Grow Group Study

The Epistle (Letter) of James – Chapter 5

# Chapter 5

# I. The Characteristics of Faith (con’t) Vs.1-6

**1.** In the last study in Chapter 4, we discovered that faith produces a dependence and obedience in God, and not on our own abilities and resources.

James now addresses those who have gained wealth through selfish ambition and for personal gain. He rebukes some of them for their dishonesty, and then goes on to address those who would walk by faith and dependence on God.

**a.** Is God against people being wealthy? What’s He warning us against?

# II. The Triumph of Faith vs.7-20

**1.**  **Vs. 7-9** James begins to encourage us that although there is evil all around us, we need to trust God for patience and endurance.

**a.** Can you see the prophetic reference to the second coming of Jesus?

Who’s the farmer? What's the precious fruit? What's the early and latter rain?

(**see Joel 2:23, 28-29**)

**b.** Who's the Judge? What does it mean that, “He’s standing at the door”?

**c.** What does it mean to “establish our hearts” in vs.8 as we wait for the coming of Jesus?

**2. Vs.10-11** What kind of suffering must our faith endure before the coming of Jesus?

**3.** **Vs.12** James discourages us from making promises (swear) that we may not be able to fulfill.

Comment on this in light of the following verses:

(**see Mt.5:33-37; Deut.23:21; Eccl.5:4-7**)

**a.** Keep in mind that faith is not hope. Faith is an assurance, confidence, and evidence of God’s word independent of our natural senses.

**4. Vs.13-14** Remember faith is not dependent on feelings.

**a.** What corresponding action does faith produce in the good times and in the bad times?

**b.** Mark 16:18 tells us that as believers we can “lay hands” on sick people, take authority over sickness in the name of Jesus and see people recover. As a matter of fact, an individual believer can operate in this authority for themselves.

However, **vs.14** tells us that if you aren’t seeing results, come to the “elders” of the church so they can pray for you. As elders, they should believe in the authority and power of Jesus over sickness & disease, or else they won’t help you either.

**c.** What does the “oil” represent? (**see Mk.6:7,12-13; Lk.4:18**)

**5.** **Vs.15&16a**

**a.** Forgiving a sin means to release that person of its consequence.

**b.** Can sin lead to sickness, and how does healing result in forgiveness? (**see the example in John 5:10-14**)

**6. Vs.16-18** Effective fervent prayer must involve faith.

**a.** Have you ever confessed wrong doings to somebody you trusted and then prayed together? How did it make you feel?

**b.** What must we believe when we pray? Comment on the following:

1. Being righteous speaks of our position in Christ and therefore our right to ask and declare His will according to His word.
2. Describe faith based on the following: We don’t need to beg God over and over again if we know it’s His will.

Faith stands on the promise and expects to receive after asking or declaring the first time:

Elijah prayed once for the rain to stop and once for the rain to come.

(See 1 Kings 17:1 & 1 Kings 18:41-45) NB: It doesn’t say Elijah prayed 7 times for the rain to come. It says Elijah sent his servant 7 times to see if he saw any rain coming.

**c.** What should be our corresponding action of faith after we have prayed?

**7. Vs.19-20** Can you think of anybody who needs help right now? What will you do to help them? Pray about it and be obedient to the Holy Spirit. Remember, faith works through love! (Gal.5:6)