

## Does Prayer Make a Difference?

James 5:13 – 18

Prayer of Serenity – God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom always to tell the difference.

Intro. Repeat Laminated Card – Prayer of Serenity – God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom always to tell the difference.

Gary D. Foster

#1

**What Do Adults Pray For?** 9 out of 10 say they pray. The things they pray for most often are: their own families (90%), the world's children (81%), world peace (77%), and co-workers (69%). USA Today Snapshots 5/2004

**Prayer in School:** Large majorities favor allowing voluntary prayer in public schools, and believe that religion has too little presence there. A Gallup poll found 76% of Americans favor "a constitutional amendment to allow voluntary prayer in public schools." While just 23% opposed it. This is not new. In 1983, a similar poll showed 81% in favor, and polls in the past decade show about three-quarters of Americans consistently supportive. Among Professional Educators, 60% of teachers support a constitutional amendment permitting spoken prayers in public schools (The Pastors' Weekly briefing, 4.9.99. (Gallup News Service 8.26.05)

**Nascar is the** only major sporting event with a pre-game invocation.

### Is Prayer Really Necessary?

1. Yes, because it is our only way to Commune with God.
2. Yes, because it helps us Obey God.
3. Yes, because it aligns our daily lives the God's Agenda.
4. Yes, because it creates Spiritual Growth.

Read James 5:13 – 18 – I had rather stand against cannons of the wicked than against the prayers of the righteous. Thomas Lye

## Does Prayer Make a Difference? (Yes Brett Favre)

1. Yes, it initiates miracles that otherwise would not happen.
  - a. 1 Kings 18:36 – 38 Elijah expects God's Glory
  - b. He who runs from God in the morning will scarcely find Him the rest of the day. C. S. Lewis
  - c. A Prostitute's Prayer – Yancey p. 224 # 2
2. Yes, it restores the image of God in us that sin has deformed.
  - a. Ps51:10 – 12 David repents of his sin. Yancey p. 174
  - b. When we pray, remember:
    - i. The love of God that wants the best for us.
    - ii. The wisdom of god that knows what is best for us.
    - iii. The power of God that can accomplish the best for us.
  - c. Story – Juanita lost
3. Yes, it inspires active revival in our mediocre complacent lives.
  - a. 2 Chr. 30:26 – 31:1 Hezekiah leads a revival of purity
  - b. You can do more than pray, after you have prayed, but you cannot do more than pray until you have prayed. Prayer will give a person confidence and resolve to cease sinning, or sin will entice a person to cease from praying. John Bunyon
  - c. Story – A true story is told of a southwest Texas town historically "dry" county, but then a local businessman decided to build a tavern.... # 4
4. Yes, it reveals God's perspective.
  - a. Mt. 6:9 – 13 "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
  - b. We are constantly on a stretch if not a strain, to devise new method, new plans, new organizations to advance that Church and secure enlargement and efficiency for the gospel...Men (&Women) are God's method. The Church is looking for better methods; God is looking for better men (women)... the Holy Spirit does not flow through methods, but through men (& women). He does not come on machinery, but men (& women). He does not anoint plans, but people—people of prayer # 5
  - c. Story – 3 men hiking through the forest when they came upon a large raging violent river. # 6

Conclusion – Serenity Prayer Story – Attending church in Kentucky "Ya'll pray for me now!"