



Sermon Discussion Guide

July 20, 2025 | James 5:13-18 | Joe Lucero

SUMMARY

Big Idea: Unwavering Faith anchors our roots and produces fruits of powerful prayer and praise

In our verses, James is in “conclusion-mode.” He is wrapping up his letter with practical instructions for how he desires the church to put their faith to work (we’ll cover the 2 remaining verses next week.) In verses 13-18 James instruct believers how to respond in faith to three circumstances: Pray when you are suffering, sing praise when you are cheerful, and invite others in when you are sick (weak). For James, the whole of the Christian life is lived with a God-ward orientation – whether through prayer or praise, in any circumstance.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Intro

1. Life has ups and downs. As a whole, where are you this week?
 - a. What is “up” for you? (good, praiseworthy)
 - b. What is “down” for you? (hard, bad, difficult, stuck)
 - c. **Note:** As a fitting application of the verses, these intro questions *could* easily take the whole group time if everyone took a turn, follow up questions were asked, and the group prayed for each other in response.

Read James 5:13-18

2. To what extent is prayer (supplication or praise) your first response to the ups and downs of life? Why do you think this is the case?
3. The words James uses for “sick” bears a strong range of meaning with an emphasis on physical and/or spiritual weakness and weariness. What connection does James make between physical and spiritual realities (sickness and sin)?
 - a. Could physical sickness and weakness be caused by personal, unrepentant sin? (see Psalm 32:1-5; 1 Cor 11:29-30)
 - b. Does physical sickness always have a direct, 1:1 correspondence to personal, unrepentant sin? (cf John 9:1-3)
 - c. In general, do you think you are too quick, or too slow, to connect adverse circumstances, suffering, or physical sickness to unrepentant sin?
 - i. What are the strengths and dangers of each?
 - d. How then are we to respond when we are sick (physically, mentally, spiritually)?
 - i. How are we to respond to others who are sick?
 - e. How does God use trials, including sickness? (see James 1:2-4)
4. How does Elijah fit into James’s instruction?
 - a. What encouragement can we take from his example?
5. Is James promising that if you just have enough faith you can be physically healed, or if you have enough faith you can physically heal others?
 - a. Consider: 2 Cor 12:7-9; Phil 2:25-27; 2 Tim 4:20. In each of these, was Paul’s prayers not faithful enough?