

# Part 1: Living a Nurtured Life of Prayer

**Theme:** Before we can nurture a prayer request, we must live a nurtured life in Christ—one rooted in confession, vulnerability, righteousness, and faith-filled, fervent prayer.

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## Main Scripture: James 5:16 (NLT)

*“Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.”*

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## Expository Teaching:

In James 5:16, we are given a formula that unlocks the power of prayer. It's not mystical, it's not reserved for spiritual elites—it is available to anyone who will humble themselves under God's hand.

### ♦ 1. Confession Is the Gateway to Healing

James doesn't begin with “prayer” first—he begins with **confession**. Why? Because unconfessed sin clogs the communication lines between us and God.

- Confession isn't just vertical—it's horizontal. *“Confess your sins to each other.”*
- This creates spiritual vulnerability, accountability, and healing—mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.
- Confession breaks the power of shame and isolates the grip of sin.

### Supporting Scriptures:

- 1 John 1:9 – “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us...”
- Proverbs 28:13 – “Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper...”

### ♦ 2. Healing Comes Through Community

Healing isn't just a personal journey—it's a *communal exchange*. James challenges us to embrace the power of community prayer and mutual care.

- When we confess and pray for one another, healing is released.
- Healing here is more than physical—it's restoration of relationships, emotional well-being, and alignment with God's peace.

### ◆ 3. The Earnest Prayer of the Righteous

This isn't about long-winded prayers, but about prayers that are **honest, sincere, consistent, and aligned with God's will**.

- "Earnest" = passionate, heartfelt, persistent.
- "Righteous" = not perfect, but in right-standing with God through Christ.
- These prayers **carry weight in the spirit realm and produce results**.

#### Supporting Scriptures:

- Psalm 34:15 – "The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are attentive to their cry."
- Proverbs 15:29 – "He hears the prayer of the righteous."

### ◆ 4. Pray with Expectation

James references Elijah (v.17-18) to prove that **we, too, can expect powerful results when we pray**.

- Elijah was **human**, but he tapped into **divine power** through **consistent, fervent, faith-filled prayer**.
- Expectation fuels perseverance. When you believe God hears, you won't stop praying until something happens.

#### Supporting Scriptures:

- Psalm 5:3 – "In the morning I lay my requests before You and wait expectantly."

- Mark 11:24 – “Whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it...”

◆ **5. Nurtured Life → Nurtured Prayers**

To nurture a prayer request, you must **nurture the soil of your life**:

- Keep short accounts with God through confession.
  - Be honest and vulnerable with others.
  - Be fervent, not flaky, in prayer.
  - Live with expectation, not resignation.
  - Build a lifestyle that mirrors the character of God.
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**Reflection & Application:**

- How am I nurturing my spiritual life daily?
  
  - Are my prayers being nurtured or neglected?
  
  - Am I cultivating the kind of life where prayers can thrive?
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### **Discussion Questions (With Supporting Scriptures):**

- 1. Why does James pair confession with prayer in this passage?**  
(See James 5:16, 1 John 1:9)
  
- 2. What does it mean to live a “righteous” life in Christ, and how does that affect your prayers?**  
(See Proverbs 15:29, 2 Corinthians 5:21)
  
- 3. What does “earnest prayer” look like in your daily life?**  
(See Luke 18:1–8 – Parable of the Persistent Widow)
  
- 4. How does vulnerability with others nurture spiritual healing?**  
(See Ecclesiastes 4:9–10)
  
- 5. Do you pray with expectation or doubt? How can you build more faith into your prayer life?**  
(See Psalm 5:3, Mark 11:24)

**6. What barriers in your heart might be blocking the full power of your prayers?**

**7. What practical steps can you take this week to nurture your prayer life?**

