

5-DAY DEVOTIONAL

Healing Begins When Hiding Ends

Based on James 5:14–18 and 1 John 1:7

Higher Purpose Church

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Real People. Real Life. Real Love.

[The House That Changes Lives — Part 2](#)

DAY 1

You Can't Call Elders You Don't Have

James 5:14–15

"Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up."

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James 5 opens with a strategy for the sick — and it starts with a simple command: call the elders. But embedded in that command is a powerful assumption: you have a church to call. You belong somewhere. You have people who know your name, know your face, and would show up. For many of us, that assumption is where the text stops applying to our lives — not because God's design is flawed, but because we've been attending without belonging.

There is a critical difference between attending a church and belonging to one. Attending is optional. Belonging costs something. It costs you your anonymity, your control, and the comfortable distance you've kept between yourself and real community. But James doesn't give instructions for the anonymous attender — he gives instructions for the person who is genuinely connected. And the invitation today is to close that gap.

God never designed you to carry your sickness alone — physical, emotional, or spiritual. He designed a community specifically to absorb what you cannot carry by yourself. But that community can only show up for you if you've let them in.

REFLECTION QUESTION

Are you attending a church or belonging to one? If you were sick today — physically, emotionally, or spiritually — is there a person or community you could actually call?

PRAYER

Father, I confess that I have kept people at a distance and then wondered why I felt alone. Today I choose to move from attending to belonging. Lead me into the depth of community you designed for me, and give me the courage to make the call when I need help. In Jesus' name, amen.

NOTES

DAY 2

Honesty Is Not the Same as Openness

James 5:16a

"Confess your sins to one another and pray for one another so that you may be healed."

DEVOTIONAL

There is a difference between being honest and being open — and most of us have mastered one while avoiding the other. We don't lie. We tell the truth when asked. We follow the rules and keep our word. But we have become experts at being honest from a distance — close enough to seem transparent, but far enough that nobody ever actually sees what's inside.

James 5:16 doesn't just ask for honesty. The Greek word he uses — *exomologeisthe* — means to bring something out into the open. It's a present imperative, which means it's not a one-time crisis response. It's an ongoing posture. Mutual. Reciprocal. Everybody confesses. Everybody receives. This is not the confessional booth with one person always on each side — this is a community of people who have agreed to stop hiding together.

Dr. James Pennebaker spent decades studying what happens when people stop hiding. His conclusion: when people confess and disclose deeply personal experiences, blood pressure drops, heart rate slows, and immune function improves. Your body was never designed to store what your mouth refuses to say. And James — writing two thousand years before the research — gave us the prescription: confess your sins to one another, that you may be healed.

REFLECTION QUESTION

Where are you being honest but not open? Is there something you're carrying that you've never brought into the light with another person? What is the fear that's keeping it hidden?

PRAYER

Lord, I have confused honesty with openness, and I have called my silence strength when it has actually been fear. Today I make the decision to stop hiding. Give me one person I can trust, and give me the courage to open up. I refuse to allow my image to keep me in captivity. In Jesus' name, amen.

NOTES

DAY 3

God Doesn't Look at Your Prescriptions

James 5:16b–17

"The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. Elijah was a human being, even as we are. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years."

DEVOTIONAL

James makes a deliberate choice when he picks Elijah as his example of powerful prayer. He could have chosen Abraham — the father of faith. He could have chosen Moses — the friend of God. He chose Elijah. The prophet who called fire from heaven. The same man who, immediately after his greatest victory, ran from a single threatening word from a queen and hid in a cave, praying to die.

James says this man — the depressed one, the anxious one, the one hiding in the cave — prayed and shut the heavens for three and a half years. And then he says the reason this matters is because Elijah was a human being just like us. Not because he was perfect. Not because he had it all together. Because he was persistent. God didn't honor a perfect prayer. He honored a persistent one.

