

- I) V16 **Confess** your trespasses to one another and pray for one another that you James had just written concerning suffering, singing, and sickness
He had instructed them, when suffering (sick), to **call the elders** to pray for them
- II) The elders would anoint them with oil, and would pray for their healing
Their faith was being exercised when they called for the elders to pray
- III) V15 The **prayer of faith** spoke of the heart of the ones who were praying
It speaks of a fervent request, **depending** on and **confident** in God's power
They were trusting in **God's ability** to heal, and trusting in **His will** to do so
NOTICE
- IV) V15 If he has **committed sins**, he will be forgiven
Why does James include the idea of sins being committed
BRIEFLY
- V) When sin entered the world, sickness and death also entered the world
Ro 5:12 When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam's **sin brought death**, so death spread to everyone, for (**in Adam**) everyone sinned.
- VI) Because of this, sin and sickness became connected in the mind of the people
You see an example of this in the Gospel of John
Jn 9:1-2 As He went along, He saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, **who sinned**, this man or his parents, that **he was born blind**?"
PERHAPS
- VII) Since sin and sickness was connected, the sick person might feel punished
Their past life might be remembered and they might think: I deserve this!
- VIII) James makes it clear: God is a God who forgives
Ps 103:2-3 Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all his benefits (kind deeds)— Who forgives all your **sins** and heals all your **diseases**
- IX) When they came for prayer by the elders, they were to humbly confess their sin
Ps 66:18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear.
This would have been part of their request: they wanted their prayers heard
- X) This wasn't to receive **absolution** from **them**, because **the elders** do not forgive sin
Ps 51:4 Against You, *You only*, have I sinned, And done this evil in Your sight--
That You may be found just when You speak, And blameless when You judge.

- I) They were in need of healing, and **confession** was part of receiving it
Confession was made so the elders could pray **the prayer of faith**
- II) The humility required for confession put the person in the position to be healed
- III) V16 Continues this train of thought and amplifies it, speaking of **confession**
Not only was confession made to elders, but it was also made to one another
FIRST: CONFESSION
- IV) V16 **Confess** your trespasses **to one another** and pray for one another that you
This kind of practice reveals fellowship and humility, as well as accountability
REMEMBER
- V) James had already exhorted them to live in Christian love and unity
They showed partiality to the rich, neglected the poor, and spoke evil of others
Under the pressure they endured, they were beginning **to grumble** (V9)
WHAT CAN CUT DOWN GRUMBLING
- VI) V16 **Confessing** our trespasses (harmatias-sins) **to one another**
Confessing doesn't just speak of to elders, but to any solid believer
We can pray for one another: it isn't just one person who can pray for us
SECOND: PRAYER
- VII) V16 And pray for one another: They confessed to and **prayed** for one another
This was not restricted only to the elders, but was to be **practiced by them all**
APPLICATION
- VIII) Confessing sins and praying for one another is not something people will do
The idea of having this kind of relationship with others is difficult
- IX) In modern thinking, church is a place that you go to hear a message
It isn't necessarily more than that: it isn't a place to develop relationships
- X) The idea of knowing someone well enough to be honest with them is foreign
For many, it is more comfortable simply listening to a message and leaving
I GET IT
- XI) For many years I attended church services but never knew many people
I was more comfortable being in an audience: it was less difficult
- XII) Over time, I realized that **having godly friends** was a way of being safeguarded
I came to realize that accountability was important, and even needed

I also realized that it takes time to develop this kind of relationship

- I) Having real and true friends that you pray with is a good thing
It is a way of growing in your faith and experiencing Jesus together

I WANTED THIS FOR THIS CHURCH

- II) I just never realized how threatening it was to pray for one another
I learned this the hard way when I asked people to pray together in church!

- III) I needed to learn how difficult it was for people to do such a thing
The experience helped me to learn to encourage fellowship, not demand it

WE NEED TO LEARN

- IV) The **church** is not simply an audience, but is designed to be a loving community
We love, pray for, encourage, correct, fellowship with and support one another
This is all to be done in an atmosphere of love and faith

GET INVOLVED

- V) I pray that we can come to realize this and to live like this

IN THESE CHURCHES

- VI) They were learning to love and **trust** one another
This led to them confessing **to one another**, and praying for one another
This affected both their souls and bodies

- VII) James says **confess**, that your soul may be refreshed and your faith strengthened
Jas 4:6 Confession was an act of humility, resulting in **receiving grace**
This confession renewed their confidence to be heard as they prayed

NOTICE

- VIII) V16 James says that you **may be healed**: This is not a guarantee of healing
We are not guaranteed healing, but healing is a possibility
The **prayer** of faith is our responsibility, but healing is the work of the Lord

WHAT KIND OF PRAYER

- IX) V16 The **effective fervent prayer** of a **righteous** man that avails much
Effective: Intense unwavering **faith filled** prayer from a righteous person

- X) This prayer comes from within, prompted by the Spirit and prayed with passion
Faith filled, fervent prayer is intense, sincere petitioning of the Lord
Jas 1:5-6 If any of you lacks wisdom let him ask of God who gives to all liberally
and without reproach and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no
doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind

