

Sermon Title: The Fundamental Principle of Righteousness

Sermon Text: James 5:13-20

Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to develop an effective prayer life based on righteousness.

Sermon Proposition: There are 5 disciplines of a righteous man, leading to effectiveness in prayer.

I. The righteous man prays in times of suffering for comfort. V.13a

This is the same word as in v. 10. We saw this word during our study in 2 Timothy 2. It means to suffer evil treatment or persecution, abuse, wicked treatment, bodily beatings, distress, or calamity. Turn to God for comfort, by praying. (*Jonah 2:7 "When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the LORD; And my prayer went up to You, Into Your holy temple."*) The word here in the Greek means a continual pleading to God for comfort.

II. The righteous man praises in times of suffering for comfort. V.13b

The word cheerful (euthume) means to be well in ones soul, or have a happy attitude. The idea is not physical, but happy or well in ones spirit. On one hand we have the suffering soul, but on the other we have the happy soul, both are to pray. One is singing praise for comfort, the other is pleading for comfort. Praise is fundamental to spiritual comfort. Prayer is fundamental to spiritual comfort.

III. The righteous man pursues help in times of suffering for restoration. V.14-15

The Greek word is (astheneo), the root verb. The translations have always said "sick." Therefore everyone assumes James is talking about sickness. There are several terms for sickness or disease. The term (astheneo) may refer to sickness, but most Greek Lexicons agree that the primary meaning is to be weak, to be feeble, to be impotent. In fact in the book of Acts, it is used to refer to weakness. In **Romans 4:19** And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb.

Romans 14:1 Receive one who is weak in the faith, *but* not to disputes over doubtful things.

Romans 14:21 *It is* good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor *do anything* by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak¹.

Is used of being weak in faith.

1 Corinthians 8:9 But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak. . . and **11** And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? **12** But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ.

Used of spiritual weakness.

(2 Corinthians 9-10) weakness tat comes as a result of difficulties in life.

Idea is that if any of you arrive at a point when you are defeated, you're down on the battlefield of spiritual warfare. Maybe persecution put you down, maybe sin put you down, the point is that you are weak. You're weak mentally, emotionally, physically, or spiritually. This may also be causing affects in your physical body. During the battle you have tried to pray, but find yourself, unable to draw on the power of God, and now you find yourself in a position of spiritual weakness.

In these situations, seek out the spiritually strong, those that are living victorious lives and are patiently enduring.

Call, (poskaleo) means to call alongside, call the elders to come alongside.

Galatians 6:1 Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who *are* spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.

Acts 6:4 "but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

The Leaders are to come alongside the spiritually weak, those who have been weakened in battle.

What about the anointing with oil? The verb is (aleipho) it means to rub with oil. The best translation is, "rubbing him with oil in the name of the Lord." Literally means to crush over. It is used of an outward anointing of the body.

In this case it is with olive oil (elaion). Literally the text says, "After having oiled him."

Some interpret this to mean a ceremonial oiling, which they say is symbolic of the Holy Spirit you put a little dab on their head and that's sort of reminiscent of the Holy Spirit.

The problem is that the word (aleiphois) is never used in Scripture to speak of ceremonial anointing. There's a completely different word for that (chrio). The idea behind anointing the weak, injured, or persecuted person with oil in a metaphorical sense is to stimulate, encourage, massage your spirit, warm your heart, provide strength in weakness.

Luke 7:46 "You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil.

Mark 6:13 And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed them.

Hebrews 12:3 For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.

The prayer of the strong, is to restore (sozo) to save, to deliver, to rescue the weak. It can mean to preserve, to make whole. The prayer of faith will restore the weary. The Lord also promises to raise the weak up, this means to rebuild, that's the word (egeiro), to arouse, to awaken, to excite. This is a promise made by God.

Maybe your weak as a result of sin, he will be forgiven, means sins will be sent away.

IV. The righteous man **confesses** trespasses in times of suffering for fellowship. V.16

These instructions are for the congregation. We are to maintain a relationship with other believers that you're always praying for one another. This is a basic element of fellowship. There is to be mutual honesty, confess your sins/trespasses to one another, it means don't hide your evil or habitual sin from one another. Sin wants to get us alone, it wants to isolate us, sin doesn't want anyone to know, sin wants to keep itself private and in secret, so that you can nurse it, nurture it, and need it. And God wants it open and out, exposed among people who love you and won't judge you.

The word confess is a compound in the Greek (exomologeoo), let it out, be honest, share your struggle, let people know you're in a battle so that you don't become weak and defeated, weary and exhausted, wounded and victimized. We are to open up, share, and seek forgiveness with one another.

The phrase "one another" means people who are the same kind (allos). That's another believer not just anybody. Confess your sins to another believer, confess the weaknesses of your life until God gives you the victory over these areas.

The main point of this verse is to not let yourself go down to the point of spiritual weakness driven by your sin because you don't deal with it. (**John 12:40; Acts 28:27; Luke 4:18**)

Matthew 13:15 For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with *their* eyes and hear with *their* ears, Lest they should understand with *their* hearts and turn, So that I should¹ heal them².'

1 Peter 2:24 who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness-- by whose stripes you were healed.

V. The righteous man **prays** earnestly in times of suffering for power. V.17-18

The reason you share with another believer is because, a righteous person praying for you has tremendous power. Effective in the Greek is the word from which we get our word energy. The energetic empowered prayer of a righteous man who has no sin habitually being practiced in their life is going to have tremendous impact.

Psalms 66:18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear.

The phrase "can accomplish much" literally says "is very strong." The energetic prayer of a man who is dealing with sin in his life and living righteously before God is very strong.

This means there is such a thing as weak prayer and weak prayers come from weak people that's why weak people have to go to strong people.

But Elijah a righteous man "prayed earnestly". This is an amazing phrase in the Greek. It means, He prayed with prayer. This is a compound way to say he really prayed.