



# STUDY GUIDE

## JAMES: Week 13

### 9.1.13

#### [set up]

Who do you call first when you have good news or bad news to share?

What do they typically do or say that encourages you in that moment?

Why do we typically go to God or forget to go to God first with the things we experience in life?

#### [digging deeper]

Read the passage from this last week's message in James 5:13-18

What are the most immediate observations that you make in these verses?

Where is the middle ground in seeking medical help for illness and praying over illness. Why are we quick to medicate and slow to prayer. Why are some quick to prayer and slow to medicate?

It was shared this last weekend that the deeper understanding of the word sick here (Astheneō) refers to those who are weak and weary. What other types of "sickness" then can we pray over or request prayer for?

In verses 15 and 16 mix sin and sickness together. What is a good way to understand how sin can produce sickness but that not all sickness is from sin? (John 9:1-3; 1 Cor. 11:27-30; Psalm 32:1-5, Prov. 28:13)

In Mark 2:1-12, we find recorded the healing of a paralytic. Notice that Jesus first offers the man forgiveness of his sins (think his friends were bummed to hear that when they had hopes for more?) But afterward He then healed him of his paralysis. What more can this teach us about the need for spiritual healing over physical healing?

Read a few parts from the Elijah story in 1 Kings 17:1; 18:1, 2; 18:41-45. Where do you see the examples of Elijah praying "fervently". Why is it important/meaningful that James pointed out that Elijah had a nature like ours. (5:17) How can we pray more like Elijah?

How can we pray with courage and the kind of faith we see in Elijah, with the faith James mentions in James 1:6, 7 and the faith we see in John 14:3,4 and 1 John 5:14, 15 without slipping into a "name it and claim it" mindset?



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## [living it out]

After spending time in a portion of Scripture like James 5:13-18, we realize how valuable and powerful prayer is. But we may go through seasons of disbelief or disengagement. Or encounter others who feel that way. How can we speak to the following questions/criticisms about prayer with Biblical understanding and faith (not just opinion)?

- How do you know God answers prayer?
- I tried prayer and it doesn't work
- How do I know if I'm hearing God?
- (another one maybe you have heard)

After this time in James, where do you feel most affirmed in your prayer life? Where do you feel most challenged and feel the need to grow? What's a practical step for growth you can apply starting now?

James says to confess your sins to one another and pray for one another (5:16)

If you are in a LifeGroup at this moment, take some time in prayer as a Life Group and increase your vulnerability by sharing something you have been struggling with and need prayer for. You can pray for each person one at a time or pray for the person on your right or left as you close and pray for those specific requests that have been shared. Commit to pray for requests each day of the upcoming week. Share with each other how you have seen God answer those prayers too!

If you are not in a LifeGroup, schedule a time with some Christian friends this week to just pray. Share what you learned from James and enter into a time of prayer time similar to James 5:16 and pray for one another. Commit to pray for each request each day of the upcoming week. Share with each other how you have seen God answer those prayers. For now, close in an extended time of prayer, praying over what God has impressed on you during this time. Maybe also journal whatever insights, convictions or commitments you have made in your heart from this time