- XI) Like the two blind men near the city of Jericho who cried out to Jesus for help
I) Mt 20:30-31 And behold, two blind men sitting by the road, when they heard that Jesus was passing by, *cried out*, saying, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David!" Then the multitude warned them that they should be quiet; but they *cried out all the more*, saying, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David!"
- II) James says that this kind of prayer is prayed by a *righteous man*
This is not speaking of a perfect man, but one who has been cleansed by Jesus
Ro 4:5 But to him that works not, but believes on him that justifies the ungodly, his faith is *counted for righteousness*.
- III) *By faith*, we receive forgiveness and now are made right with God, through Him
ELIJAH WAS A PROPHET
- IV) V17-18 Elijah was a man *with a nature like ours* and he prayed earnestly that it
The Prophet Elijah was an ordinary man, but he worshiped an extraordinary God
He ministered during the time of a wicked king named *Ahab* (853? BC)
DEVELOP
- V) Ahab had an evil, pagan wife named Jezebel and he did much evil in Israel
1 Ki 16:30-33 Now Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, more than all who were before him. And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and worshiped him. Then he set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a wooden image. Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him.
- VI) Elijah spoke against the sins of Ahab, and came and gave a word to him
1 Ki 17:1 Now Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, *whom I serve*, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word."
- VII) James points out that it did not rain for three and a half years, at the word of Elijah
- VIII) V17 Notice how James says that *he prayed earnestly*
1 Ki 18:41-46 tells us that Elijah went up to Mt Carmel, crouched on the ground with his face on his knees and prayed, and did so seven times. At the end of his prayer the sky turned black with clouds, and there was a heavy shower

James makes it clear: He was a man with a sin nature, yet God heard his cry

- I) V18 And he prayed again and the heaven gave rain and the earth produced its fruit
The drought and the famine ended, at his prayer

WHAT IS JAMES SAYING

- II) God works miracles, and it is reasonable to believe He will bless us also
Jn 15:7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you

FINALLY: RESTORATION

- III) V19-20 Brethren if anyone among you **wanders** from the truth and someone turns
James concludes his letter by writing if anyone **wanders from the truth**
What is he saying when he speaks of **wandering from the truth**

FIRST

- IV) He is speaking of wandering from the **truth of the gospel**

LET ME DEVELOP THIS

- V) The truth of the **Gospel** speaks of good news of salvation in Jesus
Eph 1:13 And in Him, having heard and believed **the word of truth—the gospel** of your salvation—you were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit
Col 1:5 (Paul speaks of) the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in **the word of the truth** of the gospel

- VI) James has already made reference to this in an earlier part of the letter
Jas 1:18 He chose to give us birth through **the word of truth**, that we would be a kind of firstfruits of His creation

THIS MEANS

- VII) For the Christian, truth is not **theoretical** but is revealed in scripture
Jn 17:15 Sanctify them by the truth: **your word is truth**

- VIII) We also know that **truth** is a Person (Jn 14:6)
With this in mind, truth can be **wandered** (strayed away) from
This is what the backslider does, becoming lost as he wanders away from Jesus

- IX) James points out that some of the **people in the church** are wandering away
They have heard the message but are being **influenced away** from its truth
This can happen through false teachers preaching a false message

- X) He has already pointed out that false teachers had begun infiltrating the church
These false teachers may have been influencing people in the church

They were teaching false doctrine, undermining faith, resulting in wandering

JAMES ADDRESSES THIS

I) James says if they **wander** (stray) from the truth (of Christian doctrine)
They are being deceived through the influence of **bad teaching**

II) They are being seduced from the truth of the gospel
This is something that believers should be concerned about

WHY?

III) When someone **wanders from the truth** it affects their entire lives
Wandering from the truth is seen in a life filled with sinful practices

IN CONTRAST

IV) When we believe and live by the teachings of Jesus, our lives are different
Love for God and love for others becomes our way of life

V) The Holy Spirit begins to work in us, producing what is called fruit of the Spirit
Gal 5:22-23 the fruit of the Spirit is **love**, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

VI) When someone **wanders** from God's truth, they reject the conviction of the Spirit
This results in a life that is empty and unsatisfying

VII) James is telling them that it is of great importance to care about others souls
Every genuine Christian has concern for those who are in need of the Lord

CONVERSION

VIII) What are we to do when we see someone **deceived**, going in the wrong direction?

NOTICE HE SAYS BRETHREN

IX) V19 and someone **turns him back**

This speaks of bringing him to **faith in Jesus**

It speaks of bringing him back from his wanderings; **establishing** him in truth

X) We must love **the wanderer** enough to **turn him from a false belief**, to the Lord
This can include seeking the person out, and sharing with them

Lu 15:4 What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?

XI) Sometimes it is difficult to share the truth with someone you know who is in error

You're aware of your own faults and can feel unqualified to share with someone

- I) This is one reason why it is so important to guard your own walk with Jesus
This puts you in the position of having the character to help someone else
Gal 6:1 Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you **who are spiritual** restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, **considering yourself** lest you also be tempted
- II) V20 Let him know that he **who turns a sinner** from the error of his way will save a **Turns a sinner** speaks of conversion
- III) Ac 3 records how Peter and John were at the Beautiful Gate in Jerusalem
They encountered a man crippled from his mothers womb, and he was healed
- IV) When the miracle occurred, the Jews gathered together and Peter preached
He told them that he didn't do the miracle, but it was done through Jesus
- V) He said they had disowned Jesus and killed the author of life, but God raised Him
He went on to say
Ac 3:17-19 Now, fellow Israelites, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders. But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Messiah would suffer. **Repent**, then, and **turn to God**, so that your sins may be **wiped out**, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord
- VI) This is what James means when he says **turns a sinner** from the error of his way
It speaks of coming to faith in Jesus: conversion
They turn to God and their sins are wiped out
WHAT WILL HAPPEN?
- VII) V20 he will save a soul from death (final judgment)
He will be used to provide salvation for the person
This is the goal: to turn the sinner from the error so they can be saved
- VIII) V20 and **cover** (conceal) a multitude of sin (atonement)
This puts them in the place to repent, and experience genuine conversion
- IX) God will forgive all of their sin, showing grace and mercy to them
This forgiveness and mercy produces joy that is deep, and lasting
Ps 32:1 Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, *Whose sin is covered.*

