



WEDNESDAY EVENING

AT BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH

Title: The Power of Prayerful Living

Passage: James 5:13

Speaker: Pastor Dan Preston

Introduction: Someone once said, “Patience is what you admire in the driver behind you, but not in the one in front of you.” Prayer can be much the same. We believe in it, talk about it, and teach it, but when pressure comes, it is not always our first response. Too often, we treat prayer like a last resort instead of a daily lifeline. Yet, as James closes his letter, he reminds us that prayer belongs in every season of life, both trouble and joy. In our text tonight, we see that prayer is not the believer’s emergency option, but the believer’s normal response.

I. Pray When Life Hurts

James assumes that prayer should be the natural response of the believer to affliction.

Prayer is usually what we do after we’ve exhausted everything else.

Prayer is not the escape from trouble; it is the strength in trouble.

Prayer does not always remove the burden, but it repositions the heart under the burden.

Notice James does not say how long to pray, where to pray, or what words to pray. He simply says: pray. Because prayer is not about eloquence, it is about dependence.



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II. Praise When Life is Good

Joy should lead us to God just as quickly as pain does.

One of the great failures of God's people throughout Scripture was forgetting the Lord in seasons of blessing.

Anybody can pray when life hurts, but it takes spiritual maturity to praise God when life is going well.

Prayer says, "I need You." Praise says, "I recognize You." Both belong in the daily rhythm of the Christian life.

Conclusion: Some of us do not pray because we think we have to clean ourselves up first. Others do not pray because they think their problem is not big enough. Some have simply grown used to carrying things alone. But James reminds us that whatever season you are in, bring it to God. Do not wait for tomorrow, do not wait for things to calm down, and do not wait until you feel more spiritual. The believer's response in every circumstance is the same: Bring it to the Lord in prayer.



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Prayer Focus for Tonight:

1. Prayer for Instinctive Prayer

Ask God:

- To make prayer your first response, not your last option.
- To help you turn to Him before relying on your own strength.
- To train your heart to seek Him when trouble or pressure comes.

2. Prayer for God's Help in Life's Hardships

Ask God:

- To help you bring your worries and burdens to Him.
- To give you strength and peace in present hardships.
- To teach you to lean on Him instead of carrying everything alone.

3. Prayer for God-Centered Joy

Ask God:

- To help you thank Him for blessings you may overlook.
- To help you praise Him in joyful seasons as well as difficult ones.
- To keep your heart grateful and mindful of His goodness.

4. Prayer for Daily Dependence

Ask God:

- To make prayer part of the rhythm of your day.
- To help you live aware of His presence.
- To teach you to talk with Him throughout ordinary moments.