

NOVEMBER 29, 2026

Effective Prayer Accomplishes Much

JAMES 5:13-20

On July 12th, we began our study of the New Testament letter of James. We began by discussing the background, authorship, and purpose of the letter. Let's remember the overall purpose of this letter from James, the brother of our Lord.

James is not writing to explain how a person is saved but to demonstrate what saving faith looks like in everyday life. Throughout the letter, he repeatedly shows that authentic faith cannot remain hidden. It will be revealed in our speech, our relationships, our response to trials, our treatment of others, our prayers, and our obedience to God's Word.

James is deeply concerned about believers who profess faith but fail to practice it. His central message is simple: **Faith that is genuine will be visible in a transformed life.**

James is a pastor and shepherd at heart. He wrote to fellow believers because he cared about their spiritual growth. His pastoral concern is evident throughout the letter.

As he concludes his letter, the theme of the final verses (13–20) is prayer! According to tradition, James was nicknamed "Old Camel Knees" because of the thick calluses reportedly built up on his knees from years of passionate prayer.

Throughout these eight verses, James repeatedly emphasizes prayer. While these verses have been a battleground for differing interpretations and applications, the most obvious point is the power of prayer! James is encouraging Christians to make prayer a consistent practice in every circumstance of life.

When the practice of prayer permeates God's people, both corporately and individually, God will manifest His power among His people.

Key thought: If you want to experience the power of God in your life, you must make prayer your priority and your practice!

Questions to Consider

1. What is the prayer of the faith?
2. Does the prayer of the faith guarantee healing?
3. Are sin, sickness, confession, and healing connected?
4. Should people practice anointing with oil today?

Truths to Apply

1. Prayer should be our first response in every circumstance!
    a. When suffering (v. 13)
    b. When cheerful (v. 13)
    c. When sick (v. 14)
    d. When dealing with sin (v. 15)
    e. When concerned for others (v. 16)
2. Prayer should permeate the church and your life!
3. Prayer is effective when we follow God's requirements!
    a. "Righteous"
    b. "Fervent"

Conclusion

James closes his letter by showing us that prayer is not an occasional activity reserved for emergencies. It is to be the ongoing atmosphere of the Christian life and the church. The church is to be saturated in prayer.

1. When we suffer, we should pray.

2. When we celebrate, we should praise.

3. When we are sick, we should call for prayer.

4. When we sin, we should confess and pray.

5. When others struggle, we should pray for them.

6. When someone wanders, we should pursue their restoration.

The question is not whether God has the power to work. The question is whether we are depending on Him through prayer.

A church that prays is a church that acknowledges its dependence on God. A Christian who prays is someone who acknowledges their dependence on God.

If we want to see more of God's power manifested in our lives, our families, and our church, we must become more dependent on Him through prayer!