Some of us feel disqualified from powerful prayer because of what we're going through. The anxiety. The depression. The medication. The neighbor who looks the other way because they don't want to deal with where you are right now. But you serve a God who doesn't look at your prescriptions — He looks at your persistence. And if God could use Elijah in the cave, there is hope for you today.

REFLECTION QUESTION

Have you allowed your struggles — mental, emotional, physical — to convince you that your prayers are less effective? How does Elijah's story challenge that belief?

PRAYER

God, I have let my struggles convince me that I am disqualified. But today your Word reminds me that you don't require perfection — you reward persistence. I will press in, even from this cave, even from this low place, even from this season. Meet me here. In Jesus' name, amen.

NOTES

DAY 4

Judge Yourself Before God Has To

Proverbs 28:13

"Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy."

DEVOTIONAL

Scripture gives us two people who sinned significantly and faced very different outcomes. David committed adultery and arranged a man's murder. Ananias and Sapphira withheld a portion of money from the church. By most measures, David's sin was far greater. And yet David received mercy while Ananias and Sapphira did not. The variable was not the sin. It was the response when given the opportunity to come clean.

When Nathan confronted David, David didn't deflect or defend. He said simply: I have sinned against the Lord. He judged himself. And God had mercy. Ananias and Sapphira were given the same opportunity — Peter asked them directly. They chose to maintain the cover-up. And God judged them. The difference between judgment and mercy is often nothing more than whether you repent while the window is still open.

Proverbs 28:13 puts it plainly: the person who conceals their sin does not prosper. Not might not — will not. Concealment arrests forward movement. But the one who confesses and renounces finds mercy. The cover-up is always more costly than the confession. Nixon didn't lose the presidency because of the break-in. He lost it because of 26 months of concealment. Judge yourself while you still have the chance.

REFLECTION QUESTION

Is there something in your life right now that you have been concealing — from God, from others, or from yourself? What would it look like to confess and renounce it today, while the window for mercy is open?

PRAYER

Father, I don't want to be found out — I want to come clean. I choose today to stop concealing what you already see. I confess what I have hidden, and I renounce it. I would rather judge myself in your mercy than be judged in your justice. Restore me and lead me forward. In Jesus' name, amen.

NOTES

DAY 5

The Blood Can't Reach What the Light Can't Touch

1 John 1:5–7

"God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin."

DEVOTIONAL

John makes one of the most important theological statements in all of Scripture in a single verse: if we walk in the light, the blood of Jesus purifies us from all sin. Not some sin. All sin. The blood is completely sufficient. But notice what John attaches it to — walking in the light. The purification and the openness are not separate events. They happen simultaneously, in the same act of bringing what is hidden into the light.

This is the reason openness is not optional in the Christian life. God is light. In him there is no darkness at all. Which means every area of your life that you keep hidden is an area where God is not fully operating. Not because he has abandoned you — but because you have closed the door. The blood of Jesus is powerful enough to cleanse anything. But it can only reach what you bring into the light.

Every hidden area is an unreached area. The healing you've been waiting for may be delayed not because God is withholding it, but because the thing that needs healing is still in the dark. The invitation of this entire week has been one consistent call: stop hiding. Bring it into the light. Let the blood reach what you've been protecting in the dark. Healing begins when hiding ends.

REFLECTION QUESTION

What area of your life have you been keeping in the dark — from God, from others, or from yourself? What would it look like to bring that specific thing into the light this week?

PRAYER

Lord, I have kept things hidden because I was afraid of what the light would reveal. But today I choose the light. I choose the blood. I choose healing over hiding. Search me, God, and know my heart. Lead me into the openness that produces the purification I have been searching for. Healing begins when hiding ends. In Jesus' name, amen.

NOTES

Don't Stop Here

This week's devotional was designed to be lived in community.

If you haven't yet joined a growth group at Higher Purpose Church,
this week is the week. Three groups. Different times. One family.

Scan the QR code or visit the Welcome Desk to find your group.

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