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Sixth Test: Your attitude towards prayer

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James 5:13-20

When in trouble – pray. James 5:13 (NLT) - ¹³ Are any of you suffering hardships? You should pray.

1. Take your troubles to God.

2. Realize answers don't satisfy

John 9:2-3 (NIV) - ² His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³ "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life."

3. Acknowledge the pain

Psalms 13:1-3 (MSG) - ¹ Long enough, God— you've ignored me long enough. I've looked at the back of your head long enough. ² Long enough I've carried this ton of trouble, lived with a stomach full of pain. Long enough my arrogant enemies have looked down their noses at me. ³ Take a good look at me, God, my God; I want to look life in the eye, ⁴ So no enemy can get the best of me or laugh when I fall on my face.

4. Allow God to use troubles for His glory

Philippians 1:29 (NCV) - ²⁹ God gave you the honor not only of believing in Christ but also of suffering for him, both of which bring glory to Christ.

When things are going well – sing. James 5:13 (NLT) - Are any of you happy? You should sing praises.

When you are sick – get help

James 5:14-15 (NLT) - ¹⁴ Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make you well. And if you have committed any sins, you will be forgiven.

1. Sometimes the healing is the strength to endure

1 Corinthians 10:13 (MSG) - ¹³ No test or temptation that comes your way is beyond the course of what others have had to face. All you need to remember is that God will never let you down; he'll never let you be pushed past your limit; he'll always be there to help you come through it.

2. Healing is not an issue of faith or the lack thereof

Luke 17:6 (MSG) - ⁶ But the Master said, "You don't need more faith. There is no 'more' or 'less' in faith. If you have a bare kernel of faith, say the size of a poppy seed, you could say to this sycamore tree, 'Go jump in the lake,' and it would do it.

3. God heals through His Word – never underestimate the power of the Word of God to bring about healing

Psalms 107:20 (NIV) - ²⁰ He sent forth his word and healed them; he rescued them from the grave.

4. Healing can come through doctors and medication

5. Not everyone is healed

Hebrews 11:32-40 (NIV) - Others were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection. ³⁶ Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison. ³⁷ They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated-- ³⁸ the world was not worthy of them.

6. The greatest healing is that God saves you

Luke 10:20 (ASV) - ²⁰ Nevertheless in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.

When you sin – confess

James 5:16 (NIV) - ¹⁶ Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

1. Confess to God

2. Confession takes place within the circle of those offended

3. Confession is to be specific

4. The response must be left to God

When someone strays from the truth – bring them back

James 5:19-20 (NLT) - ¹⁹ My dear brothers and sisters, if someone among you wanders away from the truth and is brought back, ²⁰ you can be sure that whoever brings the sinner back will save that person from death and bring about the forgiveness of many sins.

1. People are worth going after

2. Restoration is a matter of life and death

3. Settle the issue of "You're judging me"

4. Don't compromise God's Word

5. Pursue the person, forgive the issue