

SERMON TAKE HOME- James 5v13-18-A Call to Prayer

We will be spending a few weeks on this text-This week I wanted to emphasize James call to prayer for all of us. Next week, we will be getting more into the inter-workings of prayer.

All too often you will find a body of believers who are given to the Word of God, but lacking in prayer. In addition, you will all too often find a body of believer who are given to prayer but lacking in the Word of God. This cannot be! Both, a the Word of God and prayer are essentials for our personal life and as a gathered body of believers. There should be a direct correlation between our growth in the Word (which brings humility and a recognition of our dependency on Him (not to mention prayers of thanksgiving)), and our prayer life. As we grow in truth, we should be growing in prayer. It is not either or, but both the Word and prayer!

¹³Is anyone among you suffering

- The word for suffering is broad and can include suffering evil, persecution, distress, affliction
- What should we do when we are suffering? *Let him pray*
- We are commanded to pray. This must be our immediate response.
- Please note it does not say call a brother/sister, family, pastor, but rather “*pray*”. Go to the Lord alone first
- Why would we not go to Him first? We don’t believe He will answer. We have prayed before and nothing happened. We think we can handle it on our own.
 - If this is what we believe, we are not trusting in His word but in our feelings, experiences, or ourselves. In any case, we are not believing. Put your faith in God and His word and go to Him.

Is anyone cheerful?

- What should be our first response when are joyful? *Let him sing praise*
- To whom should we sing praise? To the One worthy of our praise, the Sovereign King! (Ps 95:2)
- Note again, in our joy let our first response be a turning to God and giving praise in prayer. It is good to share testimonies with others, but we must go to the Lord first.
- In all things go to the Lord first-Rejoice with Him, petition Him, depend on Him, cry out to Him (Phil 4:6)

Our life must be a life of prayer: This should encompass the unbroken communion we see in 1 Thess 5:17 “unceasing prayer” and our Lord’s instruction in Matt 6:6 “*And when you pray, go into your room & shut the door & pray to your Father*”. Do you have daily dedicated time of prayer? If not show the priority in your life, that scripture demonstrates by making prayer a priority in your life. Meditate on Luke 5:16 (Do you follow this example Jesus set?)

¹⁴Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

- Not only should prayer define our personal lives but it should be central to elder’s ministry.
- Elders should be given to ministry of the Word and prayer.
- Personally, I am committing to making sure that I am praying more and talking less. The power is in prayer
- We will discuss this text more next week

¹⁶Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another

- We should not understand this text to mean that we should confess every sin to one another
- This is a call to be honest and open with our brothers/sisters, which will help us know what to pray for
- May I challenge us all to remove the “veneer” that everything is ok? We should not confess sin to the degree that we glorify sin and its details.
- I also want to challenge us that when we gather for fellowship in each other’s homes to commit a portion of our time to prayer. That this would be a purposed part of our lives continually.
- One last challenge, when someone brings something to you and we say “I will pray for you”, let’s change that to “Let’s pray now”. Don’t delay, pray right then! And yes, continue in prayer as well.