



SERMON

SMALL GROUPS

GREAT FAITH

Week 7: “The Prayer of Great Faith”
Sermon Small Group Notes

USING THIS SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

- This Sermon Discussion Guide is only a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. For most groups, there are too many questions to answer in one session together. After considering the needs of your group, you may choose one of the following options:
 - ◆ one section of questions
 - ◆ one or two questions from each section
- Feel free to adapt the format to meet the needs of your group. If your group is mature and wants to dig deeper, add Scripture and ask suitable questions. Remember that this is only a guide.
- Personal application is key to everyone’s growth and should be included in every discussion. When asked how he or she intends to apply a certain principle a group member may say, “I need to spend more time in the Bible and in prayer.” It is important for you to help group members make applications that are more specific and commit to a specific plan of action by asking, for example, “How are you going to begin?” An example is to get up 30 minutes earlier each morning, spending 15 minutes reading the Bible and 10 minutes in prayer. Encourage each group member to be accountable to the group for personal progress at the next meeting.
- As the leader your goal is to help bring the group into a stimulating discussion that helps the members recognize their need for personal life change. Ultimately you want them to be willing to commit to change with accountability to the group. Accountability helps us to persevere in our commitments and achieve the blessings of success.



SERMON

SMALL GROUPS

INTRODUCTION

Do you ever wonder why some prayers get answered while others don't? Do you ever feel like other people's prayers get answered but yours don't? God has given us several principles in His Word that will help us on our journey of faith and in our journey of praying prayers of faith. This final installment of the Great Faith series, correctly applied to our lives, will result in faith-filled prayer that will move mountains, both seen and unseen.

[James 5:16b-18, AMP/NLT]

The earnest, heartfelt, continued prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results. ¹⁷ Elijah was as human as we are, and yet when he prayed earnestly that no rain would fall, none fell for three and a half years! ¹⁸ Then, when he prayed again, the sky sent down rain and the earth began to yield its crops.

KEY SCRIPTURE

[Matthew 8:5-13, NLT]

⁵ When Jesus returned to Capernaum, a Roman officer came and pleaded with him, ⁶ “Lord, my young servant (in Greek, “child”) lies in bed, paralyzed and in terrible pain.” ⁷ Jesus said, “I will come and heal him.” ⁸ But the officer said, “Lord, I am not worthy to have you come into my home. Just say the word from where you are, and my servant will be healed. ⁹ I know this because I am under the authority of my superior officers, and I have authority over my soldiers.



SERMON

SMALL GROUPS

[Matthew 8:5-13 (cont.), NLT]

I only need to say, ‘Go,’ and they go, or ‘Come,’ and they come. And if I say to my slaves, ‘Do this,’ they do it.”¹⁰ When Jesus heard this, he was amazed. Turning to those who were following him, he said, “I tell you the truth, I haven’t seen faith like this in all Israel!”¹¹ And I tell you this, that many Gentiles will come from all over the world—from east and west—and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the feast in the Kingdom of Heaven.¹² But many Israelites—those for whom the Kingdom was prepared—will be thrown into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”¹³ Then Jesus said to the Roman officer, “Go back home. *Because you believed, it has happened.*” And the young servant was healed that same hour.

KEY POINTS

Prayers Go Unanswered When:

1. They Contradict the Will of God

[1 John 5:14-15, NIV]

¹⁴ This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask *anything according to his will, he hears us.*¹⁵ And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.



SERMON

SMALL GROUPS

Prayers Go Unanswered When:

2. We Have Wrong Motives

[James 4:2b-3, NIV]

You do not have because you do not ask God. ³ When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

3. God is Saying Wait (in order for us to grow in faith)

[Romans 4:20-21, NLT]

²⁰ Abraham never wavered in believing God's promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger, and in this he brought glory to God. ²¹ He was fully convinced that God is able to do whatever he promises.

Don't interpret "wait" as a "no!"

4. There is Spiritual Resistance (that requires perseverance)



SERMON

SMALL GROUPS

Prayers Go Unanswered When:

[Daniel 10:12-13a]

¹² Then he said, “Don’t be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day you began to pray for understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your request has been heard in heaven. I have come in answer to your prayer. ¹³ But for twenty-one days the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia blocked my way.

5. God is Protecting Us (from what our request might produce)

**Faith can grow stronger in the face
of unanswered prayer.**

How to Gauge if Your Prayers are the Will of God or not:

- A. Would it bring glory to God? / Would Jesus be exalted?
- B. Would it advance His Kingdom?
- C. Would it help people?
- D. Would it cause me to grow spiritually?
- E. Would it make me more God-dependent or independent?





SERMON

SMALL GROUPS

4 Elements of Praying with Great Faith:

1. Proximity to Jesus and His Word
2. Come Humbly (No Entitlement)
3. Simply, Clearly, & Repeatedly ASK

[James 4:2b, NIV]

You do not have because you do not ask God for it.

[Matthew 7:11, NLT]

¹¹ So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him.

[Matthew 7:8, NLT]

⁸ For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.

[John 15:16b, NIV]

...whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.





SERMON

SMALL GROUPS

4 Elements of Praying with Great Faith:

[Mark 11:24, NIV]

²⁴ Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

[Ephesians 3:20, NIV]

²⁰ Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us...

4. Focus on God's Power (not the magnitude of the problem)

**Mountain-moving prayer cannot focus on the mountain
but on the One who has the power to move it!**



SERMON

SMALL GROUPS

Small Group Questions

1. If the “Prayer of Faith” is defined as “Coming to Jesus, asking for help,” then what keeps us from doing that? Why?
2. How do we come under the authority of Jesus, practically?
3. What is a prayer you've prayed that you're glad went unanswered/unfulfilled?
4. How do we come into “proximity” with Jesus and His Word?
5. How do we “come humbly?”
6. What keeps us from asking continually? How can we increase our “prayer stamina?” (our ability to keep praying for something continually over time)
7. What does it look like to focus on God's power and not the problem? (because the problems can be MOUNTAINS)