

Exhortation (James 5:13-20)

Scripture Text:

13. Is anyone among you suffering? Then he must pray. Is anyone cheerful? He is to sing praises.
14. Is anyone among you sick? Then he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord;
15. and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.
16. Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.
17. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months.
18. Then he prayed again, and the sky poured rain and the earth produced its fruit.
19. My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back,
20. let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins. (James 5:13-20 NASB1995)

Outline:

- I. Exhortation About Times of Suffering and Times of Cheer (v.13)
- II. Exhortation About Times of Sickness (vv.14-15)
- III. Exhortation About Confession of Sin and Prayer (v.16-18)
- IV. Exhortation About Restoration of Sinners (vv.19-20)

Worksheet:

- I. Exhortation About Times of Suffering and Times of Cheer (v.13)
 - a. Is anyone among you suffering? Then he must pray. (13a)
 - i. James here asks a very relevant question to the first century Christians of his day. **What** kind of “suffering” is he talking about and at whose hands might they have been suffering? *[discussion]* _____
 - ii. **What** kind of suffering might these first-century brethren been experiencing that was unique to their time? *[discussion]* _____
 - iii. **What** is the proper response to “suffering” for a believer? *[discussion]* _____

- iv. **How** are believer's to do this? What should characterize these prayers?
[discussion] _____
 - v. **What** should believers pray for? Are they praying for something or against something? [discussion] _____
- b. Is anyone cheerful? He is to sing praises. (13b)
- i. James asks another question of these first-century believers that is one that is not as often-times asked or considered. **What** does it mean to be "cheerful"? _____
 - ii. **What** are some things that people do or say when they are "cheerful" (in good spirits, gladdened, joyful, of good courage)? [discussion] _____
 - iii. **What** is the proper response for someone who is cheerful? [discussion] _____
 - iv. **What** are some attitudes that accompany this "cheerfulness" and the "praise" that results in the life of a believer?
 1. _____
 2. _____
 - v. **What** do you do if you think you "can't sing" praises to God? Then make a joyful _____ unto the Lord...
 1. O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. (Psalms 95:1 KJV)
 2. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. (Psalms 95:2 KJV)
 3. Make a joyful noise unto the Lord , all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. (Psalms 98:4 KJV)
Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation. (1 Peter 4:12-13 NASB1995)
 4. speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ. (Ephesians 5:19-21 NASB1995)

II. Exhortation About Times of Sickness (vv.14-15)

- a. Is anyone among you sick? Then he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; (v.14)
- i. **Who** is this exhortation directed at and what are their responsibilities?
[discussion] _____
 - ii. **What** kind of sickness is being referred to in this verse? [discussion] _____
 - iii. List the things that a believer needs to do when they are sick:
 1. Recognize that they are _____ and in need of _____.
 2. Call for the _____ of the _____.
 3. Ask them to _____ over the believer, anointing the believer with _____ in the name of the _____.
 - iv. **What** is “anointing” usually used for in the bible? _____
 - v. Is it being used in a different way here? [discussion] _____
 - vi. Look at the context of this passage and consider all of the topics from that perspective. Consider in the life of a believer times of “suffering”, “cheerfulness”, “sickness” (in all of it’s forms) and what the proper response is to each according to scripture.
 - vii. **What** are three forms of sickness that can be experienced by people, whether believers or not?
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
 - viii. For believers who go through extreme times of testing, persecution, mistreatment and other unpleasant experiences the toll that it takes on their entire being can be manifest in the physical body, mental mind and the spiritual soul. For information on “crisis of faith” review this web link: <https://www.gotquestions.org/crisis-of-faith.html>
- b. and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him. (v.15)
- i. **What** will “restore” the one who is sick in this verse? _____
 - ii. In what way will they be “restored”? [discussion] _____
 - iii. **Who** is “offering” up this prayer? _____
 - iv. **Why** do you believe this to be so according to this verse? [discussion] _____
 - v. **Who** will “raise” this sick person up? _____

vi. **Who** will forgive this person if they have committed sins?

vii. So then, it is not the elder who has prayed for the individual who will raise them up or forgive this person if they have committed sins. So what's the point? *[discussion]* _____

viii. **What** kind of sins may need to be forgiven in the context of this passage for a brother or sister who is "weakened" by "suffering" and persecution and perhaps further "weakened" by unrepentant sin? *[list]*

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

III. Exhortation About Confession of Sin and Prayer (v.16-18)

a. Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much. (v.16)

i. All people whether believers or not are accountable to God and must give an account to God one day in judgement. **Why** should believers confess their sins to one another and not only to God? *[discussion]* _____

1. But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.
(Romans 14:10 NASB1995)
2. So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God.
(Romans 14:12 NASB1995)
3. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.
(2 Corinthians 5:10 NASB1995)

ii. **What** can unrepentant sin do in the life of a believer who is already suffering for righteousness sake if left unaddressed? *[discussion]* _____

1. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.
(Romans 6:12-14 NASB1995)
2. If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. Make sure that none of

you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name.

(1 Peter 4:14-16 NASB1995)

3. Lo, God will not reject a man of integrity, Nor will He support the evildoers. He will yet fill your mouth with laughter And your lips with shouting. (Job 8:20-21 NASB1995)

iii. Believers are told to _____ for one another so that they may be _____. **How** can the confession of sin by others help to facilitate “effective” prayers offered up on their behalf? *[discussion]* _____

iv. **What** can the “effective” prayer of a righteous man accomplish? _____. **What** does this mean? *[discussion]* _____

- b. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months. (v.17)

i. Sometimes the people of faith of old are disconnected in our minds because of time, geography, culture, language and so forth. What does this verse seem to suggest about these patriarchs of the faith? *[discussion]* _____

ii. **What** can learning about their lives in the past do for the lives of believer’s at this present time and into the future? *[discussion]* _____

iii. **What** kind of man was Elijah? _____

iv. **What** did Elijah do and what happened? _____

v. **Why** did Elijah pray this prayer? _____

vi. Does that sound like a “natural man” to you? _____

vii. **What** is the link between the people of God of Elijah’s day and the people of God of today? _____

- c. Then he prayed again, and the sky poured rain and the earth produced its fruit. (v.18)

i. **What** was the significance of Elijah’s second prayer after three and a half years of drought? *[discussion]* _____

ii. **Whose** power was on display during the drought and after it was over? _____.

iii. **Whose** glory were these miracles performed for alone? _____.

- iv. **Who** made it stop raining, start raining, and caused the earth to produce its fruit once again after the rains returned? _____.
- v. **Application: When** the drought comes, the rains return, and new life springs up in the lives of a believer, whose power is on display and who deserves all the praise, glory and honor? _____.

IV. Exhortation About Restoration of Sinners (vv.19-20)

- a. My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back, (v.19)

- i. This verse speaks about another type of person in the church that has made a profession of faith, but have strayed from the truth.

- 1. **Spiritually Immature:** For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

(Hebrews 5:12-14 NASB1995)

- 2. **Spiritually Mature:** Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of instruction about washings and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment. And this we will do, if God permits. (Hebrews 6:1-3 NASB1995)

- 3. **Apostates in the Church:** For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame. (Hebrews 6:4-6 NASB1995)

- ii. **What** is the responsibility of the spiritually mature towards those who have strayed away? *[discussion]* _____

- iii. **How** is this accomplished? *[discussion]* _____

- b. let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins. (v.20)

- i. **What** is the benefit of turning a sinner from error?

- 1. _____
 - 2. _____

- ii. **Whose** responsibility is it to turn a sinner from the error of his way?

[discussion] _____