

Prayer that Prevails

James 5:16

Context: James was the half-brother of our Lord. His book is believed to be the earliest Christian letter in the New Testament (AD @43-47). James primary theme is to live out one's faith visibly - that good works follow true faith (2:14-26). He closes his letter with an appeal to believers to pray prayers of faith.

For prevailing prayer...

I. _____ sin to others (vs. 16a)

- a. Do Christians need to confess sins? The pattern of scripture suggests "yes": See Psalm 51, 1 Peter 3:7, Ephesians 4:30, Psalm 32:3-5.
- b. Mutual honesty, openness, and sharing of needs will enable believers to uphold each other in the spiritual struggle. (MacArthur Study Bible)
- c. Sometimes confession in the community is needed before healing can take place, since sin may be the cause of the illness (1 Corinthians 11:29-30). (ESV Study Bible)

II. _____ the slate (vs. 16b)

- a. "That you may be healed." Confession and prayer will bring healing to the Christian. In the context, it is referring to both physical and spiritual healing.
- b. While not all physical healing is promised in this life (See Philippians 2:7; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10; 1 Timothy 5:23), spiritual healing is (1 Peter 2:24, John 6:37, Colossians 2:14).

III. _____ Biblical Righteousness (vs. 16c)

- a. "The prayer of a righteous man has great power as it is working." The key to prayer is righteousness, which is something that every Christian struggles with.
- b. 1 John 1:9 (ESV) If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.