

Closing: Faith that Turns Your World Right Side Up

- A. "... if anyone among you *wanders from the truth...*"
- i. Galatians 5:7
 - ii. 1 John 1:6
- B. James is a letter about faith in the truth that results in walking out the truth. The kind that submits ourselves to God, resists the temptations of the devil, and draws near to God Who cleanses us from sin. Faith that turns your world right-side-up!

LIVE THE STORY

The Gospel is intended to be learned and lived in community. The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- Read James 5:13-20. Note each time prayer is mentioned; sin or forgiveness; and anything that indicates a shared life. What is James saying about each of these? What else stands out to you?
- What are some of the ways throughout this letter, that James tells us the world we are in is upside-down? How does faith teach us to live right-side-up?
- Why are prayer, confession of sin, and forgiveness all necessary aspects of living by faith in an upside-down world?
- Does the illustration of the experiment with goggles that turned the world upside-down help capture what it means to walk in the truth as a believer? Explain.
- Why must Christians not merely believe truth to be true, but walk in it? Can you show where James says things that indicate this? Other NT writers?
- What are the experiences of a "waiting people" that require us to be a people of prayer?
- Why must we have prayer living amidst a "wandering people"? What do you think Jerry meant by "a wandering people"?
- What did you learn about living right-side-up in an upside-down world from the letter of James? Is it changing how you live?

Faith that Turns Your World Right Side Up (Part 16)

Prayer for a Waiting and Wandering People

Jerry Cisar — August 28, 2016

Text: James 5:13-20

Introduction: Faith in an Upside Down World

I. Prayer for a Waiting People (5:13-15)

- A. Different circumstances call for different God-ward responses.
- i. Is anyone *among you* suffering?
 - 2 Corinthians 1:8-11
 - ii. Is anyone cheerful?
 - a) Prayer and Anointing with Oil
 - b) If he has committed any sins, they will be forgiven him.
 - iii. Is anyone *among you* sick?
 - Matthew 9:2-8
- B. The Christian life is a shared life.
- i. Colossians 3:16
 - ii. Ephesians 5:18-20

iii. James 1:1 and 1 Peter 2:10

C. To live right-side-up in an upside-down world, we must have a God-ward orientation lived out in the midst of a waiting people.

II. Prayer for a Wandering People (5:16-20)

A. *Confess your sins to one another...*

i. How did James envision this confession of sin taking place?

- a) This is not confession to the elders or to a priest.
- b) Does James picture something close to our modern therapeutic self-help groups?
- c) Some suggest something more akin to what we read of in Nehemiah 9:1-3 and following.

d) Psalm 32:3-5

ii. James doesn't tell us exactly what this is to look like. His audience probably knew what it looked like already.

B. *...that you may be healed.*

C. This healing, restoration or renewal is in answer to prayer: *praying for one another.*

*"It requires neither great native ability, nor much knowledge, nor money. The least gifted, the uneducated and the poor can cultivate the holy art of prayer. However, certain requirements must also be met if the art of prayer is to be acquired. In the main they are two: practice and perseverance. Without practice no Christian will become a real man or woman of prayer. And practice cannot be attained without perseverance."*¹

¹ Ole Hallesby. Prayer (p. 42).

D. *The prayer of a righteous person has great power.*

i. Why are we told this? *Because we are to pray for one another.*

ii. Who is this righteous, or just person? *Those in the church.*

E. Elijah's prayer had great power.

i. Elijah's prayer was not answered because he was a prophet.

a) Elijah had the same kind of nature we have—the same passions, desires, and weaknesses.

b) Wholly devoted to the Lord

ii. Why did James choose *this* example of prayer from Elijah's life?

a) These two prayers involved waiting.

b) It has to do with what gave rise to these prayers: Wicked injustices and idolatry by Ahab as well as calling the nation of Israel to repent and return to the Lord.

➤ 1 Kings 16:33

iii. *"he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and... it did not rain on the earth. ¹⁸ Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit."*

F. Bringing back the wandering sinner.

i. James has not suddenly dropped the subject of prayer.

a) 1 John 5:16

b) Jude 1:20-25

ii. Matthew 6:12-13