

Faith in Real Life 14:
Honest, realistic and practical words about faith from the
epistle of James

“Prayer, Faith and Healing” (10/8/17)

James 5:13-20

- 1) **The call to pray for those who are suffering (v. 13)**
 - a) *Suffering* refers to enduring evil treatment by people.
 - b) Prayer can either remove the evil treatment or give the person the grace needed to endure the hardship. (ref. 2 Cor. 12:7-10)

- 2) **The call to pray for those who are sick (vv. 14-18)**
 - a) This is one of the most disputed passages in the NT. The debate relates to what James meant in referring to the *sick*?
 - b) Those who are sick or weak are to *call for the elders of the church*.
 - c) *The prayer of faith will save the one who is sick* – God does the healing in accordance with His will. (ref. 1 Jn. 5:14-15)
 - d) *And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.*
 - i) The use of the word “*if*” means sin may or may not be cause of the illness.
 - ii) The Bible teaches sin can cause sickness (ref. Mk. 2:5; Jn. 5:14; Psa. 32:3-4)
 - iii) The Bible also teaches sin is not always the cause (ref. Jn. 9:2-3)
 - iv) God may bring sickness as discipline for disobedience (1 Cor. 11:29-30).
 - e) **Therefore** indicates a transition. James exhorts the congregation to *confess their sins to one another* and *pray for one another* before they experience suffer physically, spiritually or both.

f) *The prayer of a righteous person has great power* - the example of Elijah.

3) **The call to pray when a believer is straying from the faith (vv. 19-20)**

b) *Cover a multitude of sins* – God’s grace is greater than any sin (Rom 5:20) and is available to those who exercise faith in turning from their sin to the Lord.

Conclusions

- 1) The theme of the Epistle is living by faith, a faith that is evidenced by righteous living and godly behavior every day in every situation of life. (James 1:22 – *Be doers of the word and not hearers only*)
- 2) In this final chapter, James describes the impact and power a spiritually mature Christian can have through prayer.

Next Steps

- 1) Ask God to examine your heart to reveal any unconfessed sin (Psa. 139:23-24) so you can confess it and experience the tremendous power there is in prayer for those who are righteous.
- 2) Earnestly pray for each other, especially those who are suffering physically and/or spiritually.
- 3) Lovingly reach out to those who appear to be straying from the Lord and do whatever you can to encourage them in the faith.