

James: The Power of Words

(James 5:12-20)

Words of Truth (v. 12)

- James reminds us not to swear
 - This is *not* about the use of vulgar language
- But rather, a prohibition of invoking God's name to guarantee the reliability of what a person says
- This reflects Jesus' teaching (Matt 5:33-37)

Words of Prayer (v. 13-18)

- James concludes with a reminder to pray in all circumstances
- When we face trouble, ask for encouragement, patience, perseverance, & strength (v. 13a)
- When we are happy, praise God for His goodness (v. 13b)
- When someone is sick/weak (*astheneo*), ask others to pray with you for healing/strengthening (v. 14-15)
 - This is not a guarantee of physical healing
 - Though God may do that
 - Rather, it is a promise of God's power to save, raise up, & forgive
- The call for healing prayer centers on mutual confession of our sinful struggles
 - To ask for healing requires we confess our brokenness
 - Confess: To agree about what is true
 - This is *not* to say that all physical illness is the result of sin
- There is power in our prayers together
 - God uses us coming together in confession and seeking to accomplish His work in us (Matt 18:19-20)
- James uses Elijah as an example of a man of faithful prayer
 - His prayer for the end of a drought was answered (1 Kng 17-18)
 - But he was a simple human, just like us
 - The power was in the One he prayed to

Words of Repentance (v. 19-20)

- James' last word is of encouragement
- If anyone has wandered from God, there is hope
- We need to *lovingly* show them the truth and bring them home
 - This is *not* judgment, but repentance
 - It is mercy & reconciliation

So What?

- Are we people of our word?
- Are we praying always?
- Are we calling others to repentance?
- Let's continue to walk in wisdom with Jesus together

Meditation Verse: James 5:16