

EXCERPT FROM TEXT

“And so, dear brothers and sisters, now we may walk right into the very Holy of Holies, where God is, because of the blood of Jesus” (Hebrews 10:19).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- When do you first remember praying? How did you learn what it meant to pray?
- How would you define prayer?
- Why do you think that prayer is such a ubiquitous human experiences? Do you know people who would not confess faith in Jesus (or maybe anything at all), yet they pray? What drives them to pray?

READ JAMES 5:13-14.

- When do you find you are most often compelled to go to God in prayer?
- When does James suggest that we need to go to God in prayer? How does James's advice on prayer compare to your practice of prayer?
- Should certain situations in our lives lead us to pray with greater frequency and intensity? Why or why not?
- James tells the person who is sick to call on the elders of the church for prayer. Who did James put the responsibility on? Why is this important?
- If we do not make our sickness known to brothers and sisters in Christ, of what blessings are we depriving ourselves and the church?
- Praying for health (or a job, or a passing grade, etc.) and having others do the same alleviates the responsibility to act from the person requesting prayer. What are we missing when we don't partner our prayers with action?

READ JAMES 5:15-18.

- What three groups of people are mentioned in these verses? What is James promising about the sick in verse 15?
- How would you respond to someone who believed that ongoing sickness was the result of a lack of faith, or that with enough faith, God would heal them?
- How are sin and sickness related? How does confessing sin function in a community? Why is this something we should pray for together as well as individually?
- What joy or relief have you experienced when you confess sin to another brother or sister in Christ?
- What does the word “righteous” mean in the context of verse 16? Why would the prayer of a righteous person be more effective? James uses the example of Elijah. Who comes to your mind when you think of a righteous “prayer warrior”? What could you learn about prayer by observing their life?
- Read Hebrews 10:19-22. What do we gain when we pray in Jesus’ name? How do we make this more than a compulsory phrase tacked on to the end of our prayers?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- Who, having a method for prayer, helps you pray more regularly and effectively? How could you incorporate the ACTS prayer strategy in your life and with your family this week?
- Do you feel comfortable expressing your prayer needs to this group? Why is prayer such an indispensable part of our life together as believers?
- Why do we undervalue prayer as a strategy to see people reached with the gospel? What would it look like to devote regular time in our gatherings and in our personal lives to see people come to a saving knowledge of the gospel of Jesus Christ?

WORK OUT (THIS WEEK’S ASSIGNMENTS)