



COMMUNITY GROUP QUESTIONS FAITH ALIVE - A STUDY OF JAMES

PRAYER AND PERSEVERANCE - JAMES 5:13-20

Focus

In these closing verses of James' letter, we see that Jesus' disciples will have to continue to face suffering, sickness, and sin in this world, but that God has also given us the means of perseverance - namely, prayer and the church community. The aim is for this church community to lovingly help each other keep their sights set on God so that they might persevere to the very end and be saved.

Opening Question

In what way has James most challenged and confronted you about some sinful aspect of your life?

Read

Read James 5:13-20

Some Questions for Reflection

What seems to be the primary point of this passage? (Hint: what word is repeated multiple times?)

How does James' example of Elijah *as a man with a nature like ours* underline his primary point?

List all the things you learn about prayer from this passage.

Does anything surprise you? Does anything confuse you?



What is and is not *the prayer of faith*?

Who in the church is instructed to pray for whom?

What do the instructions about confessing sin reveal about the kind of healing James is ultimately concerned about?

Is it possible for someone who professes to believe in Jesus to wander from the truth? (What does James say?)

Who can bring a wandering person back? What happens if that person is brought back? By implication, what happens if that person is not brought back? (What does James say?)

Applying the Text

Consider your own prayer life: do you pray with the understanding that God desires to answer your prayers and does powerful things through your prayers, or do you pray with the expectation that He won't answer them and that they're largely ineffective?

Think back to your answer to that opening question: have you prayed for the Lord to bring growth and healing to that aspect of your life?

How do you pray for others in the church? How can you do this more faithfully?



Have you ever called on the elders of the church to pray over you?

What might it look like to confess your sins to someone else in the church?

What might it look like to help someone who has wandered from the faith?

Our church covenant expresses our desire to be a church that lives out these things expressed in this passage. How might we as a church continue to more faithfully be conformed to the Word of God in these areas?

Reflecting back over all of James, how has this letter helped you to better understand the gospel? Greg Gilbert asks the insightful question: “How might our understanding of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ be impoverished if we did not have James’ letter?”