

Faith Prays

James 5:13-20

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- 1) Pray when we are _____.
Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. **James 5:13a**

Why don't we pray?

- 2) Pray when we are _____.
Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. **James 5:13b**

- 3) Seek Prayer when we are _____.
Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. **James 5:14-15a**

Key Points from the text:

- **Sickness:** “Weakness”—physical, emotional, or spiritual
- **Anointing with Oil...** medicinal, sacramental, or symbolic?
- **The Prayer of Faith will save/The Lord will raise Him up**
*God does heal through our prayers.
God does not always heal immediately, or in this lifetime.
The prayer of faith balances expecting God to heal with surrendering my will to His.*

Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from Me. Yet not what I will, but what you will. **Mark 14:36**

- 4) Pray when we need to confront our _____.
And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. **James 5:15b-16a**

Sin directly causes some sickness: I Corinthians 11:30; Psalm 32

Sin indirectly causes all sickness: Genesis 3; Revelation 21:4

Confessing sin leads to forgiveness and restoration: I John 1:9, Psalm 32:1-5

- 5) Pray when we need _____.
The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit. **James 5:16b-18**

Prayer is powerful—let's exercise it more consistently! Do it!

Righteous prayer—praying like Elijah did, according to God's desires, God's will.

John 14:14: “If you ask Me anything in My Name, I will do it.”

- 6) Pray when others are _____.
My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins **James 5:19-20**

For Further Study

- 1) How fitting that at the end of the book of James we are encouraged to pray! To wrap up his letter to his brothers in the faith—people who have been enduring trials and hardships because of their faith—James reminds them—and us—of the power of prayer, and how essential it is for us to be a praying community. Here are some classic passages in the Bible that encourage us to be people who pray: **I Peter 5:7; Psalm 55:16, 22; Hebrews 4:16; I Thessalonians 5:16-18; and Philippians 4:6-7.**
- 2) Today's passage raises the question about the connection between our sin and our sickness. What is the link between sin and sickness? If we get sick is it because of sin? The Bible shows us that there are times that sin has a direct impact on our health (look at **I Corinthians 11:30, and Psalm 32:1-5**). There are also clearly times that someone can have a physical ailment that is not at all due to their own personal sin (the blind man in **John 9:1-5**; or **Job** in the Old Testament).
- 3) God can heal, and He does so through the prayers of people. The Apostle Paul is an example of this. God used him to heal a man named Eutychus in **Acts 20:9-11**, and a crippled man in **Acts 14:8-12**. But there were also times that Paul was sick (**Galatians 4:12-14**), times when his teammates were sick (Epaphroditus in **Philippians 2:25-30**; Timothy in **I Timothy 5:23**), and a time when he asked God three times to remove a “thorn in the flesh” that was tormenting him (**2 Corinthians 12:7-10**) and God did not immediately respond with physical relief, but did provide grace and strength. In any circumstance, prayer expresses our faith in God, whether He wants to show His power through healing, or whether He wants to show His glory through the suffering and death of His people (Stephen in Acts 7, Jesus in Mark 14:36). And through faith and prayer, God's people can face trials with joy, peace, and confidence, knowing a loving God is in control (**James 1:2-4; Romans 8:28-39**).
- 4) Today's passage reminds us that spiritual growth is a team effort. We do not do it on our own. God has created us to be connected with other people—praying together, confessing sin together, and helping each other when one of us begins to wander away from the faith. Look at these passages that underscore this theme: **Hebrews 3:12-14; 10:24-25; Philippians 1:27-2:11; and Ephesians 4:25-32.**

To Discuss... w/a friend, community group, or in a family devotional time

- 1) We will rarely meet anyone who is proud of their prayer lives—most people realize they could/should be praying more. Why don't we pray?
- 2) What does a prayer of faith look like when we are praying for someone who is seriously sick? How does Jesus' prayer in Mark 14:36 model faith-filled prayer?
- 3) What evidences do we see in our friendship/relationship/community group that we are helping each other grow closer to God? How can we utilize the practices of confession, prayer, and exhortation (see Hebrews 3:12-14) to help us help each other even more effectively?