



## James 5:13 Prayer and Praise: Responses for Affliction and Joy!

April 10, 2016

### Text: James 5:13

- After last week's message, which had a lot to consider therein, I felt backing up a verse might be a good idea.
- As we said then:

"Over the last few years, many of the precious saints at CRCC have lost loved ones, endured personal sickness, or walked with friends and family through sickness. We've experienced sudden deaths, sudden and unexpected illnesses, accidents, emotional turmoil, and other maladies. For even the most ardent lover of Christ, the most fervent prayer warrior, or the most mature faith-filled disciple, it can seem overwhelming. 'Lord, why is this happening? Why are you allowing this? Did I do something wrong?' These are questions I KNOW I HAVE ASKED. Maybe you have too?"

- In response, we did our best to provide some heartfelt, Christ-honoring thoughts as an overview of sickness and suffering. The goal was to breathe life into you, encourage you in the Lord, and to cause, we hoped, your increased faith and rest in His loving sovereignty.
- Today, we just want to "go simple," and continue to, by His grace, encourage this faithful church!

### Prayer...The Response To Affliction

*Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. (KJV)*

1. After all James wrote in this very serious, very demanding epistle, I'm encouraged by these closing statements. They give such **simple** encouragement!
2. For example, "Is any among you suffering or afflicted? Pray!" (Note that this sort of suffering or affliction is certainly different than what we'll cover in verses 14-15, as the prescription is different).
3. James simply says, "Pray." "Sing Psalms." Could it be this simple sometimes?
4. Let us be truthful:

#### ***How many of us would be content with simple prayer during times of affliction?***

5. How many of us can walk in the powerful simplicity of these verses below? From PRISON, Paul writes:

*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Php 4:4-7)*

6. As we can see, prayer, when it's biblical, does a few things for us, especially during times of suffering:
  - It focuses us on **Christ**, which brings rejoicing! Oh, what great love He has for us!
  - It lessens our **anxiety**, as we cast our cares upon Him because He cares for us! (1 Pet 5:7)

- It fosters the **humility** of supplication. When we petition God, we become mindful of His power and our weakness; His authority and our lack thereof; His holiness and our sinfulness!
  - It ushers us into thanksgiving, regardless of our **circumstances**! One of the remarkable things about Paul's letter to the church at Philippi is his consistent call to rejoice! And again, he was in jail!!!
  - It gives us **peace**! This peace is written like a promise! If we pray this way, "the peace of God" will guard our hearts and minds!
7. As many have said, in the spiritual battle we fight, prayer is firing the winning shot! Oh, church...Pray! Pray during times of affliction! Pray when there is misunderstanding! Pray when you are angry, or depressed, or confused! Pray without ceasing. :)

### **Praise...The Response To Joy**

1. I love the way King James rendered the last part of this verse! If you are merry, sing Psalms!
2. The word here rendered "praise" in ESV is psallō, which means "to make melody." The connotation is to play a stringed instrument.
3. Is there a better group of "melodies" in the world one can sing in response to the  **blessings** of God than the Psalms?
4. What if we made it a habit to sing "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" (Eph 5:19; Col 3:16) when we are cheerful? How would our day-to-day lives change? Our attitudes and strength? Our interaction with family and friends? Our service to Christ?

**If you're happy and you know it, sing a Psalm...if you're happy and you know it, sing a Psalm...if you're happy and you know it, then your heart will surely show it. If you're happy and you know it, SING A PSALM! :)**

*The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever. (Ps 23:1-6)*

*I waited patiently for the LORD; he inclined to me and heard my cry. He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure. He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the LORD. (Ps 40:1-3)*

*O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory. Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you. So I will bless you as long as I live; in your name I will lift up my hands. (Ps 63:1-4)*

*Shout for joy to God, all the earth; sing the glory of his name; give to him glorious praise! Say to God, "How awesome are your deeds! So great is your power that your enemies come cringing to you. All the earth worships you and sings praises to you; they sing praises to your name." Selah. (Ps 66:1-4)*

*He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust." (Ps 91:1-2)*

*Oh come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise! For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hand are the depths of the earth; the heights of the mountains are his also. The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land. Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker! (Ps 95:1-6)*

*Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth! Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into his presence with singing! Know that the LORD, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name! For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations. (Ps 100:1-5)*

*Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. (Ps 103:1-5)*

*My heart is steadfast, O God! I will sing and make melody with all my being! Awake, O harp and lyre! I will awake the dawn! I will give thanks to you, O LORD, among the peoples; I will sing praises to you among the nations. For your steadfast love is great above the heavens; your faithfulness reaches to the clouds. Be exalted, O God, above the heavens! Let your glory be over all the earth! (Ps 108:1-5)*

*Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the LORD! Blessed are those who keep his testimonies, who seek him with their whole heart, who also do no wrong, but walk in his ways! You have commanded your precepts to be kept diligently. Oh that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes! (Ps 119:1-5)*

*Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD, O my soul! I will praise the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being. Put not your trust in princes, in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation. When his breath departs, he returns to the earth; on that very day his plans perish. Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God. (Ps 146:1-5)*

*Praise the LORD! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens! Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his excellent greatness! Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp! Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and pipe! Praise him with sounding cymbals; praise him with loud clashing cymbals! Let everything that has breath praise the LORD! Praise the LORD! (Ps 150:1-6)*

If you are afflicted or suffering, pray. If you are happy and joyful and cheerful, sing. **Lord, please show us the POWER of this sort of simple faith.**

In Jesus' Name, Amen.