

## The Book of James

### 5:15-19

I'm always excited when I can share with you the Word of God. Today we want to continue our study in the book of James in chapter 5.

Now, last time, we left off with verse 15, but let's review verse 14 just a moment. It says, *Is any sick among you? 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.* It speaks of the anointing with the oil there. Let me remind you that nowhere in the Bible does it say that the oil is what's going to make the person better.

As we read in Mark 6:13, it talks about the oil, and in I Peter 2:24, it says, *Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.* Now, this is not speaking of a physical healing here in I Peter 2:24. This is speaking of spiritual healing, the saving of a soul.

We are saved by the stripes of Christ. Through His blood, we come to a saving knowledge. Through His blood, we have eternal life. Let me remind you that no person is healed from sickness apart from the supernatural effect that God does. God is the One who heals.

Now, as I mentioned last time, God has placed doctors and hospitals on this earth, and those doctors are here to help us. And when all else fails, when doctors fail, when everything that we do fails, we turn to God and we ask God, if it be His will, would He please heal us. Sometimes God heals us in a way that we don't understand. Sometimes He heals us in a way that we don't understand.

Sometimes He heals us in the sense that He takes us home to be with Him, and that's a healing in itself.

But in Genesis 20:17, it gives the answer as to who and what actually heals the person. It says there, *So Abraham prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife...* It's God who does the healing. It's not the oil or anything else that we read of. In the Word of God, nowhere does it say that a certain thing heals you. It is all of God.

So, today we pick up with verse 15 of James chapter 5, and it says there, *And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up...* There it is again; it's the Lord, and the verse continues... *and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.*

Now, the God of faith, not the elders... in verse 14 it talks about the elders... it's the God of faith, not the elders who petition to pray. They're not the healers and they cannot restore the health. It's the Lord who does this. And verse 15 talks about "if" there is sin. And we know that all have sinned, according to Romans 3:23. And as we read that verse, it says all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Well, the same faith that God sees as a saving faith He also sees as a healing faith, and it is all according to His will.

A confession of sin to God is always necessary for God's blessings upon our life. If we want to have the blessings of God in anything we do, we must confess the sin that we know that is there. Get rid of it.

I John 1:9, of course, says, *If we confess our sins, he... that's God... is faithful and just to*

*forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* God wants all to be saved. This is His will, but He cannot force anyone to receive Christ as Savior. He wants all to be healed. This is His will, but because of sin, the body gets sick and eventually dies. That's because of one man, Adam. It talks about that one man sinned and sin came into the world, and that one man, of course, was Adam. If God always heals, then no one would ever die. Well, this body has to die.

And by the way, one day there will be no more sin, no more sickness, no more death, according to Revelation 21:4 and Revelation 22:3. Revelation 21:4 says, *And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*

And Revelation 22:3 says, *And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him.* What a glorious time that's going to be when mankind will not be plagued anymore by sin.

James 5:16 says, *Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* Now, James is speaking here in verse 16, I believe, to the church collectively. Now, of course, he could be speaking to one person, but I believe he's speaking to the church collectively. He's not speaking to one individual here.

We need to keep in mind the theme that seems to be prevalent in this chapter and the other chapters of James and that is practical Christian living. Confess your faults or confess your sins collectively. That is, this admonition seems to apply to the whole congregation, and I believe that James is

saying admit... own up to the problems within the local congregation to mend rifts within. Remember, only God can forgive sin.

And I believe we're living in a day and time where there's much sin within local congregations. There is much sin that needs to be confessed collectively. In other words, churches need to get things right with God and those local bodies need to do the things of God and submit to His will.

Pray collectively for healing. If one part of the body is injured, the whole body suffers, and we need to remember that, that we're not alone when we're serving the Lord. We are part of the body of Christ, and when any one part of that body suffers, the whole body suffers, so we need to pray one for another.

And do we want prayers answered? Well, get things right with God is what is being said here. Be right with God. Be passionate in praying and much can be accomplished, not so much for us as individuals but for God, for God's glory and His honor.

Now, James 5:17-18 says, *<sup>17</sup>Elias... or Elijah... was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. <sup>18</sup>And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.*

Now, Elijah was a man. He was just a man, a human, just like us, James is saying. There's no difference. Elijah prayed seriously to God for no rain, and it didn't rain for 42 months. And we often think, *Well, if Elijah did that, then I can do that.* Well, it was to serve a purpose. It was to bring honor and glory to God, and when we pray, we need to pray that God is going to receive the honor and glory.

We need to pray that if it be God's will to do a certain thing.

Sometimes our prayers do not get answered because we pray for the wrong reason. Our motives are not right, and we need to pray, "God, if it be Your will, do this or do that." And Elijah prayed and there was no rain, but, you know, Elijah prayed again for rain, and he was serious with God, and God answered his prayer and the ground produced food, according to verse 18. It says, *And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.* There had been a drought and Elijah prayed then and God sent the rain, and so the earth was able to produce the fruit or the food that people needed at that point.

There was a point that was being made that God was in charge, that God could do whatever He wanted to do and that man needed to pray, "God, Your will be done."

Now, we see in verses 19-20 the blessings of love for erring brethren. James 5:19-20 says, *<sup>19</sup>Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; <sup>20</sup>Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.*

Well, James 5:19 talks about the brethren, about that brother who errs from the truth, and it says "if any of you err." Anyone can go astray. This could happen to anyone. In I Corinthians 10:12, it talks about the person who errs, and the Bible talks about, if you think you stand, take heed, because, you know, pride goes before a fall. None of us are above the sin that is prevalent in this human body. We need to stay close to the Lord.

And it talks about the brethren who errs from the truth, the Gospel, or the doctrine, the

precepts of the Gospel, the precepts, the very foundation that says God so loved this world that He gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. We do not want to err from that. We do not want to stray away from the Gospel truth, the doctrine that God has set forth in His Word.

And the words there talk about conversion. It says, *Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him...* "convert." This means to turn back to the Gospel doctrine it teaches, and I believe, once again, as we look at these verses, the Lord is speaking to a congregation. The Lord is speaking to the people within a local congregation to pray for one another and to help that brother or sister who has strayed, who is straying from the truth that is found in the Word of God.

Now, I Corinthians 10:12, I mentioned that earlier, it says, *Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.*

And Galatians 6:1 says, *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.*

It's often been said that the army of God is the only army that shoots their own. When a person gets wounded, the army of God seems to want to step on that person and cause more harm than has been accomplished or done in the past. When that person that we know of has erred from the truth, we're not to belittle that person. We're not to degrade that person, but we are to build that person up in the faith. We're to pray for that individual and help that individual back to a place in their lives where they can serve the living God.

I don't know about you but when something happens in my life... maybe I become a little, shall we say, a little depressed or something happens in my life that would bring me down, yes, I'm human just like you are, and when something happens that would hinder my walk with the Lord, I want people praying for me. I want people helping me to know that God still loves me and I can still serve Him because He first loved me.

And I pray that you know Jesus Christ today as your Savior. And if you do, you need to be serving Him right now, trusting Him to lead and guide you.

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