

# James 5:13-20

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## REVIEW...

- As we came to the conclusion this Epistle on Christian living...
  - We tied together all the COMMANDS - with two simple conclusions...
  - Either we will be the RICH or we will be the PATIENT!
- FOUR conclusions for the Rich...
  - They will weep – because they were deceived by the wisdom of this world...
  - They put their trust in corrupted riches / moth-eaten clothes / corroded silver and gold...
  - All of which will be a witness against them – heaped up for the last days!
  - They mistreated their workers – whose cries reach the Lord of the armies of heaven...
  - They lived for pleasure and luxury – but they are like a calf being fattened for the slaughter!
- FOUR conclusions for the PATIENT...
  - PATIENT for the return of the Lord...
  - PATIENT like a farmer – because our reward does not come in this life...
  - PATIENT with others – no SIGHING – because we received PATIENCE from God...
  - PATIENT like the prophets – who did NOT receive the PROMISE in this life!
- ABOVE ALL – we are not to SWEAR...
  - Looking at the TWO options – we might be tempted to SWEAR we will be PATIENT...
  - Do NOT swear – just DO it - let our yes be yes / and our no be no!

## IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER...

- 1<sup>ST</sup> – COMMAND TO PRAY... vs. 13
  - SEVEN final commands...
    - Up to this point we have received 51 COMMANDS – on HOW to walk in Christ...
    - As we close up the book – we will be given SEVEN final COMMANDS...
    - Teaching us HOW we are to minister to one another in the church!
  - 1<sup>ST</sup> – Bad mood...
    - **Is anyone among you suffering - let him pray!**
    - SUFFERING – 4x in NT – compound word – evil and emotions – a BAD mood...
    - This is NOT a question [indicative] – someone among us is in a BAD mood...
    - If we are that person – we are commanded to PRAY [imperative]!
    - PRAY [προσεύχομαι] - to come close to God to share with Him our heart!
    - **When problems come - our first response is to get into a BAD mood...**
    - **Only when it becomes unbearable – in desperation – do we PRAY to God...**
    - **Yet when we PRAY - we find whatever brought on the BAD mood is gone...**
    - **Our perspective changes - we see our circumstances in a new light...**
    - **We no longer see our PROBLEM - we see our God who is greater than ANY problem!**
    - **Philippians 4:6 - “Do not worry about anything – instead - pray about everything...”**
  - 2<sup>ND</sup> - How to PRAY...
    - There is not a special or required position when it comes to pray...
    - We see examples in the Bible of praying while standing / sitting / lying down!
    - **God does not listen to a prayer made on our knees any more than praying standing...**
    - **But practically speaking I find it best not to pray lying down - tend to fall asleep...**
    - **Better to walk and pray - or on our knees - it helps keep us attentive!**
    - **It is not about the position of our body - it is about the position of the heart...**

- **We cannot have a bad prayer - if we have the right heart!**
- o 3<sup>rd</sup> - Who to PRAY to...
  - Prayer is directed toward God in heaven - Our Father - **Luke 11:2**
  - When Peter was walking on the water - took his eyes off Jesus and began to sink...
  - **Matthew 14:30** - "He was terrified and he shouted - Save me Lord!"
  - The shortest prayer in the Bible - crying out to Jesus in a time of need!
  - Presumably we can also direct our prayers to the Holy Spirit [no NT reference]
  - We pray for the Holy Spirit to empower us - **Acts 1:8** - teach us - **John 14:26**
  - **We can pray to the Father / to the Son / or to the Spirit - because they are one!**
- o 4<sup>th</sup> - What to PRAY for...
  - **It is good to be specific in our prayers - to give God details...**
  - **Not that God does not know - God sees the end from the beginning - Isaiah 46:10**
  - **But it allows God to DIRECT us on specific issues - allows God to CHANGE us...**
  - **Prayer is not about changing HIS mind - getting Him to agree to OUR plans...**
  - **Prayer is about God changing OUR mind - getting us to line up with HIS plans!**
  - **Luke 22:42** - "Nevertheless not my will - but Your will - be done."
- **2<sup>ND</sup> - COMMAND TO SING... vs. 13**
  - o 1<sup>st</sup> - Good Mood...
    - **Is anyone cheerful - let him sing psalms!**
    - CHEERFUL [indicative] - 3x in NT - being in a GOOD mood...
    - Also NOT a question [indicative] - someone among is in a GOOD mood...
    - If we are in a GOOD mood - we are commanded [imperative] to sing PSALMS...
    - Sing PSALMS [ψάλλω] - to pluck a string - make pleasant noise!
    - **When we are in a GOOD mood - we are to WORSHIP!**
  - o 2<sup>nd</sup> - How to WORSHIP...
    - **Ephesians 5:17-20** - "The WILL of the Lord is... be filled with the Spirit - speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs - singing and MAKING MELODY in your heart to the Lord - giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."
    - It is the WILL of the Lord is that we be FILLED with the Spirit...
    - WHEN we are FILLED - we will speak to one another in PSALMS - the WORD...
    - Making melody [ψάλλω] - singing in our hearts to the Lord!
    - **The reason we are in a GOOD MOOD - is because of WHO is in us...**
    - **When we are filled with the SPIRIT - the result is going to be displayed our attitude...**
    - **And we are going to have a song in our hearts - because of SPIRIT in our hearts!**
- **3<sup>RD</sup> - COMMAND TO CALL... vs. 14**
  - o 1<sup>st</sup> - The sick...
    - **Is anyone among you sick** [indicative] ...
    - There are THREE ways we can experience DIFFICULTIES in life...
    - We can suffer RELATIONALLY - FINANCIALLY - or PHYSICALLY...
    - SICK [ἀσθενέω] - emotionally overwhelmed - financially lacking - physically ill...
    - Interesting word as it encompasses ALL of the ways we can be SUFFERING!
  - o 2<sup>nd</sup> - CALL the Elders...
    - **Let him call for the elders of the church!**
    - The SICK are commanded [imperative] to are to CALL - for the ELDERS of the church...
    - ELDERS - [πρεσβύτερος] - those who are OLDER - more mature in faith...
    - In context we would say PASTORS - the leaders of the church!

