

Study Guide for the Week of May 18, 2008

This study guide is designed to help you to become more familiar with the Bible. Study these passages on your own, with a friend, or with a group. If you or someone you know needs a Bible, please take one from under a chair in the Worship Center. They are there for you to take home and use! Sermon manuscripts are available at www.spwired.com.

Monday, May 19 – Memorize James 5:16. **“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective” (James 5:16, TNIV).** Read James 5:1-6. In these 6 verses James is trying to show just how worthless earthly riches are, and to show the terrible consequences of putting money and possessions before people. What is James’ warning? How is it relevant today? In your life?

Tuesday, May 20 – Go over the memorization passage for the week. **Read James 5:7-12.** The early Christians lived with the constant expectation that Jesus would return in their lifetimes. Even though Jesus himself said that no one would know the day or hour when he would return, many people have speculated of when that would be. James says that while we wait for the return of Jesus we should be patient and that we must trust God. What else does he tell us to do? Why is it important?

Wednesday, May 21 – Hit the memorization verse again. **Read James 5:13-15.** In these verses James encourages the early Christians to sing for joy and pray for healing. Both are forms of prayer. This was the heart of the message on Sunday. Take a minute and review the outline from the message. How does this speak to your prayer life? How do you offer your praise to God? Do you pray boldly expecting God to act and trusting God’s response? Or do you pray safe prayers that give God little room to work? How have you seen prayer work in your life?

Thursday, May 22 – How are you doing on the memorization verse? Is it locked in? **Read James 5:16-18.** Verse 16 talks about confessing our sins to each other. The idea behind this is that it is sometimes easier to confess to God than to the people we may have wronged. James is teaching us that we must also go make the hard journey of confessing to others when we have done them wrong. Certainly we have to be wise about this and refrain when it might do more harm than good, but it is important to make ourselves right with God and with others. How might you need to do this today? What happens if you don’t?

Friday, May 23 – Hit James 5:16 one more time. **Read James 5:19-20.** We finish the book of James with these last verses and James’ encouragement that we look after one another and hold each other accountable. What mistakes might you have avoided if someone would have stepped in and shown you the truth? How might you gently bring truth to someone who has wandered from it? There is a right way and a wrong way to do this. What is the difference? What happens if we are too brutal in how we hold someone accountable? What happens if we avoid doing this?