

## Prayer and Restoring the Erring Brother [James, pt. 11] (James 5:13-20)

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1. We conclude our study of the book of James this morning with James 5:13-20 where James deals with the importance of prayer and singing in various circumstances of life, as well as restoring erring brethren.
2. The end of a practical book urging us toward greater faithfulness

Discussion:

### I. PRAYER (James 5:13-18)

#### A. Outline of this section

1. A time to pray and a time to sing psalms (:13)
2. Praying about illness (:14-15)
3. Praying for each other (:16a)
4. The power of prayer (:16b-20)

#### B. A TIME TO PRAY AND A TIME TO SING PSALMS (:13)

1. If we are suffering (afflicted, in trouble of any kind) – pray
  - a. Command to rejoice always, count it joy when we fall into trials (Phil. 4:4; 1 Thess. 5:16; Js. 1:2, etc.)
  - b. Sometimes we are troubled and need help – the solution: prayer for strength and encouragement
 

-- Zerr – “When a disciple is met with these trials, he should be in the frame of mind that would lead him to go to God in prayer for strength and encouragement”
  - c. Don't be anxious but take your troubles to the Lord (Phil. 4:6) who hears our prayers (Js. 5:4; Lk. 18:6-8)
    - i. Pray continually (Eph. 6:18; Col. 4:2; 1 Thess. 5:17)
    - ii. Pray for strength (1 Pt. 5:7)
    - iii. Pray for the removal of the suffering if God wills (2 Cor. 12:8)
    - iv. Pray for those causing our suffering (Lk. 6:28)
2. If cheerful (we aren't suffering or have laid our burdens on the Lord and have received comfort and we are filled with cheer) → sing Psalms (praise God!)
  - a. Consider the Psalms (Ps. 96:1-2; 98:1-3; 113:1-3; 147:1)
  - b. A way to express thanksgiving (Eph. 5:18-20; Col. 3:16)
3. BOTH are important! (We are often more ready to pray when troubled than to sing when cheerful) – we ought to be “Prayerfully patient in adversity and thankfully happy in prosperity”

#### C. PRAYING ABOUT ILLNESS (:14-15)

1. If you are sick (physical ailment, feebleness of the flesh)
2. Call for the elders of the church (each church should have them – Ac. 14:23; Titus 1:5)

3. Let them (elders) pray over them – a much neglected responsibility of elders... why them? Righteous? (c.f. :16b)
    - a. And anoint with oil in the name of the Lord
      - i. Healing properties in oil/comforting to the sick? (**Luke 10:34; Mk. 6:13**)
      - ii. ‘symbolic’ for the healing power of the Lord? (miraculous healing done without oil by Jesus and the apostles sometimes)... or just a custom of the time?
      - iii. Either way, prayer is the primary focus here and elsewhere in the text prayer is the emphasis!
  4. The prayer of faith will save the sick
    - a. They must pray trusting in the Lord’s power to heal the sick, IF it be His will to do so (c.f. **Js. 1:5-8**)
    - b. The Lord will raise him up (if it is His will) – sometimes He doesn’t heal us as we wish (Paul – **2 Cor. 12:7-10**)
    - c. IF he has committed sins, he will be forgiven – conditional ‘if’ - though the sickness is physical, the prayer can heal us spiritually as well via forgiveness -NOT saying that physical illness is related to our sins, though sometimes this is the case.
- D. PRAYING FOR EACH OTHER (**:16a**)
1. Confess your trespasses to one another – seek forgiveness (preferably before they need to confront you about it – **Mt. 18:15-17**)
  2. Pray for one another – for spiritual healing, strength, encouragement, etc., thanksgiving for forgiveness and restoration of the relationship
  3. That you may be healed – forgiveness of sin, reconciliation
- E. THE POWER OF PRAYER (**:16b-18**)
1. The type of prayer which avails much
    - a. Effective, fervent – active, whole-hearted prayer
    - b. of a righteous man – must be righteous for God to hear our prayers (**1 Pt. 3:12; Heb. 11:6; Prov. 28:9; Mt. 7:21**)
  2. Example
    - a. Elijah (**:17-18; 1 Kg. 18:41-46**)
      - i. A man with nature like ours – he was an “ordinary” human – with the same physical limitations, emotions, etc.
      - ii. He prayed to God and God provided his request twice – he was a righteous man who prayed earnestly (// fervent :16)
        - We don’t have his prayer recorded, but are told here it was through prayer
        - We see man has NO power over the weather, but God chose to respond to his effective fervent prayer.
  3. Other Examples
    - a. Joshua → sun stood still (**Josh. 10:12-13**)
    - b. Hezekiah → Delivered from the threat of Sennacherib and the angel slaid 185,000 Assyrian soldiers (**2 Kg. 19:14-19; Is. 37:21,36**)
    - c. Hezekiah → life extended (**2 Kg. 20:1-6**)

d. Jerusalem church → Peter released of prison (Ac. 12:5-10)

## II. RESTORING ERRING BRETHREN (James 5:19-20)

- A. If anyone among you wanders from the truth
1. Hardened through the deceitfulness of sin – Heb. 3:12-15
  2. Wanders from the truth we were brought forth by – Js. 1:18
  3. Drawn away by human wisdom – Js. 3:14
  4. Any darkness in us – 1 Jn. 1:5-7
- B. And someone turns him back
1. Gal. 6:1-2 – the responsibility of the spiritual, carefully restore
  2. 2 Tim. 2:24-26 – seek them out and be firm but gentle
  3. Mt. 18:15-17 – if they wrong us personally, follow this
  4. Turns him back – converts him, repentance, induce them to turn away from sin and back to the path of truth
- C. When we turn a sinner from the error of his way (recognize the error, bring it to their attention to get them to repent of their sin and turn back to the truth)
1. Save a soul from death – those who wander from the truth are destined for hell – Rom. 6:23; 2 Pt. 2:20-22; Heb. 10:26-31
  2. Cover a multitude of sins (when you bring them to repentance, God forgives their sins and blots them out – Ps. 103:12)
  3. REJOICE!! When this happens – Lk. 15:7

### Conclusion:

1. How are we doing?
  - Do we pray when we are troubled?
  - Do we sing Psalms when cheerful?
  - Do we seek prayer when we are ill?
  - Do we confess our trespasses to one another and pray for each other?
  - Are we working to restore those who have wandered from the truth?
2. Is thy heart right with God this moment?
3. If not, why not come back to Him today?