

## The Prayer of Faith

### La oración de fe

**How should we pray?**  
**¿Cómo debemos orar?**

1. Let's pray with faith in \_\_\_\_\_.

Oremos con fe en \_\_\_\_\_.

James 5:15 (Santiago 5:15)

James 1:5-6 (Santiago 1:5-6)

2 Corinthians 12:8-9 (2 Corintios 12:8-9)

2. Let's pray for \_\_\_\_\_.

Oremos unos por \_\_\_\_\_.

James 5:16 (Santiago 5:16)

Ephesians 6:18 (Efesios 6:18)

Colossians 1:9 (Colosenses 1:9)

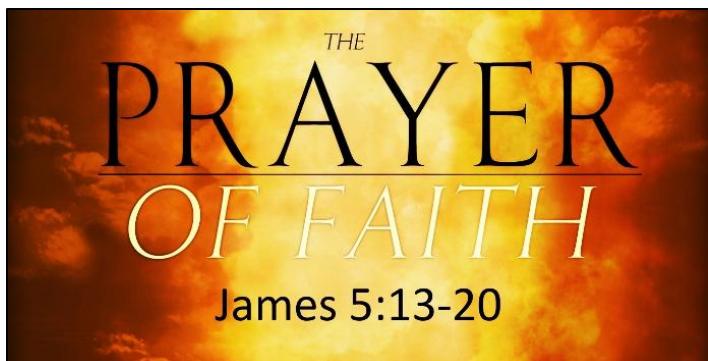
3. Let's pray for people to be \_\_\_\_\_.

Oremos para que la gente se \_\_\_\_\_.

James 5:19-20 (Santiago 5:19-20)

Matthew 5:4-45 (Mateo 5:43-45)

Jude 1:20-23 (Judas 1:20-23)



# Life Group Discussion Questions

Week 11: August 3-10

James 5:13-20

As James writes the final words of his book, he turns our attention to the importance of prayer. He has already mentioned prayer in previous passages. In 1:5-8, he urged us to pray with faith. In 4:2-3, he explained to his readers why their prayers were not being answered. But in his conclusion, he goes much deeper into this topic. He tells us how we can have powerful and effective prayers. He describes how God works through the prayers of church leaders to help us experience physical and spiritual healing. He encourages us to confess our sins to one another and pray for each other. Then, in the last two verses, he urges us to reach out to those who wander from the truth and bring them back into a saving relationship with God.

## Read James 5:13-20

1. What should a Christian do when he or she is in trouble? (5:13)

Gary Holloway writes,

James teaches his readers how to react to the changing circumstances in life. “In trouble” is actually “suffering” (as the prophets, v. 10). This is a general word for all hardships. What should a Christian do when suffering? He should not blame God for trouble (James 1:13) but pray to him who gives all good gifts (James 1:17). That prayer might be for relief from pain or for patience in suffering. (Holloway, 124-125)

2. What should a Christian do when he or she is happy? (5:13)

3. What should a Christian do when he or she is sick? (5:14)

4. What are the elders of the church to do for someone who is sick? Why? (5:14-15)

Holloway comments,

James does not say, “call the elder who is the healer,” but “call the elders of the church.” Charismatic healing is probably not meant here... In this verse, oil symbolizes the blessing of healing from God. Again, this is not magical healing oil. It is given “in the name of the Lord” (James 5:10). The healing that comes

from the anointing and prayer of the elders is miraculous, from the Lord, even if it is not charismatic. The oil does not heal; the Lord who hears prayer does (v.15). The oil is a symbol of his blessing. (Holloway, 126-127)

5. Why is it important to pray with faith? (5:15; see also 1:5-8)
6. How can prayer affect a person physically and spiritually? (5:15)

Charles Swindoll notes,

The Greek word for “restore” (sōzō [4982]) is used for spiritual salvation, but it can also refer to physical healing (Matt. 9:21; John 11:12). Although physical ailments can be a result of personal sin, James uses the expression “and if” (kan [2579]) in this final phrase, “and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.” This indicates that not all cases of physical illness are the result of sin. But if the person’s illness was caused by his or her own sin, then God’s restoration can include both physical and spiritual recovery. (Swindoll, 124)

7. Why should we confess our sins to one another? (5:16)
8. How did James describe the prayer of a righteous person? (5:16)

Kent Hughes observes,

If you are “confessed up” and walking with Christ, your prayers are spiritual dynamite, especially as they are offered for your needy brothers and sisters in Christ! A confessing and a praying church is packed with spiritual power. Think what could happen if Christians not only confessed their sins to God but, as the Holy Spirit directed, confessed certain sins to each other and then, as righteous people, prayed for each other! Such confession was at the heart of the small group meetings which fueled the Methodist movement. Indeed, confession has been at the heart of the periodic revivals which have graced the American church since New England’s Great Awakening. (Hughes, 241)

9. How did James describe Elijah in verse 17?
10. How did God answer Elijah’s prayers? (5:17-18)

11. What should we do if a fellow Christian wanders away from the truth? (5:19)

Holloway writes,

Praying for one another leads to physical and spiritual healing (v. 16). Prayer might also lead a brother back to God. A brother may have wandered away like the one lost sheep among a hundred (Matthew 18:12-13; 1 Peter 2:25). The Greek word for “wander” ( $\pi\lambda\alpha\nu\omega$ , *planaō*) is translated “be deceived” in James 1:16.

Through deception, the brother has wandered from the word of truth that gave him spiritual birth (James 1:18). (Holloway, 129)

12. What happens when we turn a sinner from the error of His way? (5:20)

13. What does it mean for Christians to pray with faith in God?

14. Why might God choose not to answer our prayers the way we want Him to? (2 Cor. 12:8-9; 1 John 5:14)

15. What helps you to trust the answer God gives to your prayer, even if it's not the answer you wanted?

16. Why do you think God wants us to confess our sins to each other and pray for each other?

17. What causes Christians to stumble and fall away from their faith?

18. How have others helped you when you were drifting in your relationship with Christ?

19. What situation or person will you pray for in faith this week?

20. What personal needs can you ask others to pray for through the coming week? Whom will you ask?

#### **Sources cited:**

Holloway, Gary. *James & Jude*. College Press, 1996.

Hughes, R. Kent. *James: Faith that Works*. Crossway, 2015.

Swindoll, Charles. *Insights on James, 1 & 2 Peter*. Tyndale, 2014.