

WINTER QUARTER SUNDAY SCHOOL 2014-2015

THEME: COME LET US ADORE CHRIST THE KING IN WORSHIP, PRAYER, AND STEWARDSHIP

Unit II – Worshipping Christ Through the Model of Prayer

“Christians Demonstrate They Care When They Offer Prayer”



Sunday School Lesson No. VIII – January 25, 2015

Pastor Frank A. Davis, III, Pastor-Teacher

Lesson Text: James 5:13-18

Required Reading: James Chapter 5

Motto Text: James 5:16, *“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”*

Reliable Resources: Union Gospel Press Expositor and Illuminator; Standard Lesson Commentary; Libronix Electronic Library; Outline Bible (Wilmington); Wiersbe’s Expository Outlines on the New Testament

Introduction

Beloved, we come to the end of Unit 2 with a great challenge to all who name the name of Christ: be patient and prayerful in spite of life’s circumstances. James opens Chapter 5 by continuing his exegesis of the sins of the ungodly rich and affluent against the poor and struggling. James condemns the rich, according to Wiersbe because, “They gained wealth illegally and oppressively.”

Jesus is definitely coming back to the earth to right all wrongs at His return, and this should encourage patient faithfulness, even to the suffering saints. But until He returns, the believer should exercise patience and prayerfulness at all times! The presence of Christ in the believer should help us realize that we need each other to encourage and cause each other to strive for the mark of excellence and faithfulness in Christ Jesus our Lord!

But how much do we Christians really care for each other? James helps us answer that by our prayers for one another. Quoting the Bible Knowledge Commentary, “A fitting climax to James’ letter is his emphasis on prayer. The greatest assistance any believer can offer another is faithful prayer. Prayer is clear of care. Prayer is the “hotline” to the One who can provide for any need no matter how complex or impossible it may seem. To share in prayer, a believer must have a sensitivity to someone’s needs, engage in diligent supplication for those needs and recognize the significance of those needs.” Remember that James was a man who, according to early church tradition, spent much time on his knees in prayer. The ancient writer Eusebius wrote: “He used to enter alone into the temple and be found kneeling and praying for forgiveness for the people, so that his knees grew hard like a camel’s because of his constant worship of God, kneeling and asking forgiveness for the people...he was referred to as ‘Old Camel Knees’.”

Jesus truly teaches us that **Christians Demonstrate They Care When They Offer Prayer**. Anticipated Power Points:

- **Caring Prayer Works in Times of Affliction. James 5:13a**
- **Caring Prayer Leads to Praise. James 5:13b**
- **Caring Prayer Reveals God’s Will in Weariness or Sickness. James 5:14-15a**
- **Caring Prayer for Repentance and Restoration. James 5:15b**
- **Caring Prayer Reveals the Believer’s Weakness and Leads to Deliverance. James 5:16**
- **Caring Prayer’s Human Example. James 5:17-18**

Lesson Outline

I. Caring Prayer Works in Times of Affliction. James 5:13a

James tells the saints that caring prayer works in times of difficult, suffering afflictions and hardships. Remember during the times of James' writing, the Church was suffering under Jewish rejection and Roman persecution. Hebrews 5:7 reminds us that even our Lord offered up strong prayers with tears in the days of His suffering. Prayers and suffering are often shared together.

II. Caring Prayer Leads to Praise. James 5:13b

James uses a Greek word here, *psalletō*, which means, "to play on a stringed instrument." This word is used in the New Testament 4 times, Rom. 15:9, I Cor. 14:15, Eph. 5:19, and Acts 16:25, which reflects that when Paul and Silas were in prison, they prayed and sang praises unto God. Why? Because there is confidence in the results of prayer to our God, so let us sing praises unto the Rock of Our Salvation!

III. Caring Prayer Reveals God's Will in Weariness or Sickness. James 5:14-15a

Many argue here as to whether James is speaking of a sense of weariness in the struggle against personal sins and doubts, or literally, sickness or disease. Both could be recognized according to some well-known theologians. I will not argue over this point but will come back to the thought of prayer. In spite of the situation, the focus is on the prayers of those that care. When we pray for our fellow saints, we must remember to fully rely upon the will and word of God. Note Romans 8:26, (NKJV) "*Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.*"

But what about the oil? Well, what about it? In James time, oil had several uses. Luke 10 tells us that oil and wine were used medicinally (Lu. 10:34). Oil was also a symbol of the Holy Spirit who is called "the Oil of Gladness" (Ps. 45:7) and was used to anoint for service (Ex. 29:7). Beloved, James makes it very clear that the focus is on "*the prayer of faith.*"

IV. Caring Prayer for Repentance and Restoration. James 5:15b

"*And the prayer of faith...*" What is that? Warren Wiersbe defines it in I John 5:14-15, "*And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us: and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.*" The '*prayer of faith*' is a prayer offered when you know the will of God. The elders would seek the mind of God in a matter, and then pray according to His will." Whatever the ailment's cause, physical or spiritual, God could restore the believer upon his repentance as He wills.

V. Caring Prayer Reveals the Believer's Weakness and Leads to Deliverance. James 5:16

Exposure of our trespasses and sins should be practiced among our fellow believers. It starts with us and God (I Jn. 1:9). We must confess to those we have offended in private when done in private and in public when done in public. It is not right to go viral with our personal sins to contaminate an innocent public. Remember Proverbs 28:13.

VI. Caring Prayer's Human Example. James 5:17-18

James brings Elijah the prophet to the spotlight. "He prayed earnestly," that is, "he prayed in his prayer." Not just futile words but a faithful conviction that touched the heart of God! The believer who would dare to really ask God for something! (Read I Kings 17-18). Like Elijah, we can care enough to earnestly ask God's intervention in our prayers. Remember, **Christians Demonstrate They Care When They Offer Prayers.**

Closing

Matthew 7:7-8, "*Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.*"

Bibleway Missionary Baptist Church, New Orleans, LA & Little Bethel Baptist Church, Amite, LA

Mailing Address: Post Office Box 19768, New Orleans, LA 70179-0768

Phone: (504) 486-7876 Email: bible32@bellsouth.net

Website: www.thestudyhour.com

Radio Broadcast: WABL AM (Amite City), Saturday, 3:00 p.m.

TV Broadcast: WHNO TV-Channel 20, Sunday, 6:30 a.m.



Looking Ahead:

February 1, 2015

Daniel 1:5, 8-17; Matthew 6:16-18

You are invited to attend Noon Bible Study every Wednesday as Pastor Davis teaches the lesson at Bibleway.