

CLASS: SS1

SUBJECT: CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

TOPIC: EFFECTIVE PRAYER

WEEK: 2

TERM: SECOND

MEANING OF EFFECTIVE PRAYER

Prayer may be defined as a medium of communication and communion with God. Among Christians, prayer is a ritual copied from the prayer life of Jesus who taught his disciples how to pray. Prayer is the Christian weapon of defense and encouragement in life. However, prayer is effective when we pray according to the will of God, and when we receive the answers to our prayers.

There are various types of prayers:

- a) Adoration or praises prayer
- b) Petition prayer: Presenting personal needs to God.
- c) Thanksgiving prayer-expression of gratitude to God.
- d) Dedication prayer: Handing-in something to God for protection.
- e) Prayer of confession: asking God for mercy and pardon for sin committed.
- f) Intercession prayer: Praying for others.

ST. JAMES TEACHING ON EFFECTIVE PRAYER

(James 1:2-8; 5:13-18)

According to St. James, the effectiveness of prayer depends on **steadfastness, perseverance, faith** and **one's righteousness**. When Christians encounter trials, they should not worry, instead, they should rejoice because it is trial of their faith. This faith when it is tested produces perseverance and steadfastness. If any Christian lacks wisdom, James said that God is kind and can give generously to all without reproach, if you ask in faith, that is, without doubting. For he who has a doubt is like a wave of the sea that is double-minded, that person is unstable in all his ways and will not receive anything from the Lord.

James said that anyone suffering should pray, and anyone that is cheerful should sing songs of praise. And if anyone is sick, he should call for the elders of the Church to pray

for him, anointing with oil in the name of the Lord. James said the prayer of faith will save the sick person. And, the lord will raise such a person up if he had committed any sin, he will be forgiven.

James said the prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects. He cited the prayer of Elijah as an example, saying that Elijah prayed that it might not rain and there was not rain for three and half years. He also prayed again that it should rain, and it rained.

THE SIGNIFICANT AND REASONS FOR UNANSWER PRAYER

By his teaching, James throws light on the various factors that hinder the effectiveness of prayer. This is important because when our prayers are not effective, there is no way they can be answered by God. Some of the reasons for ineffective and therefore unanswered prayers are:

- A) Lack of faith on the part of the one praying: This happens when we doubt the ability of God to answer our prayer or solve our problem.
- B) Sin is another barrier, to effective pray: when our hearts are given up to repentance from personal sin, our prayer cannot be answered.
- C) Ingratitude to God for previous answered prayers.
- D) Unforgiveness also prevents prayer from being answered.
- E) Lack of concentration is another barrier to effective prayer
- F) Lack of patience, persistency and consistency can also cause unanswered prayer.
- G) Asking God for wrong thing: when we ask God for wrong or unnecessary things, God might delay or refuse to grant us our request.

Assignment

Do God answer our prayer when we shout or when we pray calmly?

