

heal the sick, He certainly has the power to do so.

b. For those who are spiritual healthy

- 1) The sinner mentioned here (v.19-20) is a true Christian who for some reason erred or wandered off the path of truth. He was one of the brethren (v.19). Unbelieving sinners were never on the path of truth.
- 2) If you are walking close to the Lord and see a Christian who is straying, you need to try to turn him back to the right path. (Galatians 6:1) "*Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.*" This is our duty.
- 3) By reaching out to help and turning a straying Christian back to the truth you will save his soul from death and hide a multitude of sins.
 - a) "Death" is a separation. Here it cannot refer to eternal separation from God in hell, because those truly saved are kept safe in the hand of God. (John 10:28) "*And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*" This death may be premature separation from his physical body (a sin unto death). It may be separation from his fellowship with God – a death of his fellowship.
 - b) Converting him will hide or cover all those sins with Christ's righteousness (1Jn 1:9). (Psalms 86:5) "*For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.*"

Conclusion: When we sin, we lose our fellowship with God. We become miserable. And sometimes we even get physically sick. Don't allow sin in your life rob you of God's peace, your health, your fellowship with God or even your physical life. When you sin, humble yourself before God, confess your sin and by faith receive God's promise of cleansing.

If you are walking with God and you see a fellow believer straying from the truth, pray for him. But do more than that. Reach out and try to help him. If he will listen, he will be eternally grateful for your help.

Song: Have Thine Own Way - 388

Praying for the Sick

5 February 2017 AM - James 5:14-20 - Jas16 - Scott Childs

Introduction: Our text today that concludes the book of James is one that has been interpreted in many different ways by sincere people. However, I believe there is a common link that connects these last seven verses together. By following that link, I believe we will discover what God is trying to teach us.

Transition: I want to show you some helpful observations, then God's instruction and finally the basic application for us today.

1. Helpful Observations

a. Observe the wording

- 1) James poses another question, "*Is any sick among you?*"
- 2) The word translated "*sick*" describes one who is weak, feeble, without strength or powerless.
- 3) The prayer of faith could "*save*" the sick (v.15). This is the word that means to deliver or rescue.
- 4) Confessing faults and praying for one another can "*heal*" sinners (v.16). This word means to cure, to heal, or to make whole.
- 5) It is unusual that the sick person may be rescued but the sinner may be healed. I believe this is a clue.

b. Observe the context

- 1) It is uncertain whether the sickness is physical, spiritual because of sin or physical because of sin.
 - a) (v.15) He may have committed sins
 - b) (v.16) Confessing faults and praying for each other can heal the sinner
 - c) (v.19-20) Converting (turning around) a sinner can save him from God's judgment.
- 2) Elijah's prayer had nothing to do with sickness but it did have to do with sin.
 - a) The nation of Israel had rebelled against God and King Ahab and his wicked wife Jezebel encouraged this.
 - b) Elijah prayed that it would not rain to awaken Israel

to their sins.

📖 *It appears from our observations that the "sick" person in this passage is spiritually sick because of sin and may also be physically sick because of sin in his or her life.*

2. God's Instruction

a. The "sick" person must take the first step

- 1) He must call for the church elders (leaders) (v.14)
- 2) He must confess any sin (v.16)

b. Christians are to get involved

- 1) The church leaders were to do two things:
 - a) They were to pray over him (v.14)
 - b) They were to anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. In Bible day's oil was used as a medicine (e.g., the Good Samaritan). Oil was also used to refresh and comfort the body. The oil did not have miraculous healing properties. It was God's answer to prayer that healed.
- 2) Their prayer of faith will save (deliver) the sick (v.15).

Faith is acting on trusted information.

 - a) Praying in faith requires that we know for positive that it was God's will to answer the prayer.
 - b) We can have faith in something God has promised.
 - c) We cannot have faith when we do not know it is God's will. We can have faith in God's ability to heal, but without knowing God's will we cannot have faith that He **will** heal.
 - d) When we do not know God's will in a situation, we can still ask for God to answer a certain way as long as we qualify it with, "Thy will be done." (Luk 22:42)
- 3) When James wrote in v.15, "*his sins will be forgiven*" he must have assumed that the person confessed sins as mentioned in the next verse (v.16).
 - a) God's promise to forgive hinges on confession from the offender. (1 John 1:9) "*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*" For example, if a person sins but refuses to confess it, God will not forgive him

just because you asked Him to. He must first confess his own sin.

- b) God tells us to confess our faults one to another (v.16). In other words, if I offend you, I must confess it. If you offend me, you must confess it. Then, after confession, when we pray for each other God will heal our faults.
- c) *This verse does not in any way suggest that we should confess our sins to a human priest as do some religions.*
- 4) Christians who are right with God must convert those who err from the truth (v.19-20).
 - a) The word "*err*" means to go astray. It is to wander off the Biblical path.
 - b) When you see a Christian wander off the biblical path, **do not ignore it**. Reach out to help him or her.
 - c) The word "*convert*" means to bring back.

3. Basic Application

a. For those who are sick

- 1) While not all sickness is a result of sin in one's life, some is. Therefore, when we get sick, we ought to examine our hearts to see if there is anything between us and the Lord.
- 2) When we do sin, we must not be too proud to confess it and get it right with others and God. Jesus said, (Matthew 5:23) "*Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;*" (Matthew 5:24) "*Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.*"
- 3) If you confess sin, you can pray in faith for God's forgiveness and be assure of it because he promised to forgive if we confess. (1 John 1:9) "*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*"
- 4) If you are physically sick, it is a good thing to call your pastor and ask him to pray with you. That is not a shameful thing. It is wise. Though God does not always