

Sunday School Lesson for the Month of January, 2022

Proper Prayer (James 5:13-18)

Sunday, January 2, 2022

Prayer is both necessary and helpful. We should develop the habit of being prayerful. Talking to God in praises and petitions should be natural to us. We can know God intimately through prayer. We should not only develop the habit, but persevere in it!

James' sequence of thoughts here is easy to follow. He describes when to pray; why to pray and then how to pray.

Sunday, January 9, 2022

I. Pray Always!

A. Verse 13 is a picture of the early church at it's best. In times of suffering, they prayed. In times of joy, they sang. In times of sickness, they healed. Against a pagan world that offered only a bleak hopelessness, these Christians operated with expectation and power. They loved to sing: a clear sign of joy is evident in someone's singing. When the occasion was less joyous, they prayed for help and acted on their requests as far as they could.

B. The point is that they drew together to pray and do what they could to help remedy the situation. They asked God to take their efforts and perform healing. But they were not prone, as we often are, to ask God to do the miraculous while we passively do nothing.

Sunday, January 16, 2022

II. What Prayer Accomplishes!

James' enthusiasm regarding prayer comes from high expectations of what prayer can accomplish.

A. First, the prayer of faith will save. The fact that the promise is stated in unqualified terms raises a problem. Not even the Apostles believed that prayer always resulted in healing.

Paul remained sick....

This statement then must not be taken as a guarantee that every prayer offered in sufficient faith will be answered positively. It is mainly intended to show that every possible need of the Christian can be brought to God in prayer.

Sunday, January 23, 2022

B. Second, the Lord will raise him up (vs. 15). Note James' emphasis that it is the Lord, who raises him up. The elders, the oil, the prayer, these are simply instruments that the Lord uses to restore one's health.

C. Third, if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven (vs. 15). No one can know, real health of mind, body or soul until he or she is first, right with God. A right relationship with God is a prerequisite for total good health.

Sunday, January 30, 2022

III. How To Pray!

How can we pray best? James gives two answers:

A. First, there is a need for the confession of sins, not just to God but to each other. It is sometimes easier to confess sins to God than it is to confess to other people, yet in sin, two barriers are often created. One is between us and God; the other is between us and our fellow humans. To remove both barriers, both types of confession must be made. This principle is clearly one that must be used with caution. It is quite true that there may well be cases where confession of sin to each other may do more harm than good. Only where a two-way barrier has been erected because of a wrong should one feel the necessity to confess to the other. Otherwise, just work to remedy the problem and do not cause more trouble than necessary.

B. Second, James says to pray for one another. Here we see the mark of pure unselfish intercession. Saturating oneself in prayer for others is a wonderful spiritual experience. A prayer may be quiet and private, but it avails much!