- This is the OPPOSITE of what we have been hearing for the past TWO years...
  - We have been told to STAY at home – keep people safe!
  - But God COMMANDS us to come to church – so that we can be HEALED...
  - I think the reason we often hesitate – is because we are NOT sure if God will heal...
  - We might even wonder IF God can heal – especially if it is more than just a cold...
  - But Jesus healed the SICK / made the blind SEE / the lame to WALK / even raised the DEAD!
  - And God never changes – He healed in the days of Jesus – He still heals today - **Hebrews 13:8**
- **4<sup>TH</sup> – COMMAND FOR PASTORS... vs. 14-15**
    - 1<sup>ST</sup> – The PRAYER... vs. 14
      - Let [the Elders] pray over him!
      - The PASTORS are commanded [imperative] to PRAY over the SICK...
      - Interesting – is the PRAYER of a pastor more effective than the PRAYER of others...
      - NO – the point is that we are a family and need each other!
      - People are often very shy about coming and asking for PRAYER...
      - They do not want others to KNOW about their struggles...
      - People might JUDGE them – look DOWN on them – think LESS of them...
      - So instead of finding HELP – they SUFFER in silence [and a BAD mood]
      - But we were never meant to face the challenges of life on our own – we are a FAMILY!
    - 2<sup>ND</sup> – The ANOINTING... vs. 14
      - Anointing [the sick] with oil in the name of the Lord!
      - ANOINTING – [ἀλείφω] as PART of the PRAYER [participle] – OIL is put on the SICK...
      - NOTE – the OIL is placed on them in the NAME of the LORD [κύριος]
      - There is NO power in the OIL – it is a SYMBOL...
      - **I Samuel 16:13** – “Samuel took the... oil and anointed [David]... and the Spirit of the LORD came upon [him].”
      - The OIL represents the Holy Spirit – He is the one who heals us!
      - No person / pastor has the gift of healing – the Holy Spirit does the work...
      - If God let one person be a healer - people would begin to follow them rather than God...
      - Instead the Holy Spirit gives the GIFT of healing to the person who is being HEALED...
      - How do we know WHO the Holy Spirit wants to HEAL – step out and PRAY!
      - **I Corinthians 12:11** – “The Spirit distributed to each one individually as He wills...”
    - 3<sup>RD</sup> – The FAITH... vs. 15
      - The prayer of faith will save the sick - and the Lord will raise him up...
        - And if he has committed sins - he will be forgiven!
        - The words PRAYER and SICK here - are NOT the same as from the previous verses...
        - PRAYER [εὐχῆ] – 3x in NT – it is translated VOW in the other places...
        - SICK [κάμνω] – 3x in NT – is translated WEARY in the other places...
        - The VOW of faith will SAVE [future] the WEARY – and the Lord will raise them up!
      - HOW they are SAVED...
        - RAISED up - could refer to PHYSICAL healing – such as you are able to get out of bed...
        - But it could also refer to the ETERNAL – THE resurrection – which seems to be the case...
        - As we are told - even if he has committed any SINS they will be forgiven!
        - Because the GREATEST need of EVERYONE is to be HEALED of our SINS!
      - WHO makes the VOW...
        - This could be talking about the VOW of the PASTORS that save the WEARY...
        - Because in FAITH they point people to the LORD – who is able to SAVE!
        - This could also be talking about the VOW the WEARY person is making...
        - In FAITH they come to the PASTORS of the church for PRAYER to be SAVED!

