Introduction:
A. James discusses the effects of prayer upon the sick.
   1. Two words for “sick” in the text – “Asthenei” and “Kamno”
   2. “Kamno” is weariness mind (cf. Heb. 12:3)
   3. Hence, one is raised or lifted from despondency that accompanies physical sickness.
   4. I believe the healing in verse 16 is healing from “Kamno” – weariness of mind.
B. James then gives a non-miraculous example of effectiveness of prayer (vv. 17-18)
C. James uses powerful words in the last sentence of verse 16 to answer four questions:

Discussion:
I. What? “Prayer”
   A. Several forms of prayer (1 Tim. 2:1).
      1. “Prayer” is prayer in general.
      2. “Supplication” is prayer for a specific need.
      3. “Intercession” is prayer for another.
      4. “Thanksgiving” is prayer of thanks.
   B. A constant practice of Christians.
      1. Always or regularly (1 Thess. 5:17; cf. Rom. 1:9)
      2. All places (1 Tim. 5:8).
         a. Public (Acts 12:5; 1 Cor. 12).
         b. Privately (Matt. 6:6)
      3. For all things (Phil. 4:6)
      4. For all men (1 Tim 2:1).
   C. A variety of postures.
      2. Sitting (1 Chron. 17:16)
II. How? “Effectual, Fervent” (energeo)
   A. Prayer is not merely “saying a prayer”, a formality. (Matt. 6:5-8).
   B. But, it is the expressing of ones “heart’s desire” to the Lord. (cf. Rom. 10:1).
III. Who? “Righteous Man”
   A. Not self-righteous (Luke 18:9-14)
   C. A man of faith (v. 15; Jas. 1:5-8)
IV. Why? “Availeth Much”
   A. Does not avail everything, but much.
   B. Does not avail to unconditional forgiveness. (cf. Saul of Tarsus).
   C. Does avail to invoke God’s providence (vv. 17-18). (Note difference in providence and miracle)
   D. Does avail to forgive a penitent Christian (Acts 8:24).
   E. Does avail to relieve distress. (v. 15; Phil. 4:6-8).
   F. Does avail to sanctify our food (1 Tim. 4:4,5).

Conclusion:
A. Indeed: “The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”
B. There is “power in prayer” because there is power in the one who hears our prayer.
1. kamno 2577, primarily, "to work," hence, from the effect of constant work, "to be weary," <Heb. 12:3>, is rendered "(him) that is sick," in <Jas. 5:15>, RV, KJV "(the) sick." The choice of this verb instead of the repetition of No. 1 <v. 14>, see above, is suggestive of the common accompaniment of "sickness," weariness of mind (which is the meaning of this verb), which not infrequently hinders physical recovery; hence this special cause is here intimated in the general idea of "sickness." — Vines