

## THE SPIRIT-FILLED CHURCH: POWER // James 5:13-18

*Morning message from the series, The Spirit-Filled Church*

The spirit-filled church has power through prayer. The book of James, often called the Proverbs of the New Testament, ends with instructions on prayer, demonstrating how a church accesses the power of prayer.

**Main Idea: Prayer puts power in the life of the local church.**

How do we know if we are a praying church? Marks of a praying church:

### 1. Prayer is the first move in a spiritual crisis (v. 13)

If you are suffering, you need to begin praying, and suffering refers not only to physical pain, but also to emotional or spiritual suffering. Crisis reveals the cracks in a church.

### 2. Prayer is the first ministry of spiritual leadership (v. 14)

The church needs leaders who are spiritually in-tune, who are able and willing to pray. A praying church has spiritual heavy-weights, including but not limited to the pastors. God has given these individuals influence in prayer.

### 3. Prayer is the first means of spiritual restoration (v. 15)

When Jesus heals the sick in the gospels, he heals through spiritual means. A restoration or overcoming spiritual dryness will not be the result of any of the physical, worldly antidotes we may turn to—it will be the work of the Lord.

### 4. Prayer is the first mark of spiritual community (v. 16-18)

Christians are to confess their sins to each other and to pray for one another. How do spiritual people pray?

- a. They pray with a clean heart.
- b. They pray with a clear conscience.
- c. They pray with the right request.
- d. They pray with fresh ideas, informed by scripture.

In verses 17-18, James gives the example of Elijah as an encouragement. Elijah was a man who prayed God's will back to him—we can do the same.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Is prayer our first move when facing a spiritual crisis? How can suffering prompt us to turn to God in prayer?
2. Who are the spiritual heavy-weights in your life? How can we seek influence in prayer in our own walks?
3. Are we confessing sin and praying for one another in small groups and close relationships in the church? How can we grow intentionally in this practice?