week 18: James 5:13-18 | " Powerful Praying in a Complicated World" 3/8/26

review it *(Revisit the weekly rituals and follow-up on the last gathering)*

- Look over the last session's Action Step Journal and ask how it went. Share as honestly as you can. It's not meant to cause shame or guilt, rather, a community of care.
- Try to recite last week's memory verse.
- Try to recite the series memory verse, James 1:22.

hear it *(Slow down and hear the Word)*

Read James 5:13-18 aloud (twice if possible, using two different translations).

- ASK: What word, phrase, or image stands out to you and why?
- ASK: What does this passage teach about God?
- ASK: What does this passage teach about humanity?

check the mirror *(Help the group examine themselves honestly by asking questions)*

- **starting easy:**
  - What is one thing you carry around all the time that you *probably* don't *actually need?*
  - When life gets complicated, are you more likely to talk to God first, talk to people first, or keep it to yourself?

- **a look at the book:**
  - What different situations does James name in this passage, and what does he tell believers to do in each one?
  - What stands out to you about how often James brings the conversation back to prayer?
  - Which of those situations feels most personal to you right now: trouble, happiness, sickness, or sin?

wisdom in action *(Apply wisdom principles to life situations.)*

- **bring everything to God:**
  - The sermon said we all drag our burdens differently. Which response do you relate to most right now: pride, complaining, or giving up?
  - Why do you think James does not just tell suffering people to try harder, but to pray?
  - What are some things people tend to carry alone that God never intended them to carry alone?

- **pray with others, not just by yourself:**
  - Why do you think James specifically tells sick believers to call for spiritually mature people to pray over them?
  - What does James 5:16 show us about the connection between confession, prayer, and healing in the life of the church?
  - Why is it often so hard to let other believers into our pain, weakness, or struggle?

- **powerful prayer being rooted in God:**
  - Why do you think James reminds us that Elijah was a human being just like us?
  - How does remembering Elijah's fear, weakness, and exhaustion help you think more honestly about your own prayer life?
  - How does the gospel truth that we are made righteous in Christ change the way we approach prayer?

- **prayer… more connection than control:**
  - What happens to prayer when we treat it like a formula for getting what we want?
  - How did the sermon help clarify the difference between praying to get *from* God and praying to be *with* God?
  - What would it look like this week to practice prayer more as ongoing relationship than emergency response?

put it to work *(Move from talk to action)*

This week's practice: **pray.**

Prayer is not just what we do when life falls apart; it is how we stay connected to Jesus in each moment and every aspect of our lives.

- What burden do you need to stop carrying alone and start bringing honestly to God and to trusted believers this week?

weekly rituals

(Do these in whatever order–be sure to move through them)

- Weekly Memory Verse:
  "Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working." James 5:16

Action Step Journal: *Be sure to take some notes here.*

- Series memory verse:

  "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves." James 1:22

pray

Pray that God would make us a people who bring everything to Him with honesty, faith, and obedience.