

# James 5:13-18

Faith in action on display in local churches – Part 2



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

*<sup>13</sup> Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray.*

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

*Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise.*

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

*Is anyone among you sick?*

- We are to humbly call on the Great Physician 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  
should  
respond to  
sickness by  
requesting  
leaders to pray  
(5:14-15)

*<sup>15</sup> 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 pray
  - 1 Corinthians 12:24–26
- The conviction is that God's healing purpose is accomplished, sometimes in life, and always for His people in eternity
  - There are times God blesses us with a foretaste of our 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 be eradicated by the dawning of eternal grace
    - 2 Corinthians 12:7–9
    - 2 Timothy 4:19–20

The church  
should  
respond to  
sickness by  
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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 sins committed by redeemed followers of Jesus will be forgiven and our final resurrection is secure
- How should we respond to the biblical directives given to unite in prayer as family members in the church and seek our God's healing grace?
  - 1 John 5:14-15

The church  
should confess  
sins and pray  
for healing  
grace for one  
another (5:16a)

- “*confess your sins to one another*” – We are to verbalize our agreement with God about how we are missing the mark of God’s truth and righteousness
  - There is no mediatorial function for forgiveness that other believers have with God on our behalf
    - 1 Timothy 2:5
  - Mutual confession indicates humble openness before the Lord and fellow believers
  - We are to share how we desperately need God to **purge the bad fruit** from our lives and **produce good fruit**
    - Colossians 3:5–17

The church  
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- Local churches, assembled as blood-bought followers of Jesus, are to be intentional with one another about affirming the power given to us to die to sin AND to live for righteousness
  - 1 Corinthians 5:6–7
  - 1 Corinthians 11:27–32
  - Galatians 6:1–2
  - Hebrews 3:12–13
  - Hebrews 10:24–25

*“that you may be healed.”*

- Active confession and open prayer in the life of a local church are good ways to support the spiritual and physical health of its members
- We may not be seeing healing grace produced as fruit of repentance because we are holding back on confession and requests for prayer

## The church should reveal God's power through prayer (16b-18)

We pray with confidence in God's power (16b) - *The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.*

- A "righteous person" is anyone in the local church set apart by the redeeming blood of Jesus
- "great power" - Prayer is powerful tool for every follower of Jesus  
*"has great power as it is working."*
- The magnitude of the power of prayer does not always unveil itself at once
- The effectualness of prayer frequently unfolds with the passing of time
- We need to learn to rest and patiently anticipate divine intervention as we present our requests to God
  - Luke 18:1
  - Matthew 7:7
  - John 14:14
  - Ephesians 3:20–21

## The church should reveal God's power through prayer (16b-18)

- We pray as humans relying on a powerful God (17-18) - *<sup>17</sup> 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. <sup>18</sup> Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit.*

- Elijah is a popular and impressive prophet
- But the point James makes is not the greatness of the prophet, but the greatness of his God revealed through prayer ("*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."*

- God stirred Elijah to pray and predict the drought
- For over three years it did not rain

*"Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit."*

- God stirred Elijah to pray for rain.
- Eventually, God sent a down pour.

# Questions to Consider

- What sins have you confessed to people in your church and what sins should you be confessing now? (Yes, there is wisdom in discretion, but there is also cowardice in generalities!)
- How do you describe the diligence of your prayers for humble and broken brothers and sisters in Christ?
- Are you willing to ask God to search your heart and ask others to pray for you during times of sickness and disease?
- Are you more smitten by your humanness or by God's power?

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