



## COMMUNITY GROUP LEADER GUIDE

# Mirrors: The Book of James - Part 9

## *The Prayer of Faith*

**LEADER REMINDER:** Starting Point is July 24. Please remind your group to sign up if they have not attended already! It's a great way for them to plug into serving, learn more about baptism opportunities, and covenant membership. Sign up at [mercycharlotte.com/startingpoint](https://mercycharlotte.com/startingpoint).

### **INTRODUCTION**

**LEADER NOTES:** *This is simply a guide to help discussion about the Scripture that was preached over the weekend. You are not bound to it. Ultimately, you know your group best and if God redirects your group's time away from the Community Group Guide that is great. Please do not abandon a fruitful conversation for the sake of getting all the questions answered.*

This weekend we talked about the necessity and the privilege of prayer. God has not left us in the world to wander alone. Our loving God is in control of all things and has given us the opportunity to approach Him in prayer. Jesus, our Savior, is at the right hand of the Father and is ready and willing to answer our prayers. What an amazing truth!

### **Opening Questions**

1. What is your background with prayer?
2. What stood out to you in this week's sermon?

## **BIBLE STUDY**

**LEADER NOTES:** *The following questions will help you work through the passage(s). Have someone read the passage(s) aloud, dividing among two or three people if needed. If there is a good, fruitful conversation going, you do not have to cut it off to get back to the questions.*

A good way to study the Bible is by using three steps: Observation, Interpretation, and Application. We want to observe the passage first to get an idea of what is happening. Then we interpret the meaning of the passage so that we can apply it to our lives. The following questions will follow this pattern as we look through this Biblical passage.

**Scripture: Read James 5:13-20**

### **Observation**

1. What are some of the themes in this passage?
  - a. Prayer, Confession of Sin, and bringing people who have wandered from God back to Him.
  
2. How would you summarize these themes into one main idea from this passage?
  - a. God has given us the gift of prayer so that we can come to Him with our suffering and pain and be healed.
  
3. How does this passage tie in with the rest of the book of James?
  - a. The theme of this passage is to turn to the Lord in every circumstance, which has been one of the central themes throughout the book.

### **Interpretation**

1. Why is it important to pray?
  - a. There are many different answers to this questions. One of them is the reality of life is that we desire to control our lives but we have no power within ourselves. Prayer acknowledges both that God is the ultimate One in control and is the only One with the power to change our circumstances.

2. Where does James say that the true power of prayer comes from?
  - a. Righteousness (verse 16) and faith (verse 15). Remember James 1:5-7: “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.”
  
3. Though it seems simple, why is it important that we confess our sins?
  - a. This whole passage is about asking God to heal you and give you strength in suffering and sickness. Sin is the root cause for the problems of sickness and suffering. Therefore James is saying to expose sin through confession and not let it poison you in secret.
  
4. Why is Elijah such a powerful example of effective prayer?
  - a. Because he is a “man with a nature like ours.” God has never recruited superheroes to do His will. He has always worked through ordinary people, like us.

### **Application**

1. What can you do to foster prayer in your life?
  
2. James is pointing to prayer in community. What are some things that you could do in your community group to grow one another in the place of prayer?
  
3. Thinking about the “Mirrors” series, what would you say has been your biggest takeaway from the book of James over these past couple of months?

## **PRAYER**

*Psalm 86:1-2: "Incline your ear, O Lord, and answer me, for I am poor and needy. Preserve my life, for I am godly; save your servant, who trusts in you—you are my God."*

This Psalm is a clear demonstration of the prayer that James is talking about. David, the writer of the Psalm, recognizes that the Lord is the only one with the power to change his circumstances. Because he knows God is good and in control, he trusts the Lord with his need. With this hope in mind pray for:

1. The people of Mercy Church to be a people who continually go to God in prayer in both good circumstances and bad.
2. God to draw our hearts to Him more and more each day.
3. Us to trust in our good Father no matter how difficult our circumstances are.