Reedy Fork Baptist Church

Wednesday, November 11, 2026

BIBLE STUDY

Theme: *"Let Us Pray #4-Praying for the Straying Believer"*

SCRIPTURE: James 5:19-20

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:

- Wander
- Truth
- Error

I. People, Places, & Times:

1. James

2. Wandering/Erring Believers

II. Background:

The Final Word: James concludes his letter abruptly without a traditional formal farewell. Instead, he ends with a passionate, family-style challenge about community care.

IV. In Depth:

1. Lesson Emphasis: 1 1 The Reality: Wandering from the Truth (v. 19a)

A. The Subject: "If anyone among you..."

1. This highlights the community aspect.

2. Sin and spiritual drift can affect members of the local church.

B. The Action: "wanders from the truth"

B. How it happens: Usually not a sudden leap, but a quiet, gradual drift through small compromises, unaddressed wounds, or

abandoning spiritual habits (prayer, fellowship, reading the Word).

C. What "the truth" is: Jesus Christ and His gospel teachings is the truth.

2. Lesson Emphasis: 2 The Mission: Turning the Wanderer Back (v. 19b)

A. The Instrument: "and someone turns him back"

1. God uses human instruments—ordinary believers acting in love, prayer, and humility—to accomplish His work of restoration.

B. The Approach:

1. Not with harsh condemnation: The goal is winning a person, not winning an argument or shaming them.

2. With gentleness and grace: Reaching out via personal conversation, persistent love, and prayer rather than gossip or writing them off.

3. Lesson Emphasis:3 The High Stakes: Why Restoration Matters (v. 20)

A. Rescuing from Death: "will save a soul from death"

1. Refers to saving someone from spiritual ruin, destruction, and eternal separation from God (or stopping a destructive path of persistent sin that leads to severe discipline/premature physical consequences).

B. Covering a Multitude of Sins: "and cover a multitude of sins"

1. Not that human effort earns salvation, but that bringing the wanderer back to repentance leads them back to the sufficient, atoning grace and blood of Jesus Christ, where past and ongoing sins are covered and forgiven.

V. Make It Happen

1. The Nature of Drift: Why is spiritual wandering often a slow, quiet process rather than a sudden event? What are some early warning signs in our own lives or community?

2. The Fear of Intervening: Why do we hesitate to approach a fellow believer who is drifting? How do we balance speaking the truth with showing grace (Galatians 6:1)?

3. Community Accountability: How can our church or small group cultivate an environment where people feel safe to confess struggles rather than hiding them in isolation?

4. Action Step: Is there someone God is nudging you to pray for or reach out to with a spirit of gentleness this week?

VI. Follow the Spirit:

What will you do as a result of this lesson?