




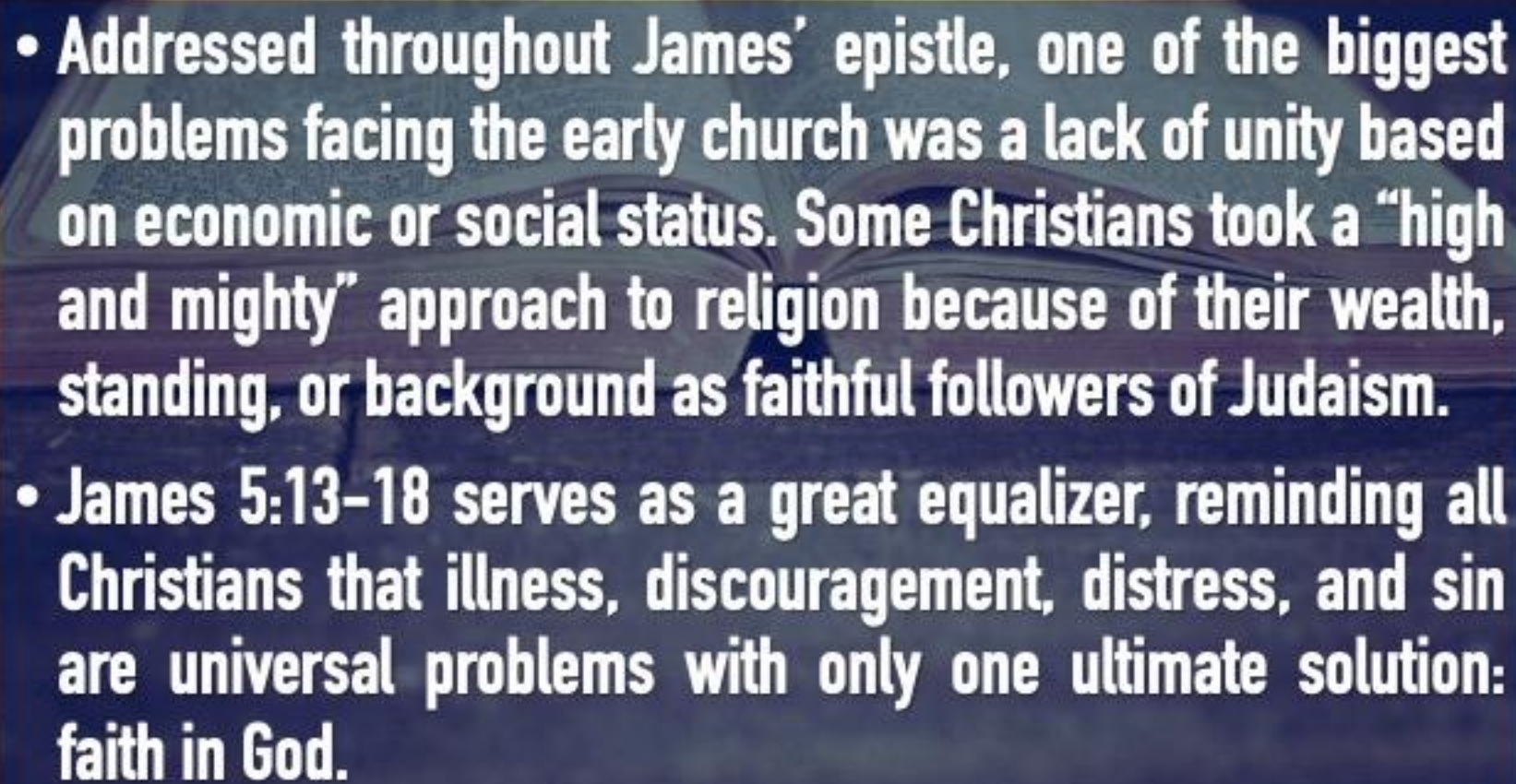
PRAYERS OF THE RIGHTEOUS



Please explain James 5:14-15. How literally should this be applied?

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- An open book with a blue overlay containing text. The book is open, showing two pages. The text is white and bold. The background is a dark, textured surface.
- Addressed throughout James' epistle, one of the biggest problems facing the early church was a lack of unity based on economic or social status. Some Christians took a "high and mighty" approach to religion because of their wealth, standing, or background as faithful followers of Judaism.

PRAYER IN THE CONTEXT

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- Addressed throughout James' epistle, one of the biggest problems facing the early church was a lack of unity based on economic or social status. Some Christians took a "high and mighty" approach to religion because of their wealth, standing, or background as faithful followers of Judaism.
 - James 5:13–18 serves as a great equalizer, reminding all Christians that illness, discouragement, distress, and sin are universal problems with only one ultimate solution: faith in God.

PRAYER IN THE CONTEXT

DOES GOD ANSWER EVERY PRAYER?

- **God told Elijah “no” when he asked to die (1 Ki. 19).**
- **The disciples were told they would suffer, without any promise of physical relief (Matt. 10:17ff, 5:10–12).**
- **“Let this cup pass from Me” was definitely met with a “no” answer.**
- **Paul’s thorn in the flesh (2 Corinthians 12:7–9).**
- **Why couldn’t Paul miraculously heal Timothy (1 Tim. 5:23) or Trophimus (2 Tim. 4:20)?**

A close-up photograph of a person's hands clasped in prayer over an open book. The person is wearing a dark top with blue stripes. The background is a soft, out-of-focus outdoor setting. The text 'WHY PRAY?' is overlaid in large, white, bold letters in the top right corner.

WHY PRAY?

- It demonstrates our belief that God *can* do all things, but not necessarily that He will. Remember, part of what makes prayer effective at all is when it is in line with God's will (John 14:13-14, Matt. 6:10).

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- Prayer is not always about asking for deliverance. Often, the suffering *is* God's will. Only suffering can produce certain results (James 1:2-4, Rom. 5:3-5).

JAMES 5:13

- Notice that “let him pray” is left open-ended. Pray for healing? Pray for endurance? Pray for a quick, painless transition into the afterlife? Pray to be a good example of courage and faith? How about all of the above? Stop seeing prayer in such a narrow way — which can lead to disillusionment.

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- The word “suffering” in verse 14 is actually a very broad term for various hardships. Also translated “suffer misfortune.”
- “Is anyone cheerful?” Don’t forget to praise God when times are good.

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- **“Anointing with oil” — A common practice of the time, whether for healing or simply as a comforting luxury. It has the idea of “no expense spared.”**

JAMES 5:15

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- **But we trust that all the saints will one day rise from the dead, just as Martha astutely points out in John 11:24-27.**

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- **The “healing” might be physical healing, if such is the will of God. But the deeper implication is that a robust prayer life, including honest confession, leads to spiritual health.**
- **Illnesses may or not be healed, but your physical condition means nothing compared to the question of your salvation. If prayer is powerful enough to stop the rain (vv. 17–18), how hard is it for God to forgive sin (Mark 2:8–11).**