

**AGAPE HOUSE OF WORSHIP
WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY**

Study Series: Wisdom for Living – Study of Epistle of James
Part II: Prayer of Faith - James 5:13–20

Wednesday, April 10, 2024
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Introduction

James has been teaching us how to live with one another in the family of God and concludes by teaching us how to commune with God in prayer, so we can be made whole! There are various types of prayer, such as thanksgiving [Psalm 100:4](#), adoration [Psalm 145:1-8](#), intercession [1 Tim 2:1](#), confession [1 John](#), and petition [Matt 7:7-12](#), which is our focus today.

***James 5:13-20** Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise. ¹⁴ Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. "And **the prayer offered in faith** will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven." **16** Therefore **confess your sins** to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. **17** 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. **18** Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops. **19** My brothers and sisters, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring that person back, **20** remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death and cover over a multitude of sins.*

Time to Pray

"Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise": every circumstance of life is a time to pray: in trouble, happiness, and sickness -- all are an occasion for prayer and worship! Men ought always to pray and not to faint. Luke 18: 1. We can always pray on our own but the scripture invites us to be vulnerable to one another by allowing others to pray with us.

Who are the "elders of the church"? They are mature believers or leaders in a congregation (Titus 1:5; 1 Timothy 5:17) who can be relied upon because of their faith and knowledge of God and His word. The elders are instructed to "pray over [the sick person] and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord" (James 5:14). Calling the elders of the church to pray is an act of faith and the elders are responsible to pray in faith. It is a demonstration of the church as the family of God, where no one is alone, even when things get tough!

What does the anointing with oil mean? James 5:14 Jesus' disciples "anointed many sick people with oil and healed them" (Mark 6:13). In the Old Testament, anointing with oil is used to set apart or ordain leaders, priests e.g when Samuel anointed David in 1 Sam 16:13-14. In the NT, "anointing" is connected with the Holy Spirit: Acts 10:38; Luke 4:18-19. We need the Holy Spirit to pray effectively. The anointing oil like the laying of hands is seen as a point of contact or a stimulus to faith.

Anoint with oil "**in the name of the Lord**" (James 5:14). It is not the oil that has power, the power is in the "name of the Lord" referring to the authority we have to invoke God's presence - John 14:12; Acts 3:6.

The Prayer of Faith

The Prayer of Faith: known also as the prayer of petition or the prayer that changes things [Matthew 21:22; Mark 11:24]. This prayer is always based on God's revealed will as declared in His Word and never contains an "if." The prayer of faith begins with the answer and is based on a promise and not on a question or uncertainty. What has God said about the issue you are praying for? Believe that you have received it, then you will have it. The faith that believes for the answer is a necessary environment for healing to occur.

Sozo:

The "prayer of faith" is said to "save" the sick person, or "make the sick person well" (NIV). The word used here is Greek **σῶζω**, meaning "save, keep from harm, preserve, rescue." It is also deemed to mean "save or free from disease" or from demonic possession. This means that healing is not only spiritual but for the whole person -- body, soul, and spirit. Jesus ministered whatever a person needed to become whole again, Matt 9:22... take heart, daughter, your faith has made you whole. **Sozo** is used again in Matt 8:25: 'Lord, save us! We're going to drown!' Jesus rebuked the storm and delivered them from immediate danger.

Can unbelief hinder the prayer of faith? Even Jesus could not do any miracles in his hometown of Nazareth because of their lack of faith (Mark 6:5-6). Jesus would often ask those who come to be prayed for: "What do you want me to do for you?" (Matthew 20:32). This was to encourage their faith. Jesus assured Jairus when he saw his faith faltering as he was informed that his daughter had died, "Don't be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed" (Luke 8:50).

How can we gain bold faith for healing? By immersing ourselves in the word and ministering alongside those who *do* have faith for healing. Heb 4:12 the word is living, **it quickens!** John 6:63- the word is spirit and life.

Can sin cause sickness? Sometimes sin is the reason for sickness - vs.15-16. When Jesus healed a paralyzed man at the Pool of Bethesda, he saw him in the temple, and said, "See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you" (John 5:14). However, Jesus demonstrated that sickness isn't *necessarily* caused by sin. John 9:1-3. He said no one sinned but that God may be glorified.

The Holy Spirit does reveal the root cause of sicknesses and sometimes asks people to forgive so they can be healed, especially when someone walks in bitterness.

Confession: Why should we confess our sins to one another?

We can confess our sins as a form of accountability and demonstration of the willingness to change. Whatever is brought to light breaks the power of secrecy that the devil uses to hold people in bondage. Refusal to confess a sin can sometimes mean that the person is still nursing and coddling the sin, and secretly enjoying it.

Prayer is intricately woven into the healing process: confession, forgiveness, healing, and wholeness. After confession comes prayer, and from the prayer of faith comes healing. Job 42:8-10. God asked Job to pray for his friends so he can forgive them and after Job prayed for his friends, the Lord restored his fortunes.

The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

James 5: 16-18 tells us that anyone that is a believer is called to participate in the ministry of prayer and healing. Elijah was a man just like us! He performed great miracles, but he also became weak and fearful! God looks for faith, and where he finds it, he goes beyond our human capacity as in the case of Elijah and many other instances, even today!!

What stood out to you in the kind of prayer Elijah prayed in 1 Kings 17 -18: Go again!. Consistent, persistent, faith-filled, passionate - the type of prayer that makes much power available. It is the prayer that knows the mind of God and insists that the kingdom of God be made manifest in the affairs of men.

Restoration: vs. 19-20: This is a call to pray earnestly to bring back any brother or sister when they wander from the faith, from the truth, which is Jesus, rather than talking about them or being proud that we are better than them. This is how a family works! Love covers a multitude of sins! 1 John 5:16.