

# What is Effective Prayer?

James 5:16

Pastor Eddie Ildefonso

Ask yourself if this scenario sounds familiar:

As you prepare to go to bed, you realize that, in all of the chaos of work, errands, and playing with the kids, you haven't spent time in prayer all day. You're tired, it's late, and you feel guilty for neglecting God, so rather than rest your weary eyes, you take a few moments of prayer with the Lord. Perhaps it sounds something like this:

*Dear Lord,*

*Thanks for everything you're doing in my life. Thanks for all the blessings. Please watch over all my friends and family. Please bless all of them and take care of them. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Maybe this isn't exactly how your prayers sound, but ask yourself this: When I pray, do I pray for specific needs, or are my petitions to the Lord general and vague?

[James 5:16](#) says, "The effective prayer of a righteous man (or woman) accomplishes much." How can we apply this verse to our time with the Lord?

An effective prayer is filled with passion, emotion, and cuts right to the heart of the matter. Simply put, an effective prayer to the Lord involves specifics. Think about the recent tsunami: when you see a homeless mother and child on television, pray specifically for them right at that moment. When you hear a husband speak about the loss of his family, ask God right then to comfort and watch over him. Effective prayer reaches God.

What does James mean by "righteous?" When we accept the Lord as our Savior, we become righteous in His eyes because Christ paid our sin debt on the Cross. ([Colossians 1:13](#)) Our conduct also determines our righteousness. If we are willfully living in disobedience to God, then our petitions to the Lord will not be effective. ([1 John 2:29](#))

The prayer of one person—one single person in a world of billions—can release the supernatural power of God. Take some time to consider your prayer life and commit to enhancing your time alone with the Lord.