

James 5:13-18

13 September 2020

ICE BREAKER: Describe something you do that few people know.

LARGE GROUP QUESTIONS:

(Read Philippians 4:4-7) Do you know what the #1 cause of death is? **Stress**. The American Medical Association identifies stress as the basic cause for more than 60% of all human illnesses and diseases. It's deadly to be stressed out. That is why God commands us, '**Do not be anxious** about anything!'

But how? 'In everything, **by prayer and petition**, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the **peace of God**, which **transcends all understanding**, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.' Though we may not be able to change our outward circumstance, prayer can change our inward stress to God's peace.

1. How has **prayer** ever given you **peace** in the middle of a **stressful, angry, or fearful situation**?

(Read verses 13-18) **Prayer** not only can change our hearts, but can also **change our circumstances**. James proclaims with confidence that prayer '**is powerful and effective**!' Prayer can get us out of 'trouble' and 'make the sick person well'.

What distinguished **Elijah**, 'a man just like us', from everyone else? He was a **man of prayer**. When he prayed, 'he prayed earnestly'. As a testimony to rebellious fellow Israelites to return to God, Elijah prayed for the rain to stop for three years and then again to return. And God answered his prayers!

As R.A. Torrey declared, '**Prayer can do anything God can do.**'

2. Describe a time where **God answered your prayer** and dramatically **changed your circumstances**.

(Read verses 13-18 again) Notice throughout this passage, **everything** we are called to do is **unto the Lord**. We are called to pray unto the Lord, 'sing songs of praise' unto the Lord, 'pray over' the sick unto the Lord, 'confess' our sins unto the Lord.

James reminds us that every aspect of our lives is **sacred** and should be presented to the Lord. Nothing is too big that God cannot handle and nothing too small that He does not care.

3. What **area** in your life do you **struggle praying** to the Lord about?

(Read verses 16-18) Today, what will be one of the most powerful things you will do? Think of all the things you can do to immediately bless others or powerfully turn back evil. James says this is the most powerful thing you can do today—**pray!**

'The one concern of the **devil** is to keep Christians from praying. He fears nothing from **prayerless studies, prayerless work** and **prayerless religion**. He laughs at our toil, mocks at our wisdom, but **he trembles when we pray.**' - Samuel Chadwick

4 Describe what happened when you tried to **do something** important **without really praying**.

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PRAYER GROUP TIME

(Make a list of people whom those in your group plan to witness Christ to this week.)
