

DEEPER BIBLE STUDY

LESSON NOTES

TUESDAY, MAY 26 | THE POWER OF PRAYER & THE MINISTRY OF RESTORATION (JAMES 5:13-20)

Everything James has taught us is impossible without:

- Communion with God = _____
- Community with each other = _____

James leaves us with three powerful realities:

- Prayer is the language of every season.
- The prayer of a righteous person is powerful.
- Restoring a person who has strayed from the faith is one of the highest callings we have.

PRAYER FITS EVERY SEASON OF LIFE

James 5:13 (NLT) — Are any of you suffering hardships? You should pray. Are any of you happy? You should sing praises.

SUFFERING HARDSHIPS:

- Greek (suffering): KAKOPATHEO = to endure affliction, hardship, distress.
- James prescribes: PRAYER.
- We treat prayer as the LAST resort when it should be the FIRST response.
 - *Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT) — Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all He has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.*

HAPPY / CHEERFUL:

- Greek (happy): EUTHUMEO = to be in good spirits, well-souled, cheerful.
- James prescribes: SING PRAISES.
- We know how to bring God our trouble, but we forget to bring Him our joy.

THE PRAYER OF FAITH FOR THE SICK

James 5:14-15 (NLT) — Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord. Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make you well. And if you have committed any sins, you will be forgiven.

VERSE 14:

- Greek (sick): ASTHENEIO = to be weak, without strength, feeble.
- Someone so weak they cannot come to the church themselves — they must CALL for the elders to come to them.
- If you want God's healing power... you have to swallow your pride and make the call.

ANOINTING WITH OIL — two uses in that day:

- MEDICINAL — Oil was used as medicine. (i.e. Good Samaritan in Luke 10:34)
- CEREMONIAL — Oil was used to anoint kings, priests, and prophets. It was a symbol of the Holy Spirit being invoked.
- The OIL is not what heals... Jesus is the Healer.

VERSE 15:

- It is not the prayer of formula. It is the prayer of FAITH.

The prayer of faith IS praying:

- With _____ in God's power.
- With _____ to God's will.
- With _____ in God's wisdom.

Greek (heal): SOZO = save, deliver, make whole, rescue.

- This is HOLISTIC healing — body, soul, and spirit.
- Sometimes God heals physically or emotionally or spiritually or sometimes all three.
- Sometimes He heals by taking us home. That is the ultimate healing.

JAMES CONNECTS HEALING AND FORGIVENESS:

- He is NOT saying every sickness is caused by sin (see John 9:3).
- But sometimes there IS a connection (see 1 Corinthians 11:30).

CONFESSION, COMMUNITY, AND THE POWER OF RIGHTEOUS PRAYER

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.

CONFESS YOUR SINS TO EACH OTHER:

- Because we were never meant to fight alone.
- Sin grows in the dark — it loses power when it is exposed.

The reason we continue to struggle in the same areas is because we keep our struggles SECRET.

- **We should be honest with trusted brothers and sisters who will walk with us, pray for us, and hold us accountable.**

Healing happens in COMMUNITY.

- We will never experience the freedom God has for us until we let someone in.
- The strongest Christians are NOT the ones with no struggles. They are the ones who have learned to bring their struggles into the light.

THE EARNEST PRAYER OF A RIGHTEOUS PERSON HAS GREAT POWER:

- EARNEST = fervent, working, active, powerful, effective.
- Engaged, intentional, hungry, persistent, on-your-face-before-God prayer.

RIGHTEOUS = NOT perfect. NOT sinless. But RIGHT with God.

- You don't have to be a pastor for your prayers to have power.
- You just have to be RIGHT with God and PRAY EARNESTLY.

Charles Spurgeon:

“Prayer pulls the rope down below, and the great bell rings above in the ears of God. Some scarcely stir the bell, for they pray so languidly; others give but an occasional pluck at the rope; but he who communicates with heaven is the man who grasps the rope boldly and pulls continuously with all his might.”

ELIJAH: AN ORDINARY MAN WITH AN EXTRAORDINARY PRAYER LIFE

James 5:17-18 (NLT) — 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! Then, when he prayed again, the sky sent down rain and the earth began to yield its crops.

VERSE 17:

- We tend to put biblical heroes on a pedestal.
- But James says: he was as human as we are.

What set Elijah apart:

- When he prayed, he prayed _____.
- When he prayed, he prayed in _____ with God's will.
- When he prayed, he prayed with _____.

VERSE 18 — 1 Kings 18 tells us Elijah prayed 7 TIMES before the rain came.

- Don't quit on the 6th prayer. The breakthrough might be on the 7th.
- *Luke 18:1 (NLT) — One day Jesus told His disciples a story to show that they should always pray and never give up.*

THE MINISTRY OF RESTORATION

James 5:19-20 (NLT) — My dear brothers and sisters, if someone among you wanders away from the truth and is brought back, you can be sure that whoever brings the sinner back from wandering will save that person from death and bring about the forgiveness of many sins.

James ends with a CALL TO MISSION.

VERSE 19 — Going after our own who have drifted.

- James is not talking about reaching the lost in the world here.
- He is talking about going after our own who have drifted.
- This is the ministry of restoration.
- *Galatians 6:1 (NLT) — Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself.*

VERSE 20 — Wandering leads to spiritual death if it is not reversed.

- Wandering is SERIOUS. It is not just a “phase.”

When you help restore a wanderer:

- Their sins are covered through the blood of Jesus.
- You potentially prevent the many sins they would have committed if they kept wandering.

WHO IN YOUR LIFE RIGHT NOW IS WANDERING?

- Don't ignore them. Don't write them off. GO AFTER THEM.

Notice how James began and how he ended:

- He began with what God does IN us... he ends with what God does THROUGH us.

THE WHOLE BOOK OF JAMES IN ONE BREATH:

REAL FAITH PRAYS.
REAL FAITH WORKS.
REAL FAITH RESTORES.