- I am ok with either view – and do not really have a preference...
- Either way is speaks of WHO the object of our FAITH is – Jesus who can SAVE!
- Not enough FAITH...
  - There is one view that is NOT correct – if we have enough FAITH we will be healed!
  - We are told Elisha became sick and was going to die - **II Kings 13:14**
  - Interesting that a man who could heal the SICK / and raise the DEAD...
  - Was himself now SICK – and could NOT keep himself from DYING!
  - There are those who say – if you are SICK it is because we lack FAITH...
  - Yet Elisha had LOTS of FAITH – but could NOT heal himself!
  - From cancer to the common cold - God can heal those who are SICK...
  - But whether or not we get SICK / or whether or not God HEALS us...
  - Is NOT based on our FAITH – it is about the purpose and plan of God!
- **5<sup>TH</sup> – COMMAND TO CONFESS... vs. 16**
  - 1<sup>ST</sup> – CONFESS...
    - Confess your trespasses...
    - CONFESS [ἐξομολογέω] – to freely talk about our FAILURES...
    - We are COMMANDED [imperative] to not HIDE what we have done WRONG!
    - Many times people who are SICK – pretend like they are NOT...
    - They avoid the DOCTOR – hoping somehow they will miraculously get BETTER...
    - But because they did not CONFESS – often their SICKNESS gets WORSE!
    - We show up on a SUNDAY – with our BEST outfits – and PLASTIC smiles...
    - Because we want everyone to THINK we are doing GOOD...
    - But the ONLY person we are fooling is ourselves – we are all FAILURES...
    - In order for us to get BETTER – we need to CONFESS our PROBLEMS!
  - 2<sup>ND</sup> – ONE another...
    - To one another!
    - We do not just CONFESS our FAILURES to God for salvation – **I John 1:9**
    - We CONFESS our FAILURES to ONE another for restoration!
    - Because when we sin – it does not just effect our lives – it impacts those around us!
    - When I was a kid – I went to the house of a friend and borrowed a game without asking...
    - When he found out I was FULL of excuses – THOUSAND reasons why what I did was OK...
    - But he rebuked me – just say you are SORRY so I can FORGIVE you!
    - We will ALWAYS have reasons why we should not CONFESS...
    - We are RIGHT – the other person is WRONG / NOT a big deal – they are just OVERREACTING...
    - But until we are willing to CONFESS - there cannot be restoration of the relationship!
    - **Matthew 5:23-24** – “If you [come to worship] and... remember that your brother has something against you... first be reconciled to your brother - and then come and [worship].”
- **6<sup>TH</sup> – PRAY FOR EACH OTHER... vs. 16-18**
  - 1<sup>ST</sup> – Healing... vs. 16
    - Pray for one another - that you may [subjunctive] be healed!
    - We are COMMANDED [imperative] to PRAY [εὐχομαι] for each other to be HEALED!
    - HEALED [ἰάομαι] – to be free from SIN – to be made WHOLE...
    - In CONTEXT the HEALING we are talking about is our RELATIONSHIPS!
    - When there is no HEALING of fractured RELATIONSHIPS in the church – it causes DIVISION...
    - And DIVISION keeps the church from being effective for Jesus - keeps us from shining...
    - Rather than seeing the love of Jesus in us - the world sees us FIGHTING each other...

