

Wisdom about Healing

James 5: 14-16



The text – James 5: 14-16

1. This text has been understood in lots of different ways. What are the strengths and weaknesses of these views?
 - if a person is dying they should be anointed with oil by a priest
 - if a person is dying and has unrepentant sin then church leaders can pray to help give certainty that the person can be raised up to new life after they die
 - if a person is sick the elders should come around and encourage them to take their medicine since olive oil was used medicinally in the ancient world
 - if a person has weak faith they should confess sin so that they can become healthy in their life with God again
2. What might make us think the person is sick? What might make us think they are weak in faith?
3. What are the functions of the various people and element in the text. Consider elders, prayer, oil, faith and God.
4. How do you understand the relationship between sin, sickness and confession? Consider James 5:20 in your answer.
5. Can you put James 5:14–16 in your own words?

The text as a portion of Scripture

6. What connections can you see between Proverbs 2:1–12 and James?
7. How do Proverbs work? How is James like it?
8. What is the Psalmist's experience in Psalm 32:1–5?
9. What seems to be going on in 1 Cor 11:30?

Walking the way of Jesus

10. Do you have a negative experience of or reaction to this passage?
11. Have you seen this passage in James lived out well?
12. Consider the questions raised by Sam Alberry in his comments in this passage
 - (a) do we have friends to whom we can confess major and persistent sin?
 - (b) are we humble enough to do so?
 - (c) would a friend at church be wise to share a painful and shameful sin with you?
 - (d) would you excuse or belittle the sin, or condemn the confessor, or something else?
13. What should our church do next in terms of expectant prayer and courageous conversations?