

## The Power of Prayer 17 Pentcost B

The letter of James speaks to us about the power of prayer. Whatever the situation; suffering, cheerful or sickness – the advice of James is to pray or sing. Whenever there is an occasion for prayer the church calls upon its people to give aid. People who pray for one another are the “God Squad” of the church. When a need arises the elders of the church are called to pray over the sick. Sins are forgiven. Confession to one another is encouraged. Powerful prayer is can be observed. People are brought back to the faith.

Christians in the early church appeared to be very close. Elijah type prayer was felt. People were healed. With all of the praying that went on without the communication devices we enjoy they had to come together often. How does the church maintain such closeness today?

Small groups that pray together observe similar results. Those groups that have worked in the past continue to be successful. The remaining SOS group continues to discuss the Bible, pray, and care for one another when members are sick. They effectively are a church within a church.

The last verse of the gospel asks a great question for the church today. How do you season a thing with salt after it lost its saltiness? Pretzels are fun food. The best ones are the hot kind made from rolled dough and salt. Let the pretzel get wet and soggy and what happens. The pretzel lost its saltiness and the taste is no longer the same. I don't know of a way to get the pretzel re-salted. Perhaps there is a way.

Salt is a preservative. It is used to give taste to food and keep it from being spoiled before the days of refrigeration. Salt is necessary to stay alive because we are made up of salt water.

The church is made of prayer. It was one of the first practices taught to the disciples by our Savior. Prayer like salt comes in different forms. And like salt for prayer to be effective it must get into our lives.

Prayer is communication between God and man and man and God. Prayer also happens between one another. I know of stories where a close relationship exists between people and the one person is prompted to pray for the other. It begins with a thought, a premonition, a sense of urgency, a mental picture of the person.

Categorically it is evidence of the faith and spirit interacting between two people. I have prayed for many of you simply as a blip on my spiritual radar.

So where is the salt that the church needs in order to get fully seasoned? I believe it is prayer. And the more we pray together, the more we stop and take even a few moments to answer the mental and spiritual radar we become the salt of the earth. Each time we point our satellite dishes toward God we receive the seasoning we need to be the church of God.

Pray for one another. Be salt for someone who has lost his saltiness. Share the seasonings of the Christian life that others may taste and see that the Lord is good! Amen.