

Reedy Fork Baptist Church

Wednesday, October 21, 2026

BIBLE STUDY

Theme: " Let Us Pray" Part 1

SCRIPTURE: James 5:13-20

¹³ Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise.

¹⁴ Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord.

¹⁵ And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven.

¹⁶ Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

¹⁷ Elijah was a human being, even as we are. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years.

¹⁸ Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.

¹⁹ My brothers and sisters, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring that person back,

²⁰ remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death and cover over a multitude of sins.

Key Words:

1. Trouble
2. Suffering
3. Prayer
4. Righteous
5. Sick
6. Confession

I. People, Places, & Times:

1. James
2. Elijah
3. Jewish Christians

II. Background:

James 5:13–20 focuses on prayer, mutual confession, community care, and the restoration of wandering believers as the practical culmination of active faith.

James is closing his letter with a final, urgent call to real-life Christian community. Active faith is not just theoretical; it shows up how we handle pain, joy, illness, sin, and spiritual wandering

IV. In Depth:

1. Lesson Emphasis: 1 Responding to Every Season of Life (James 5:13)

- A.** Suffering (v. 13a): Hardships, trials, or mistreatment. The reflex should be direct communication with God rather than isolation or bitterness.
- B.** Cheerfulness (v. 13b): Good times and blessing. Praise turns joy upward to God so it doesn't drift into self-sufficiency or pride.

2. Lesson Emphasis: 2 Caring for the Sick and Weak (James 5:14–15)

- A.** Action Required (v. 14): The sick person takes the initiative to call for spiritual leadership.
- B.** The Symbolism of Oil (v. 14): Anointing with oil represents consecration, care, and entrusting the person to God's hands.
- C.** The Prayer of Faith (v. 15): Healing and forgiveness are tied to God's sovereign mercy, lifting up both physical and spiritual restoration.

3. Lesson Emphasis: 3 Confession and Intercession in Community (James 5:16)

- A.** Horizontal Transparency (v. 16a): Healing often requires breaking the isolation of hidden sin. Safe, trusted Christian relationships allow for honest confession.

- B. The Power of Righteous Prayer (v. 16b): "The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working." Righteousness here means a life aligned with God's will, not perfection.

4. Lesson Emphasis: 4 The Example of Elijah (James 5:17–18)

- A. Ordinary People, Extraordinary God (v. 17): James reminds us that Elijah was just a human with normal weaknesses, yet his earnest prayer affected the weather for three and a half years.
- B. Takeaway: Prayer is effective not because of the spiritual elite status of the person praying, living in connection with the living God.

V. Make It Happen

1. Why is it sometimes harder to turn to God in seasons of happiness than in seasons of suffering?
2. What is your natural first reaction when life gets very hard, or conversely, when things are going great?
3. What does it look like for a modern church community to practically "call for the elders" and rally around someone who is sick or weary?
4. What keeps us from confessing our struggles or sins to one another, and how can a small group build a safe place for this?
5. How does knowing Elijah was "a man with a nature like ours" change how you view your own prayer life?

VI. Follow the Spirit:

What will you do as a result of this lesson?
