The Mystery of Healing Prayer September 3, 2023

*James 5:13-20 Series: Show Me It’s Real*

Keep asking God till you get a yes—or the grace to live with the no. – Kevin Miller

Intro: Why her and not him?

1. Is God not answering because I don’t have enough faith?
2. Life’s circumstances should inspire constant conversation with God

v. 13 *Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray.*

v. 13 *Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise.*

1. God doesn’t want you to bear big burdens on your own

v. 14 *Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church …*

1. The prayer of faith is confidence in what God has revealed (not the belief that you can order God around)

v. 15 *the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up*

v. 14 *anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord*

2 Timothy 4:20 *I left Trophimus, who was ill, at Miletus.*

2 Corinthians 12:8-9 *Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”*

Luke 22:42 *Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done.*

* How does prayer draw us closer to God and other believers?
* What is the purpose of calling the elders to pray and anoint a sick person with oil?
* What is the prayer of faith?

1. Is God not answering because I have unconfessed sin?
2. Unconfessed sin can lead to sickness, but all sickness isn’t the result of unconfessed sin

v. 15 *And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.*

1 Corinthians 11:30 *That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died.*

1. All sickness isn’t the result of unconfessed sin

John 9:2-3 *And his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.”*

1. Some sins are too heavy for you to carry on your own

v. 16 *Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed.*

v. 20 *whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins*

Galatians 6:1 *Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.*

* When you’re sick, do you tend to assume it’s because of your sin or not even consider that it may be a result of your sin? How should you think about the relationship between sin and sickness?
* When should you confess your sins to someone else? To whom should you confess your sins and how?
* What can confessing your sins to someone do that confessing them to God can’t?

1. Is God not answering because I’m not good enough?
2. A righteous person is any person in right standing with God

v. 16 *The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.*

v. 17 *Elijah was a man with a nature like ours*

1 Kings 19:3-4 *Then he was afraid, and he arose and ran for his life … And he asked that he might die, saying, “It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers.”*

1. God honours fervent prayer

v. 17 *he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth*

v. 18 *Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit.*

1 Kings 18:42-43 *And he bowed himself down on the earth and put his face between his knees. And he said to his servant, “Go up now, look toward the sea.” And he went up and looked and said, “There is nothing.” And he said, “Go again,” seven times.*

1. God honours prayer according to His revealed will

1 Kings 18:1 *After many days the word of the LORD came to Elijah, in the third year, saying, “Go, show yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain upon the earth.”*

* The point of the second half of v. 16 is that the prayers of ordinary believers have great power. Do you believe that?
* What does it mean to pray “fervently”?
* God told Elijah that He would send rain and Elijah prayed to ask for it. How should you pray when you’re not as clear what God’s will is?

Study ahead: Next week, we’ll study Genesis 37:2-28

Notes