

MAIN POINT

God hears our prayers, cares about our prayers, speaks through prayer, and moves through prayer.

INTRODUCTION

How important is prayer to you? What is the purpose of prayer? If you believed that God would answer your every request, how often would you pray?

How often do you pray? How has prayer shaped your life? How would you define a good prayer life?

Prayer is an opportunity for us to communicate our desires to God with the assurance that He always hears us and He answers us. Jesus said, "Whatever you ask in My name, I will do it so that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (John 14:13). That is an amazing promise! In studying prayer, our desire is to further believe and be encouraged toward more consistent prayer, that we will be bold to bring any request we have before our heavenly Father.

DISCUSSION

> **READ MATTHEW 7:7-11 AND JAMES 5:13-18.**

How are asking, seeking, and knocking similar? How are they different? How do we practice these things in prayer?

When have you asked God for something, then later realized it was good you didn't get it?

What does the result of that experience teach you about how to pray? What does it teach you about the nature of God?

Based on this passage in Matthew 7, why can we have confidence in God's answers to our prayers?

When do you find you are most compelled to pray? Do you usually pray when things go well, when you experience hardship, or do you go to God in any circumstance? Explain.

When did James suggest that we need to go to God in prayer? How does James's advice on prayer compare to your practice of prayer?

Should certain situations in our lives lead us to pray with greater frequency and intensity? Why or why not?

What does the word "righteous" mean in the context of verse 16? Why would the prayer of a righteous person be more effective? James used the example of Elijah. Who comes to your mind when you think of a righteous "prayer warrior"? What could you learn about prayer by observing their life?

APPLICATION

How has your perspective on prayer changed in light of this study? How are you encouraged to press further into the practice of prayer this week? How will you begin?