

"Straight Up" – May 4th
"People Praying"

Big Idea: The Prayers of God's People are Powerful.

Is prayer important enough that we should take the time to go to God with our thanks, our petition, our fears and doubts? When we pray does God even hear our requests? The answer to both is yes! Prayer allows us to focus on who God is relative to our humanness. We can grasp how awesome His power is. God accepts our prayers no matter how we present them. Prayer frees us as we release to God all that we are. We express what we are grateful for and also express our trust in our struggles. Prayer is simply keeping company with God and prayer is created for connection with Him. Pray to Him, He listens and He loves.

Open it: For fun: People might be surprised to find out that I..... ?

Open it: Do you tend to pray more when you are in trouble or when things are going well?

Dig it: Read James 5:13-20

1. What different kinds of prayer are mentioned in this passage?
2. What steps could you take to make at least one of these types of prayer more a part of your life?
3. In verses 14-16 James discusses physical and spiritual healing. What are the steps in this process? What is the significance of the elders and the oil?
4. How can we find and or provide opportunities for mutual confession and prayer? (Verse 16)
5. According to verses 19-20 how, if at all, are we responsible for each other?

Reflect on it:

1. It says Elijah was just like us. In what ways do you struggle as you attempt to grow in prayer?
2. Why is it so difficult for people to turn to God in prayer?
3. When has it been difficult for you to accept God's answer to your prayer?

Do it:

1. Pray as a group following this passage. Is anyone happy? Pray. Is anyone in trouble? Pray. Is anyone sick? Pray. Take some time to confess to each other in a time of encouragement.

