

Victoria Fellowship Church
International & Interdenominational
Bible Study Worksheet – June 26, 2022

Theme: James: Faith in Action **Topic:** The Prayer of Faith

Main Texts: James 5:13-20

Key verse: James 5:15 – “And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven him” (NIV)

INTRODUCTION: In this concluding study of our quarter series on ‘Faith in Action,’ from the book of James, we come to a critical issue of life – sickness and how to pray for the sick among us. As we have seen from the Book of James, the fact that we are believers does not exempt us from the pains of living in a fallen world. There will be persecutions, evil of all sorts which will try our faith, there will be times of abundance or lack, etc. In all these, we are invited to see each circumstance of life as an occasion to pray and or to worship. So, whether we are suffering some hardships, or life is good, or sick -- all are an occasion for prayer and worship (James 5:13).

1. (a) In Luke 11:1-4, we see that John the Baptist taught his disciples to pray, as did Jesus Christ. What does this tell you about the importance of prayer in a life of faith? (b) Read Matthew 7:7; James 1:6; 4:2-3. What can we learn from these passages about a prayer of faith? (c) What crucial factor about a prayer of faith do we see in 1 John 5:14. And how should that help us as we pray about the challenges or triumphs in life?

The context of our text today is praying for the sick. But one cannot miss the link the text makes between confession and answer to the prayers for the sick: First, those who are sick are enjoined to invite the elder of the Church to pray for them and anoint them with oil. The sick is also required to confess any sins. Then we are told that, as believers, we ought to make confession of our sins to one another as an integral part of our walk with God and relationship with one another; and this so that we can obtain healing from God. Although these verses have been used as basis for certain Christian rites and practices, the importance of confession whether by the sick or otherwise, cannot be swept aside. Praying for the sick is only one example where a prayer of faith is required. So, whether for the sick or for other situations, the prayer of faith is offered with a God-centered perspective, and a God-centered trust, and a God-centered life. And the prayer of faith is not the exclusive expectation of the ‘Elders.’

2. Read Proverbs 15:8; Isaiah 59:2, James 5:14-16 (a) What connection do you see between prayer of faith and the believer’s lifestyle? (b) How does this help your understanding of the declaration that ‘The prayer of a righteous person is powerful’ (c). In the light of these, what would you say ‘The prayer of faith’ is?

Elijah’s prayer exploits recorded in 1 Kings 17 and 18 is one that continues to amaze us till date. No wonder James uses him to illustrate what he means by prayer of faith. On his own, James says quite a bit about prayer (James 1:5-8; 4:2-3, and 5:13-18), and fittingly so. Bible historians has it that James, the author of the Book, himself, was nicknamed ‘camel knees’ because of his prayer life. If this is true, then he speaks from both personal experience as well as from Scripture. And this is particularly important for us as believers who are expected to pray for the sick among us. This responsibility to pray for the sick among us is both for the elders (leaders) as well as for the rest of us (James 5:14,16).

3. (a) James 5: 14,16 says that anyone sick among us should call the elders of the church to pray over them so that the sick person may be made well. It also says that believers should pray for each other so that you may be healed. How does the responsibility placed upon us to pray for the sick among us make you feel? (b) James 5:15 tells us that God is the One who heals the sick person. What does this say to the popular notion that a prayer of faith means one has to be extra ordinary or do extra-ordinary things to have our prayers answered? (c) In the light of the lessons from this study, what is going to change about your view of prayer that is effective and powerful?

Prayer: LORD, thank You for teaching us about the prayer of faith in today’s bible study. Help us to practice this in our daily life and to enjoy the benefits it brings, in Jesus’ name, Amen.