**“Hope For People Just Like Us”**

Going deeper in James 5:13-18

**INTRODUCTION –** “It is only when all else has failed and you’re hanging on by a thread that you find yourself saying, ‘Well, I guess all I can do now is pray’. But the truth is prayer is not the *last* resort in the life of a Christian but the first step in any situation. God has power you’ve never seen – strength you’ve never known. He knows no limits and can handle every challenge. He is not only available but eager to hear from you. He delights when his children turn to him. He can’t wait to hear your heart.” (Max Lucado, *Unshakeable Hope*)

**READ** – *Read (passage) aloud. Read it several times. Listen for what the Spirit of God is saying, don’t just think about it.*

**The Prayer of Faith**

**13**Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise. **14**Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. **15**And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. **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.

17Elijah was a human being, even as we are. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. 18Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.

**ENGAGE** – *Questions for going deeper. God is speaking… to you.*

1. Who is someone you look to for prayer? Who is someone you pray for regularly?

2. According to this passage in James, what should you do when you are in trouble? Happy? Sick? How likely are you to do any of these things? Why/why not?

3. How is confession and prayer a part of the healing process?

4. Do you believe there is a connection between the physical and spiritual areas of your life?

5. How does the Bible reinforce James’ assertion that “The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective?

**PRAY** – *God has spoken. So, reply.*

\*PRAY! Just pray!

\*Ask the Holy Spirit to strengthen the desire in your heart to be in communion with God.

\*Give thanks for God’s listening and responsive heart.

\*Be still and listen for the Lord’s voice – in your heart, in the people around you, and in the world around you.

**LIVE** – *This is where the rubber hits the road.*

“When a believing person prays, great things happen” (James 5:16 NCV) Step out in faith this week and be bold, like Elijah! Pray with the conviction that God is listening and he is absolutely delighted to hear from you. Don’t focus on being eloquent or trying to sound churchy – open up, be honest, and share the desires of your heart. He is waiting!