



MAIN POINT	MAIN BIBLE VERSE
Prayer isn't our last resort; it's our greatest weapon.	James 5:13-20

Students will learn that prayer is for every season of life and is how we depend on God.

Teaching Script / Guide

HOOK

- Use this time to build a connection:
 - Either you can start with a story about a time when you tried to fix something on your own before finally asking for help.
 - Or you can use an introduction like this...
- Have you ever waited way too long to ask for help?
 - Maybe you were stuck on homework, trying to build something, or playing a game where you kept losing. You knew you needed help, but you kept thinking, "I can figure this out."
 - Then finally, after getting frustrated, you asked someone for help. And once you did, you thought, "Why didn't I ask sooner?"
 - A lot of us treat prayer like that. We wait until we are stressed, stuck, or out of options before we finally talk to God.
- But today, James is going to teach us something really important: Prayer isn't our last resort; it's our greatest weapon.

TENSION:

- Most of us know prayer matters, but we do not always treat prayer like it matters.
 - Sometimes we try to handle everything ourselves first.
 - We worry, overthink, complain, or try to fix the problem in our own strength. Then, when nothing else works, we finally pray.
- But James shows us that prayer is not just for emergencies. Prayer is for every season of life.
 - When life is hard, pray.
 - When life is good, praise.
 - When you are weak, ask for help.

- When you have sinned, confess.
- When someone has wandered, help bring them back.
- Followers of Jesus are built different because we do not have to carry life alone. We can bring every part of life to God.

BIBLE:

- *Either read or invite a student to come up and read James 5:13-20.*
 - Before reading, say: As we read, listen for how many different situations James connects to prayer.
- **James teaches us 3 truths about prayer:**
 - **Prayer is for every season**
 - Look at verse 13. James asks, "Is anyone among you suffering? He should pray. Is anyone cheerful? He should sing praises."
 - James names two very different situations: suffering and joy. If life is hard, pray. If life is good, praise.
 - **That means prayer is not only for bad days. Prayer is how we talk to God in every season.**
 - When you are hurting, you can bring that to God. When you are thankful, you can bring that to God too.
 - Prayer reminds us that God is with us in every part of life, not just the moments when we feel desperate.
- **Prayer is meant to happen in community**
 - In verses 14-16, James talks about calling the elders, praying for the sick, confessing sin, and praying for one another.
 - **This reminds us that prayer is personal, but it is not only private.**
 - Sometimes we need other believers to pray with us. Sometimes we need to be honest about where we are struggling. Sometimes we need someone to help us turn back to God.
 - That can feel scary, because being honest means people know we do not have it all together. But church is not supposed to be a place where everyone pretends to be perfect. It is supposed to be a family where we help each other follow Jesus.
- **Prayer is powerful because God is powerful**
 - James says in verse 16, "The prayer of a righteous person is very powerful in its effect." Then he gives the example of Elijah, who prayed and God worked in a powerful way.
 - **James is not saying prayer is powerful because we say the perfect words. Prayer is powerful because God hears His people and God has power to act.**
 - That does not mean God always answers exactly how we want or when we want. But it does mean prayer is never pointless.
 - When we pray, we are talking to the God who sees, hears, heals, forgives, restores, and works in ways we cannot always see.

APPLICATION/SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION SET UP:

- So what does this look like in our everyday lives, and how can we learn to pray first instead of only praying last?
 - **Bring your real life to God**
 - Do not wait until you feel spiritual enough or desperate enough to pray. Talk to God about what is actually happening in your life.
 - If you are worried, tell Him. If you are thankful, praise Him. If you are struggling, ask Him for help.
 - **Prayer starts with honesty before God.**
 - **Let people pray with you**
 - James says to pray for one another. That means you do not have to carry everything by yourself.
 - This week, be honest with a small group leader, parent, or trusted Christian friend about one thing they can pray for.
 - **Pray for someone who needs help coming back to Jesus**
 - At the end of this passage, James talks about someone wandering from the truth and being brought back.
 - Think of one person you know who seems far from God. Pray for them this week, and ask God to help you love them well.

GOSPEL MOMENT/CLOSE:

- **Here is the good news: Jesus made a way for us to come to God.**
 - Because of sin, we could not fix ourselves or make ourselves right with God. We needed more than advice. We needed rescue.
 - Jesus came for us. He lived without sin, died on the cross for our sin, and rose again so we could be forgiven and brought back to God.
 - **That means when we pray, we are not trying to convince God to care about us. In Jesus, we can know that God already loves us, hears us, and invites us to come near.**
 - So prayer is not our last resort. Prayer is one of the greatest gifts God has given us.
 - As we get ready for small groups, here is the question I want you to think about: What is one thing you need to bring to God in prayer today?
 - Maybe it is something hard. Maybe it is something good. Maybe it is sin you need to confess. Maybe it is a person you need to pray for.
 - **Whatever it is, bring it to Him. Jesus is alive, God hears His people, and prayer is powerful because the God we pray to is powerful.**
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