

## **“The Power of Prayer” James 5:13-20**

The theme of this book is Spiritual Maturity.

To mature one has to know or learn how to respond, how to act or not act when going through suffering.

James, the author of this letter, has been stressing the sufferings and difficulties of life at this point. With that said, he changes direction and introduces prayer.

Again, I mention the theme of this book is “Spiritual Maturity,” and taking our prayers to the Lord shows and demonstrates one’s spiritual maturity. This is what we must do.

- |  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| <b>1. Pray for the suffering,</b>                  | <b>verse 13</b>     |
| <b>2. Pray for the sick,</b>                       | <b>verses 14-15</b> |
| <b>3. Pray for each other,</b>                     | <b>verse 16</b>     |
| <b>4. Pray for the nation,</b>                     | <b>verse 17-18</b>  |
| <b>5. Pray for those who stray from the truth,</b> | <b>verses 19-20</b> |

### **1 . Pray for the suffering, verse 13**

#### **v. 13**

Now, if you find yourself in this situation of suffering, being afflicted, sad, or just going through difficulties. James tells us ***Then he must pray.***

Prayer is the answer. This is what the mature Christian does in their sufferings and in the difficulties of life. It does not mean that God takes away the suffering or the difficulties. But God will give us the grace and power to endure them.

#### **Philippians 4:6-7**

We see here that it is through prayer that we can experience the peace of God. And that peace will take care of our hearts and minds. It is the mature Christian who understands this and puts it into practice.

#### **1 Peter 5:7 New Living Translation**

**<sup>7</sup> Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you.**

God can remove our anxiety and worries, our problems, and our sufferings if we are willing to give them to Him.

That is the power of prayer; this is what prayer can do, it gives us the power and peace to overcome our problems and our sufferings.

**Is anyone cheerful? He is to sing praises.** ~ There will be times of suffering as well as times of joy.

Not all of us will go through the same thing or at the same time.

The mature Christian can sing praises in their sufferings. It's because they have learned not to be controlled by their emotions.

### **Acts 16:25**

We can see and understand that this gives a great testimony to the people around us. Being able to sing praises and hymns during difficult times in life affects the people around us.

We need to understand that prayer and singing hymns, as well as praises, are an expression of our spiritual life in Christ Jesus.

We need to pray for those who suffer.

## **2. Pray for the sick, verses 14-15**

### **v. 14**

**anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord;** ~ anoint means to massage.

In the Old Testament, they would massage you with oil to bring healing. Oil was the common medicine of the day.

### **Luke 10:34 New Living Translation**

**<sup>34</sup> Going over to him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with olive oil and wine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him.**

### **Matthew 9:12 New Living Translation**

**<sup>12</sup> When Jesus heard this, he said, "Healthy people don't need a doctor—sick people do."**

This is so basic, it is so simple: if you're sick, see a doctor.

Now, for the believer, we see that there are or can be good results when they ask for prayer from the elders.

### **v. 15**

Now, I will emphasize this again; **“It is the prayer of faith”** that will restore the sick, NOT the oil.

**and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up,** ~ Prayer offered in faith by the elders of the one who is sick, and it is the Lord who will raise him up.

**and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.** ~ James brings it to our attention that it is possible that these individuals were sick because of their sins.

### **1 Corinthians 11:28-30**

Now, it may be quite possible that the reason the elders are invited to go to the home of the sick individual is because they have been excommunicated from the church for persisting in their sin.

\*\*\* Disobedience can lead us to the point of some illnesses. Sin can affect the whole church, so one has to deal with sin.

**1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous, so that He will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

### **3. Pray for each other, verse 16**

#### **v. 16**

The Christian must confess their sins to each other, that is, when they have sinned against one another, as well as to pray for each other. This is so that there can be restoration in the relationship. So that you may be healed.

**The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.**

The fervent prayer of the righteous has much power.

The righteous, the obedient, holy life in the hands of God is a powerful instrument.

### **4. Pray for the nation, verses 17-18**

#### **v. 17**

James takes this example of Elijah from **1 Kings 17-18**. We see the power of prayer in this story.

**Elijah was a man with a nature like ours,** ~ Elijah was a man just like us. He had his own battles, he had to battle against his flesh and passion much like we do too.

**and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain,** ~ he prayed for the people of that nation, that God would humble them, so that they would return to the true God.

**v. 18**

\*\*\* There are times when we are not persistent in our prayers. But Elijah was in tune with God's will, so he remained persistent in his prayers.

**1 Timothy 2:1-3 New Living Translation**

**5. Pray for those who stray from the truth, verses 19-20**

**v. 19**

James doesn't say it, but it is implied that we should pray for those who have strayed from the truth. It is a continuation of what he has been teaching on prayer.

But take note that it says **My brethren**, it says brothers. Who is James talking to? Is he talking to the pastor? To the church leadership?

The mature Christian takes responsibility for his brother or sister who has or is moving away from the truth of the faith.

**Galatians 6:1 New Living Translation**

If we can help them, help them with love and gentleness. If we make them return, we are rescuing them from God's discipline.

**v. 20**

God's desire is that we would grow and mature spiritually.

**Application:**

1. When I find myself going through difficulties in life or when I'm suffering. How do I respond? Am I dependent on prayer in difficult times?
2. A way to understand that I am mature in the Lord is our attitude to prayer. Do people seek me out to pray with them?
3. What is my attitude when someone stumbles or falls? When they fall into sin? When they distance themselves from the faith? Am I talking about them? Do I start to criticize them? Or do I seek them out to restore their relationship with the Lord?