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# Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks  
Baptist Church  
Grand Prairie, Texas

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## We Pray for One Another James 5:13-18

### Aim and Application of the Lesson

The lesson teaches us one of our main functions and what we should be known for as Christians is that **We Pray for One Another**. The **study's aim** is to recognize the powerful impact prayer has on a person's life. The **study's application** is to pray regularly for others, especially believers. *(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)*

### Lesson Introduction and Background

The book of James is unlike any other book of the Bible in certain respects. Although it begins like a letter, it reads more like a sermon, speaking with firm authority. It is loosely organized, jumping from topic to topic with little connecting material. It is also intensely practical, showing relatively little interest in doctrinal principles or formulations. The author is interested in conduct; he teaches his readers how they should live as Christian believers in a world that is often hostile to Christian values. There are several men named James in the New Testament, but most scholars believe the author of this book is the James who was the half brother of Jesus (Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3). According to church tradition, this James became the leader of the church in Jerusalem a few years after the resurrection of Jesus (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; Galatians 2:9), serving in this role until his death sometime in the AD 60s. He was given the moniker James the Just because of his constant pleas for justice for his people. Although he was a Jewish Christian in the predominantly non-Christian, Jewish city of Jerusalem, he was respected by all the people for his integrity. A second-century church historian records that James went to the temple daily to pray and spent so much time on his knees that they "became [calloused] like that of a camel's." A word from James, then, seems a fitting end to this month's lessons on prayer. In his little letter that we divide into five chapters, prayer is the final subject of his teaching, a position of importance and urgency that we should not ignore.

It seems to me that a wrong way of thinking about prayer is that prayer works. This treats prayer as if it were some type of energy we can tap, a power we can wield and control. Imagine prayer working like that: every time we ask God for anything and end the prayer "in Jesus' name," we immediately receive what we ask for. In that case, prayer would be like rubbing Aladdin's lamp, and God would be no more than a powerful genie. Consider a different way of thinking about prayer: not as a power we tap, but as a privilege we exercise. It is not that prayer works, but that God works through prayer. God actively listens to the prayers of his people to bring needed healing of the body, of the soul, and of the community. Prayer requires an active role from us. We pray about our own needs and those of others. Prayers are not magical words that activate a cosmic force for our benefit. Rather, they are personal entreaties to God, our Lord and Master who hears and answers in accordance with his will. *(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)*

### Practical Points from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator

1. We should go to the church and seek prayer for our sicknesses and hardships (Jas. 5:13-14)
2. Sometimes God uses suffering to draw attention to sin in our lives (vs. 15)
3. God will forgive you if you confess your sin to Him
4. A loving community grows in holiness together and prays for each other (vs. 16)
5. We should seek prayer first because it is very powerful
6. Powerful prayer can come from any righteous person (vss. 17-18). You do not have to be a special hero of the faith

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:**  
Prayer opens the way for God Himself to do His work in us and through us - Andrew Murray

**POEM FOR THE WEEK:**  
When I come before His presence  
In the secret place of prayer, Do I  
know the wondrous greatness Of  
His power to meet me there? —  
Hallen

**SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:**  
*6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*  
**(Phil 4:6-7 NKJV)**

*(From "Our Daily Bread", Oct 25, 2014)*

### **Series: ACTS OF WORSHIP**

UNIT: Stewardship for Life

### NEXT WEEK

**FEASTING AND  
FASTING**

***(Dan 1:5,8-17; Matt 6:16-18)***

## NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

### **OCCASIONS FOR PRAYER (JAMES 5:13-14)**

#### *Responding to circumstances (13)*

Respond by praying so that we will not fall into temptation (Matt 26:41)

Respond by praying in the Spirit on all occasions (Eph 6:18)

Respond by praying continually (1 Thess 5:17)

Respond by praying with a mind that is clear and self-controlled (1 Peter 4:7)

Respond by praying in the Holy Spirit (Jude 1:20)

Respond by praying so not to be anxious about anything (Phil 4:6)

Respond by praying and give thanksgiving for others (1 Tim 2:1)

Respond by praying for the spiritual health of others (I John 5:16)

#### *Physical illness (14)*

Pray about illness, but know that some suffering is because of sin (2 Sam 12:15-17)

Pray about illness, but accept God's will (Matt 26:36-41)

Pray about illness, but know that some sicknesses teaches that God's grace is sufficient (2 Cor 12:7-10)

Pray about illness because sometimes sickness is used so that God might be glorified (John 11:4)

Pray about illness because it is God who sustains and restores (Ps 41:3)

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF PRAYER (JAMES 5:15-16)**

#### *Healing (15)*

God's power is manifested through healing (Matt 9:2-6)

Healing because it is one of the signs of those who believe (Mark 16:17-18)

Healing through the Name of Jesus because it is the only power that heals (Acts 4:7-10)

Healing through God's compassion (Matt 14:14)

God heals spiritually (Isa 53:5)

Healing through humble repentance and prayer (2 Chron 7:14)

#### *Forgiveness (15)*

Pray for forgiveness because Jesus taught it (Matt 6:12)

Pray for forgiveness as we repent of our wickedness (Acts 8:22)

Pray for forgiveness because God is faithful (1 John 1:9)

Pray for forgiveness of others also (Acts 7:59-60)

One must believe in God before he can pray for forgiveness (Heb 11:6)

#### *Things changed (16)*

Things change from death to life (2 Kings 20:1-6)

Things change because God hears our prayers (Luke 1:13-14)

Things change because angels are on our side (Job 33:22-26)

Things change because of asking in Jesus' Name (John 14:12-14)

Things change because of intercessory prayer (Acts 12:5-7)

### **PREREQUISITE FOR PRAYER (JAMES 5:17-18)**

#### *Earnestness (17)*

Earnestness in faith (1 Tim 1:5)

Earnestness to draw near to God (Heb 10:22)

Earnestness in the wisdom of God (James 3:17)

Earnestness to seek and please God (Heb 11:5-6)

Earnestness in zealously and prayer (Rom 12:11-12)

Earnestness because we have been given a trust (1 Cor 4:2)

#### *Faith (18)*

Steadfast faith is relying on God regardless of the circumstances (2 Cor 1:8-9)

Steadfast faith is keeping the faith to the finish (2 Tim 4:7)

Steadfast faith is faith and actions working together to make faith complete (James 2:22)

Steadfast faith is throwing off everything that hinders (Heb 12:1)

Steadfast faith is confirming and proving God's trust (1 Cor 4:2)

Steadfast faith is contending for the faith (Jude 1:3)

Steadfast faith is refined genuine faith (1 Peter 1:7)