:7ff)

7 - **Prayer Is Not Effective When…**

**We don’t pray from the heart.**

Jesus spoke of those who use *“****meaningless repetition****”*.   
(Matthew 6:7)

* Jesus is describing someone who words in their prayers that they don’t mean or come from their heart.

Prayer doesn’t work when it doesn’t come from our heart (1 Corinthians 14:15).

* Our prayers are to reflect our *“****heart’s desire****”* (Romans 10:1; cf., 1 Peter 5:7).

8 - **Prayer Is Not Effective When…**

**We don’t do our part.**

* There isn’t anything that we might pray for that we don’t bear a responsibility in doing our part to bring the results that we seek.
* In fact, **do we pray to God that we might** – with humility, courage and wisdom – **do what we need to do to bring about the answer to our prayers**?
* Jesus said in Matthew 7:7-8, *“****Ask****, and it shall be given to you;* ***seek****, and you shall find;* ***knock****, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened*.*”*

9 - **Doing Our Part…**

**If we pray for our daily bread (cf Matt. 6:11)...**

**If we are praying for the lost….**

**If we pray for wisdom and strength to overcome the temptations we face...**

**If we pray for a blessed home and marriage…**

10 - **Prayer Is Not Effective When…**

**We turn our back on God.**

* One who lives in quits on God and His word, should never expect that prayer will accomplish anything.
  + Could we pray as King Hezekiah did in a time of need? (2 Kings 20:3)
* Prayer doesn’t work when choose to walk in darkness rather that walking in the light   
  (1 John 1:6-8).
* Consider the following passages.
  + Proverbs 15:8, 15:29, 1 Peter 3:12, 1 John 3:21-22,
* Sin will indeed hinder our prayers (1 Peter 3:7).

11 - **Prayer Is Effective When…**

**We pray…**

* **Unceasingly**
* **Faithfully**
* **Meaningfully**
* **Actively**