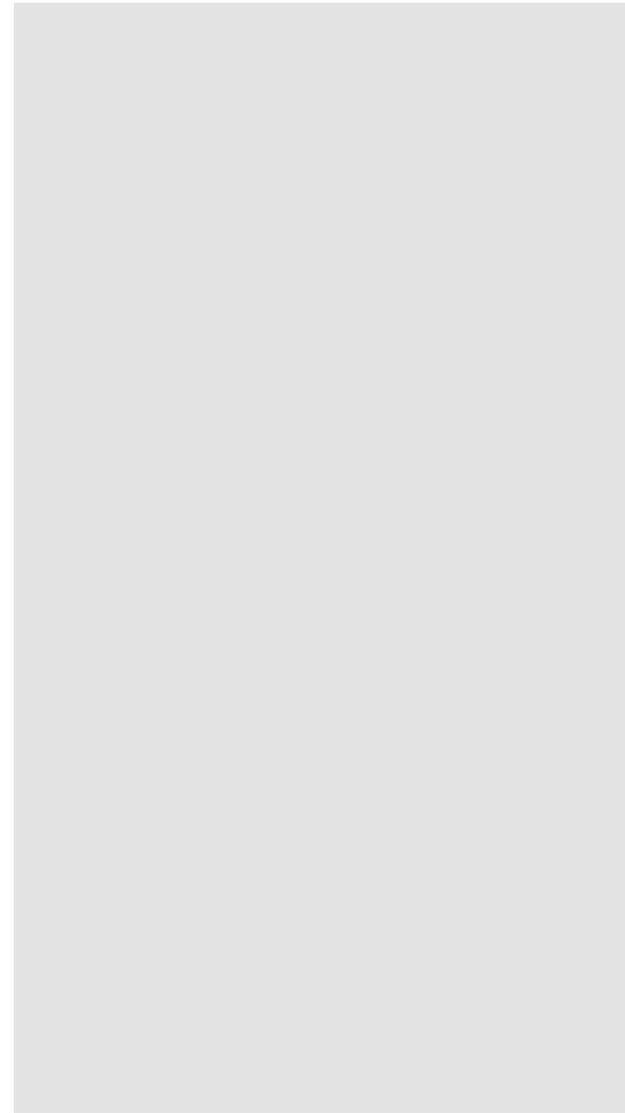


James 5:13-15

Faith in action on display in local churches



The church
should respond
to hard times
with prayer
(5:13a)

- James didn't write this letter to individuals, but to local churches.
- “*among you*” clarifies this point
- “*suffering*” – experiencing distress or enduring hardship
 - Some suffering faced in this life is coming from people and systems opposed to biblical truth and righteousness
 - Some suffering is tied to normal stresses and strains
- “*Let him pray*” – Whatever causes suffering for those in the church should be a motivation for prayer
 - The expression of prayer in the church is our humble declaration among the people of God that we need the Lord's peace, presence and power, along with their prayer support
 - Ephesians 6:18
 - In all the various types of suffering we encounter, may God form in our church, humble hearts, openly seeking God in prayer.
 - James 1:2–5

The church
should respond
to good times
with praise
(5:13b)

- Cheerfulness comes to our lives in a variety of ways when we experience the goodness and grace of God
- “*Let him sing songs of praise*” – extolling God in song for His kindness
- We need to humbly and joyfully welcome the gifts of God’s grace
 - Galatians 6:9
- As we reap the harvest of gospel goodness and righteousness, and as seasons of rest and refreshment come, songs of praise are to find expression in the church

*Come, thou Fount of every blessing,
tune my heart to sing thy grace;
streams of mercy, never ceasing,
call for songs of loudest praise.*

- We are to be on the lookout of God and His handiwork
 - Ephesians 2:10
- What would God have us do when we see His workmanship in our lives by the good works we are doing and in which we are walking?
 - The encouragement is for joyful expressions of melodious praise that can stir and inspire the hearts of others
 - Isaiah 6:1–3
 - Ephesians 5:17–20

The church
should respond
to sickness by
requesting
leaders to pray
(5:14-15)

“Is anyone among you sick?”

- Our physical ailments are a part of life and our life is to be lived before the face of God
- We who know the Lord God to be Great Physician should be humbly calling on Him for His healing grace

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.

- Those experiencing sickness in the church should request the representative prayers of their leaders.
- The elders either go to the sick person to pray as ambassadors for Christ and His church, or they offer representative prayers before the church.
- Anointing someone with oil provides a form for united and focused consecration before the Lord (*“in the name of the Lord”*)

The church
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(5:14-15)

15 And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up.

- Whose faith? Faith is a gift from God given to those praying and given to the one for whom they are praying.
 - 1 Corinthians 12:24–26
- The conviction is that God's will is accomplished, sometime in life and sometimes in eternity.
 - There are times God blesses us with a foretaste of eternal and ultimate healing.
 - Acts 3:6–8
 - There are times God's purposes are better served by believers uniting to battle, to comfort and to persevere through the realities of sickness, disease and death that will one day be eradicated by the dawning of eternal grace.
 - 2 Timothy 4:19–20

The church
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(5:14-15)

And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven, and the Lord will raise him up.

- Sometimes sickness is the result of specific personal sin (1 Cor. 11:30) and many times it is not (John 9:1-3)
- If there are sins committed in this life resulting in sickness, God is able to forgive and restore the repentant.
- All the sins committed by redeemed followers of Jesus will be forgiven and our final resurrection is secure.
 - 1 John 5:14–15

The church
should respond
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(5:14-15)

- Why don't we request prayers from the leaders of the church more consistently?
 - It is not something we have seen done that often and it is usually in times of serious affliction
 - Our problems are insignificant or personally manageable
 - We are proud and it's humbling to ask for prayer
 - We know that the Creator God is all-powerful and can heal anyone at any time, so why bug the leaders and the church?
 - There is no guarantee God will grant the healing prayed for, so why bother people?
 - We are thankful for the wisdom God has given scientist and physicians for research, development, and treatment of a variety of sickness and disease
 - We don't think God really cares and so we don't think the people in the church do either
 - I've been prayed for before and it didn't work
- Actually, we should respond to biblical directives to unite in prayer as family members in the church to seek our God's healing grace – OBEY!

Questions to Consider

- In what ways can you be more engaged in prayer with your church when you or they are suffering?
- How can your corporate worship in song better reflect your joy in God's goodness?
- What can you do to be more obedient to call on the elders for prayer in times of sickness?
- How do you need to connect more with God for the benefit and healing of fellow church members when we are united in corporate prayer?

James 5:13-15

Faith in action on display in local churches

