

James 5:16-18

Introduction:

1. Subjects previously covered in our study of James include:
 - a. "facing temptations" (1:2-18)
 - b. "hearing and doing the Word" (1:19-27)
 - c. "respect of persons" (2:1-13)
 - d. "faith and works" (2:14-26)
 - e. "a warning for teachers" (3:1)
 - f. "use of the tongue" (3:2-12)
 - g. "true and false wisdom" (3:13-18)
 - h. "strife among Christians" (4:1-10)
 - i. "speaking evil of others" (4:11-12)
 - j. "self-sufficiency" (4:13-17)
 - k. "words of warning and reproof for the rich" (5:1-6)
 - l. "patience" (5:7-11)
 - m. "swearing" (5:12)
 - n. "calling upon God" (5:13-15).
 - 1) (vs.13a) God's people are to call upon Him through prayer when afflicted.
 - 2) (vs.14-15) The elders of the church are to call upon God through prayer on behalf of those who are sick.
2. (5:16-18) James presented additional information concerning "prayer."
 - a. (vs.16a) Prayer is involved in spiritual healing.
 - b. (vs.16b-18) Prayer avails much.

Discussion:

- I. (vs.16a) PRAYER IS INVOLVED IN SPIRITUAL HEALING
 - A. Spiritual healing for Christians involves:
 1. confessing faults to one another
 2. praying for one another.
 - B. 1 John 1:9 is a parallel passage.
 - C. An illustration of these principles is found in Acts 8.
 1. In Samaria a man named Simon became a Christian (vs.13).
 2. After becoming a Christian, Simon sinned (vs.18-19).
 3. As Peter rebuked Simon he showed Simon how to receive forgiveness (vs.20-23).
 4. Simon responded by requesting prayer (vs.24).
- II. (vs.16b-18) PRAYER AVAILS MUCH
 - A. (vs.16b) Prayer "avails" [accomplishes] much when it is:
 1. "effectual" [effective]
 2. "fervent" [from the heart]
 3. offered by a "righteous" person (Proverbs 28:9; 1 Peter 3:10-12).
 - B. (vs.17-18) Elijah's prayers illustrate how prayer avails much.
 1. Elijah was *"a man subject to like passions as we are."*
 2. However, God responded to Elijah's prayers by sending rain (1 Kings 17:1; 18:1, 41-45).
 - C. In His Sermon on the Mount Jesus taught that prayer avails much (Matthew 7:7-11).

Conclusion:

1. Praying to God is a great privilege and blessing for His children.
2. Let us call upon Him through effectual and fervent prayer, when we are afflicted as well as when we need spiritual healing.