

## The Book of James

### 5:12-14

What a wonderful book the Bible is. As we look into the Bible, it's a book of life that takes us from death unto life, and we understand that as a Christian. And in the book of James, our study, James chapter 5, we've looked at verse 7 this past time. We looked at verse 7, and as we've gone down through verse 11, the theme there seems to be perseverance, in other words, not giving up, and how that God is faithful. He will take care of us.

Now, sometimes we may not think that He takes care of us the way that we would take care of ourselves, but once again, we're a selfish people. And I don't mean to hurt your feelings, but that's what the Bible teaches us, that, as people, we just don't see things the way God sees things. And I thank Him for that because He is God and He knows better than I do, but it seems like we would choose things differently than God would choose. But I thank him so much for taking care of my life and to give me exactly what I need. He doesn't always give me what I want but that's the human part of me. But I have confidence in knowing that whatever I receive from Him is going to be the best.

Well, last time, we looked and we got down to verse 11, and once again the idea or the thought there in verse 11 is to persevere... perseverance... as Job did. And we read how that Job ended up with twice as much as he had in the beginning. He stayed faithful to the Lord.

And now we want to look in James 5:12. It says, *But above all things...* besides all this, he's saying, besides persevering, he says. *But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any*

*other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.* I believe what James is saying here is, "My brothers, do not promise something you know nothing about. In other words, you have no authority to promise anything you cannot deliver or change. We sometimes open our mouth before we think and we need to be careful with that. Don't promise something that you can't deliver.

And I believe he goes on to say in that verse to let your answers be with assuredness, yes or no. If you don't know, say no, and if you do know, say yes and give the answer. Say the truth without the addition of any oath or confirmation, any emphasis. If you embellish or speak without thinking, you may be guilty of condemnation. In other words, giving the wrong information.

In Matthew 5:34-37, the Bible says, *<sup>34</sup>But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: <sup>35</sup>Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. <sup>36</sup>Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. <sup>37</sup>But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.*

Let me say that I've been called upon in the past to be a witness, a character witness or whatever, in civil trials and so forth, and one of the things that really confuse that bailiff or whoever that is that asked the person to raise their right hand and swear to tell the truth, when it comes to me and they say, "Do you solemnly swear..." I stop them and I say, "I am not swearing. That is against what I believe as a Christian. I do not swear." And they'll scratch

their head a little bit and the judge will say, "Well, do you promise to tell the truth?" And of course, I do. I promise to tell the truth. I promise to tell what I know, nothing less and nothing more. Simply tell the truth. And I believe that's what James is saying here. Don't say something that you're not sure of.

And then we look on in the book of James. We go into verse 13 here, and I believe this can be separated here in verses 13-20, prayer, singing, and concern for the erring for those people who are making mistakes or who have made mistakes in the past. First of all, I see the blessing of prayer and song in verses 13-18.

Verse 13 of James 5 says, *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.* In other words, is anyone in the congregation distressed or unhappy? That person needs to pray. Read the verse. It says, *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray.* We are to pray first for ourselves when we are afflicted. When we have something wrong with us, when we have a sickness that comes upon us, we need to pray. We need to ask God's guidance. We need to ask God's help. "Lord, give me health. I'm not well, Lord. Help me with this sickness." And that's what James is saying here. *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray.*

And he goes on to say, *Is any merry?* Is anyone happy, he's saying. That person needs to sing poems of praise, and that's what a psalm is; it's a poem. Let him sing the psalms back to God. God has given us the psalms as a comfort to help us to understand that He is so good to us and that He has given us everything that we need, everything that we... not necessarily that we desire or the things that we want a lot of times, but He gives us what we need, and He is so good to us. We could never repay Him. We could never outdo God. So I believe James is saying here, "Is anyone happy?" That person

needs to sing poems of praise. And many times I find that Christians, when they get down, when something happens to them, they run to God and they say, "Oh, God, help me," but then when they're happy and they're rejoicing over one thing or another, they forget God. And God says, you know, we need to pray if we're sick, but we also need to sing the psalms or poems of praise back to God. Let him know that we're thankful for what He does for us.

In verse 14 of James 5, 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.*

Remember, when you get sick you pray. You pray. You ask God's help. And I believe if it becomes so serious, something that it seems like I'm not getting anywhere, then James says, "Let him send for the elders of the church." "Is anyone in the congregation sick?" James is saying. That person needs to, first of all, send for the elders of the church to pray for him, and then the elders need to rub him with oil by the authority of Christ.

In Mark 6:13, the Bible says, *And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.* I want you to note this verse, Mark 6:13. It does not say they are healed because of the oil. They, these people, cast out devils, anointed with oil, and healed the sick. The Lord does the healing, as seen in James 5:14-15. We do not have to go as far as to say the use of oil as a healing means by elders, apostles, and so forth is no longer valid because that was for the early church. The use of oil, as with other medicinal remedies, can still be used today as a medicine to help the healing process of wounds and other injuries, and we know that. Nowhere does the Bible say it is because of the oil that a person receives healing.

We're once again going back, not considering necessarily the medicinal purpose here, but it's

a representation of the Holy Spirit. Nowhere does the Bible say the oil is the healing. Now, the Holy Spirit works because He's God, but God is always the healer. God is not only the healer of man's body; he is also the healer of man's soul.

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.* This is not talking about physical healing; this is talking about spiritual healing, the healing of the soul, that soul being prepared for Heaven, that soul that has received Jesus Christ as Savior.

In Genesis 20:17, the Bible says, *So Abraham prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maidservants; and they bare children.*

And in Mark 5:25-34, the woman with the issue of blood healed by Jesus, God... this was a physical healing. Jesus healed. Jesus is God, so therefore, he had the authority to do the healing because He is God.

Now the believers whom James addresses... we're still closely identified with Judaism, and because of this they practiced many things identified with Judaism. Anointing with oil was extensively used in the ceremonies of the Jews. Kings and priests were anointed, oil being liberally poured upon the head, denoting outwardly the fact of consecration to the office and symbolically the Spirit of God, which they needed for the exercise of their functions.

And furthermore, when we stop to think about it. Oil was also very widely used for health and comfort. It was and is still a great remedial agent in the Orient. And so we see that the pouring on the oil, the rubbing in of the oil, was ceremonial. And it was also a medicinal use. It

brought comfort to that person who was sick. So, please keep in mind that the oil itself has no healing power concerning spirituality or concerning what some people would have you to believe. The healing comes from God. It is God and only God who can heal. Now, let me quickly add that God has placed doctors on this earth to help us heal sometimes. Sometimes and more times than not, it seems that we need the help of a physician. Well, there's nothing wrong with going to a physician or a hospital to receive help when you're sick. And don't let anybody try to tell you that it's wrong to go to a doctor or to a hospital for help. God has placed people here to help us.

Well, we're going to pick up next time with James 5:15. Let me read that before we close. *And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.* On the surface that may seem contradictory to some of the things that you've heard in the past, but I'd ask you to study that this week, and we're going to look at that in our next study, James chapter 5, and we'll begin with verse 15.

Let me invite you to write to me this week, Lewis Woodard, 497 Judith Avenue, Fruitland Park, FL 34731. Write to me and I'll be glad to send you free of charge a transcript of this program. In the meantime, let me invite you to look at our Website, as well: [www.LRWM.org](http://www.LRWM.org).

Until the next time, may the Lord bless you richly is my prayer.