

JAMES (5:13-20)

Lesson 26: What to do When You're Sick /Confession and Prayer

10 July 2020

Vs 13 What should the believer do when they're experiencing some sort of affliction (body or mind, pain or grief)? Let him pray.

What should the believer do when they have reason to rejoice? Let him sing psalms.

God should be the first one you go to with your troubles or your celebrations

Vs 14 What should the believer do when they are sick?

1. Let him call for the elders of the church.

- a. The ministry of healing is now a church matter. It is not the ministry of select individuals who travel around performing miracles (Apostles).
- b. Healing is confined to the leadership of a local church and is a matter of prayer.
 - i. Your local church is where you find people who care about you.
 - ii. When you go outside the church seeking healing, the *healer* doesn't know you or care about you. Such a *ministry* is unbiblical.
- c. The sick believer is instructed to call for the elders of the church. What is an elder?
 - i. Leaders in an established church (1 Peter 5:1, 2 John 1, Acts 15:6).
 1. An elder is also referred to as a Bishop (1 Tim 3:1, cf. Titus 1:5).
 2. These are the leaders responsible for the care of the church (1 Tim 3:5).
 - ii. Not an apostle. An apostle travels to a place where the Gospel is unknown and confirms the word of God with signs, wonders, and miracles (Acts 5:12).
 1. Once a new church is established, the apostle travels to the next place.
 2. Paul left Trophimus sick (2 Tim 5:21) because healing was a matter for the local church in Miletum. Trophimus must now call for the elder to pray for him and anoint him with oil.
 3. If there is a church, that means there are believers who believe the word of God. There is no need of miracles to convince people in a church that the word of God is true (Mk 16:20).

Vs 15 "The prayer of faith" refers to the elder's faith. The elder is the one praying (vs 14).

1. The prayer of faith shall save the sick and the Lord shall raise him up.

- a. The Lord may save your body by removing the illness and raising you out of the bed.
- b. The Lord may save you FROM your troublesome body by raising you up to Heaven.
 - i. The word "SAVE" does not limit this promise to only healing. To be with the Lord is better for us (Php 1:23).

2. "If he (the sick man) hath committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."

- a. "If" means that all sickness is not caused by sinning. Maybe it is, maybe it isn't.
 - b. Physical healing is not proof that you're saved. If you're saved, you're forgiven, not healed (Eph 1:7, Col 2:13).
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Vs 14 "Anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord."

1. Biblical anointing oil (Exodus 30:22-33).
 - a. Myrrh, cinnamon, Calamus, cassia, olive oil (vss 23-24).
 - b. Used to anoint the tabernacle and its vessels (vs 26-28).
 - c. Used to anoint the priests (vs 30). Also kings (2 Kings 9:6) and prophets (1 Kings 19:16).
 - d. Not for strangers (vs 33).
 - i. If you "anoint" an unbeliever in your special "healing service," and they get healed (possibly by the Devil, 2 Thess. 2:9), but still die and go to Hell, your ministry is wicked.
 - e. Not to touch the flesh (vs 32). Then, anointing a person on the forehead is not biblical.
 - i. Most religions have a practice of placing a mark on the forehead. That's why you'll see many churches anointing people with oil on the forehead.
 - ii. In the Bible, the anointing oil was poured on the head and never touched the face (**Psalm 133:1-2**). The oil ran down the beard to the garments.
 1. Note that the Bible always refers to a man's beard in a positive sense.
 - a. Not having a beard was a shame to David's men (2 Samuel 10:5).
 - b. A beard makes it easy to distinguish between a man and a woman from a distance (Rev 9:7-8).
 - c. Jesus had a beard (Isa 50:6).
 2. A woman's long hair prevents the anointing oil from touching her flesh (1 Cor 11:14-15).
 - f. Believers today are anointed (James 5), meeting the prerequisite of priest, and king (Rev 1:6), as well as being those who prophesy (1 Cor 14:1), as we preach the word of God.
 - i. Therefore, an unsaved person should not be anointed with oil, they should get saved and receive the anointing of the Holy Ghost (1 Jn 2:27).

Vs 16 "Confess your faults one to another..." "Faults" is accurate (KJV). "Sins" is wrong (NIV, ASV, Good News, NASV, Williams, Beck, New World [Mormon], New Life, The Answer). NKJV "*transgressions*" is also an incorrect translation.

1. Only God can forgive sins (Mark 2:7, Luke 5:21) and transgressions (Isaiah 53:5, 43:25, Ps 103:12,). He is faithful to forgive them (1 Jn 1:9).
 2. A fault is a weakness in our character that we want to strengthen.
 - a. We confess our faults to forewarn the brethren, so that they don't have sinful thoughts about us. This confession can prevent sin.
 - b. We confess our faults so that the brethren will pray for our faults to be healed.
 - c. We confess our faults to the brethren to disarm the Devil.
 - d. Paul had a fault that God healed through infirmity (2 Cor. 12:9).
 - e. Most prayer requests are for physical needs (to feel good). We ought to request prayer for our character flaws (to live right).
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16-18 Prayer...availeth much. Prayer is not a waste of time. God says there is great benefit to prayer. Elias (Elijah) is the example given in this passage (1 Kings 18:41-46).

1. Elijah didn't quit when God didn't answer his first prayer. He kept praying and God answered after his 7th prayer.
 - a. This is not a vain repetition (Matt. 6:7). There's nothing wrong with repeating a prayer as long as you mean it from your heart.
 - b. Jesus repeated prayer (Mt 26:39-44) and encouraged it (Luke 18:7).
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Vs 19 If you convert someone, you did something to help them change their ways.

1. Christians can "**err from the truth.**" You can turn them around and bring them back to the right paths of truth.
 2. When a brother or sister gives-in to their weakness (faults), we are not to condemn them, but convert them (James 5:19) and restore them (Galatians 6:1).
 - a. They didn't get lost, so they don't need to be re-saved. They need to be restored (fixed up good as new).
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Vs 20 When you convert a Christian from the error of their way, you save a soul from death (not from Hell).

Save a soul from death

1. The wages of sin is death (Rom 3:26). This was written to born-again believers.
2. When you sin, you kill your ability to bear fruit for Christ. Instead you earn fruit unto death (Rom 6:21).
3. If you continue in sin, God may be forced to kill you (1 Cor 11:30, 1 Jn 5:16).
4. You can prevent this from happening to your brethren by converting and restoring them.

Hide a multitude of sins

1. Sins that are dealt with today do not need to be dealt with at the Judgment Seat of Christ (1 Tim 5:24). They are hidden. We are cleansed from all unrighteousness (1 Jn 1:9).
 2. We ought to deal with the sins of our brethren in private.
 - a. Sometimes church leaders need to deal with sin publicly (1 Tim 5:20) to maintain holiness in the church. The pastor needs to continue to proclaim that sin will not be tolerated in any form. He may need to expose sin openly to show that the church does not condone or overlook it.
 - b. As brethren, we need to try to resolve matters privately. Help the brethren get right with God without destroying the testimony of the church.
 - i. Clearly gossip and talebearing violate God's desire for us to keep things hidden.
 - ii. The Devil accuses the brethren enough (Rev 12:10). Don't give him any help.
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