

Letter of James Chapter 5: Perspective, Patience & Prayer

Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you might be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

-James 5:16

Day 1

Read through James 5 twice. Now read it one last time in the [NLT version](#).

1. Spend some time creating one of the following lists: A.) What does this passage say about who God is and what does it say about who you are as his child? B.) Are there any directions to follow, promises to remember or warnings to consider?
2. What verse from James 5 stood out to you and why? Write that verse out in your journal and then turn your thoughts surrounding it into a prayer.

Day 2

Read James 5:1-12 several times.

1. We often imagine our circumstances would be improved if we had more resources. How do v.1-6 contradict that assumption? What do you think James wants us to understand about wealth?
2. Read v.7-12 again. Where in your life are you currently struggling to be patient in some form of suffering? Make a list of every circumstance you can think of. Now write an honest prayer to God about what your attitude and perspective has been. Ask Him for an extra measure of patience and for his compassion and mercy to help you endure. If you're in a small group, ask your small group to pray for you.

Day 3

Read James 5:13-20

1. What tends to be your first response to hardship? To joy? To illness? If your first response is not prayer, praise, or seeking others to pray for you, why is that? What are the things that keep you from praying, praising or seeking prayer? Spend some time telling God about it in whatever way is most natural to you.
2. Read [1 John 1:9](#). Confession is a part of prayer we often overlook. Confession simply means to agree with God - about our behaviors, our attitudes, our thoughts, our words, our decisions, etc. Today, spend some time considering what you might need to acknowledge or confess to God. Then a list to offer to Him in prayer, remembering His promise to you in 1 John 1:9.

Day 4

Read [Proverbs 5:13-18, John 15:5-11](#)

Prayer has power. The Bible, our experiences, and even science, shows it can heal bodies, hearts, and minds. We believe this, but prayer can be confusing. In the back of our minds we sometimes hear, "But I prayed and God did not answer." So, can we really ask for whatever we want and expect it to be done? Or does that make Jesus our genie, under obligation to us for his freedom when the truth is just the opposite? Or is prayer just a shot in the dark that may or may not work? That thought is equally unsatisfying and we're left with competing emotions of excitement, hope, and confusion.

What do you think? Read the passages again, thinking about these dueling concepts of prayer. Pray for the Holy Spirit to speak to you through these words. Respond to the following questions in your journal.

1. What does it mean to abide in Jesus? What does that look like in practice? In your journal, write a practical list of ways to abide.
2. Notice that v.7 is conditional. What are the conditions? (Look for the if/then.... concept) Does this change the idea of asking for anything?
3. How can abiding in Jesus influence prayer?
4. How would you respond to the statement, "I prayed and God did not answer."?

Bonus study materials:

Read the article [What to Do With Unanswered Prayer](#)

Subscribe to the YouVersion seven day reading plan from professor and scholar N.T. Wright on [The Lord's Prayer](#).

Day 5

Review your notes from James 5 then choose one or more of the following:

1. Review notes from each chapter of James and make a list of at least one meaningful thing you learned or want to remember from each chapter.
2. Try praying scripture. Choose Psalm 23 or Psalm 139. Find a quiet moment every morning and evening to pray these words to God. After several days, record anything you notice after implementing this practice.
3. Choose one of the Psalms above and try this creative journaling exercise:

Read through the passage several times, at least once aloud. Before you do, ask God to show you how He sees you as you read. What do you hear Him saying to you? What does He want you to understand about His love for you today?

When you're ready create an image in your journal that represents how God sees you, what His love for you looks like, or any other meaningful image that came to mind during this process.