- Satan loves to cause DIVISION within the church - then we will not be able to FIGHT him...
  - We are too exhausted from FIGHTING ourselves - no energy left to FIGHT for a lost world!
  - **Luke 11:17** - "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and a house divided against a house falls."
- o 2<sup>nd</sup> - Effective PRAYER... vs. 16
- The effective - fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much!
  - EFFECTIVE fervent - [ἐνεργέω] - where we get ENERGY...
  - PRAYER [δέησις] - 19x in NT - carries the idea of making an URGENT plea to God...
  - If someone makes an ENERGETIC and URGENT plea to God - it is POWERFUL!
  - What is the urgent PRAYER - to RESTORE a brother who has SINNED!
  - If we knew someone who made a MISTAKE - and EVERYONE at church knew about it...
  - That person is already HURTING - BROKEN over their sin - ASHAMED of what they did...
  - And if when they show up - everyone STARES / WHISPERS behind their back...
  - They feel abandoned / discouraged - and will NOT come back to church!
  - Satan would love to keep a sinner from being restored by the GRACE of God...
  - If he can keep someone CONDEMNED - beating themselves up - he will...
  - Do not let Satan ROB the church - take a child of God Jesus died to SAVE!
  - If we know someone who has FAILED - pray FERVENTLY for them - reach out to them!
  - Instead of WHISPERING - we are to walk over and give them a hug!
  - Show them they are welcomed back into the family of God!
  - **II Corinthians 2:11** - "Lest Satan should take advantage of us - for we are not ignorant of his devices."
- o 3<sup>rd</sup> - Example of Elijah... vs. 17-18
- First PRAYER...
    - Elijah was a man with a nature like ours - and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain...
    - And it did not rain on the land for three years and six months!
    - We are given an Old Testament example to illustrate FERVENT prayer...
    - ELIJAH - was a man with a NATURE like ours...
    - NATURE like ours [ὁμοιοπαθής] - to have SIMILAR struggles...
    - He lived in an EVIL nation - under the rule of an EVIL King - Ahab...
    - Ahab and his wife Jezebel KILLED most of the prophets of God...
    - In judgement of their SIN - Elijah prayed EARNESTLY...
    - EARNESTLY - noun for PRAYED - he PRAYED a PRAYER [just once]
    - And there was NO rain in Israel for THREE and a half years - **I Kings 17:1**
    - Seeking RESTORATION does NOT mean we PRAY that God overlooks SIN...
    - It means just the opposite - we PRAY that God will bring CONSEQUENCES...
    - It is hard to see someone destroy their lives with poor choices...
    - There are people who do not WANT to stop SINNING - they like their SIN...
    - All we can do is WAIT - till their CONSEQUENCES have BROKEN them...
    - If someone wants SIN - there is NOTHING we can do to help them - but PRAY!
  - Second PRAYER...
    - [ELISHA] prayed again - and the heaven gave rain - and the earth produced its fruit!
    - After THREE and a half years Elijah faced off against the false prophets of Baal - **I Kings 18**
    - He told them to meet at Mount Carmel for a duel - a test to who was the real God...
    - The prophets of Baal spent most of the day trying to call down fire on their altar - nothing!
    - Elijah then told the people to pour FOUR large jars of water over the altar - THREE times...
    - Then he PRAYED - and immediately FIRE from the Lord fell down from heaven...
    - It consumed the sacrifice - the wood - the stones - and all the water!

- When the people saw it they fell on their faces – the LORD He is God!
- They captured the prophets of Baal – and put them all to death - **Deuteronomy 18:20**
- THEN Elijah PRAYED again for it to rain – but it took SEVEN times – before the RAIN came!
  
- Why did it ONLY take ONE prayer for ELISHA to STOP the rain...
- But it took SEVEN prayers for the rain to come again...
- Perhaps because ELISHA did not want the people to be FORGIVEN!
- Because it is EASIER to pray for CONSEQUENCES than for RESTORATION...
- When people HURT us – it is HARD to pray for God to forgive them...
- But when we PRAY – even if it is half hearted at first – it begins to change us...
- We stop seeing people in the light of what they DID...
- And we start to see them in the light of what God wants to DO...
- FERVENT prayer changes us – so we see people the way God does!
  
- 7<sup>TH</sup> – COMMAND TO KNOW... vs. 19-20
  - 1<sup>st</sup> – Wandering from TRUTH...
    - Brethren - if anyone among you wanders from the truth - and someone turns him back...
    - WANDER [πλανάω] – to be led away from the TRUTH / Jesus...
    - And instead puts their eyes on the PLANET / WORLD...
    - Our desire should be to see them TURN back to Jesus – REPENT...
    - How do we HELP them TURN – we give them ACCOUNTABILITY!
    - Being willing to ask them the hard questions...
    - If they struggle with LUST - have you looked at those pictures...
    - If they struggle with DRINKING - have you been tempted to pick up the bottle...
    - NOT so that we can CONDEMN them - but to HELP them avoid SIN!
    - **Galatians 6:1** – “If a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness.”
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> – Save a SOUL...
    - Let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way...
    - Will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins!
    - If we HELP someone to REPENT – come back to Jesus...
    - KNOW [imperative] – we are to understand - we have saved a soul from DEATH!
    - Spiritual DEATH – because SIN will cause us to walk away from Heaven!
    - **Hebrews 3:13** – “Exhort one another daily - while it is called Today - lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”
    - It is hard to CONFRONT people about SIN – especially those who we care about...
    - We might think it is better NOT to CONFRONT someone who is SINNING...
    - But the truth is leaving someone in their SIN - is risking their ETERNITY...
    - Therefore - we are called to HELP them in spite of how we fear it might HURT them...
    - Not that we can make them REPENT – it is their CHOICE - but we can WARN them...
    - Our motive needs to be LOVE - we want to see them clean / forgiven - **Ephesians 4:15**
    - We want them to TURN – see them restored to their relationship to Jesus!
    - And if we do NOT warn them – God will hold us ACCOUNTABLE!
    - **Ezekiel 33:8** – “If I announce that some wicked people are sure to die and you fail to warn them about changing their ways, then they will die in their sins, but I will hold you responsible for their deaths.”