

Audio file

[Study 37 Journeying with James 8526gsm_james_5_v13-15.mp3](#)

Transcript

00:00:00

we're going to turn to the Word of God there's many of us away this morning quite a few people are detained but let's turn to James in chapter 5 coming towards the end of our study in James so I'm turning now in the scriptures to James chapter 5

00:00:29

and verse 13 James chapter 5 and verse 13 let us hear the word of God is any among you afflicted let him pray is any merry let him sing Psalms is any sick among you let him call for the elders of the church and let them pray over him

00:00:58

anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

00:01:02

And the prayer of faith shall save the sick and the Lord raise him up and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

00:01:17

And the Lord will add his blessing to the reading of his holy word.

00:01:24

Now last time we were in this chapter, we learned

00:01:28

something very important about waiting on the Lord.

00:01:32

Waiting on the Lord.

00:01:35

And we looked at the order that the Holy Spirit gives us in the epistle of James.

00:01:40

Not what you'd expect.

00:01:43

You see, we think of past, present and future.

00:01:49

But do you remember how James, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, ordered our waiting on the Lord?

00:01:57

Well, let me remind you.

00:02:00

He spoke first of all of the future.

00:02:04

In verse 7, Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord.

00:02:08

Behold, a husbandman waited for the precious fruit of the earth.

00:02:13

And then we looked at the past.

00:02:16

We looked at the examples from the prophets.

00:02:19

And in verse 10, take my brethren the prophets who have spoken the name of the Lord.

00:02:24

And we mentioned the patriarchs in verse 11, Job, and further on we have a mention of Elias.

00:02:32

And then we looked at the present.

00:02:34

All of this should feed into our waiting on the Lord in our present lives.

00:02:42

So different to what we might have expected, but that is important.

00:02:49

Because as we then move on in this section to James chapter 5 and verse 13, we are in the present, aren't we?

00:02:59

Is any among you afflicted?

00:03:03

Is any among you afflicted?

00:03:04

And this morning with the Lord's help, and I trust to it'll be helpful, we'll look at this section under the title, Prayer and Prayers.

00:03:15

Prayer and Prayers.

00:03:18

This is part of being a Christian.

00:03:22

Prayer is often neglected by even Christians.

00:03:31

But prayer is a great sign.

00:03:32

It's the first indication of someone who's seeking God.

00:03:37

Do you remember the mark of Saul of Tarsus' conversion was that behold, he prayeth.

00:03:47

You read that in Acts chapter nine.

00:03:50

It challenges us because today prayer is much more casual.

00:03:57

It's informal.

00:03:59

But for the people of God, of James's time, and I trust we here this morning, we take prayer seriously.

00:04:08

I'll give you a few indications and quotes in a moment.

00:04:12

And then praise, dear friends,

00:04:16

The only true praise that God accepts is the praise from his children.

00:04:26

You think about that.

00:04:28

There's lots of people who take God's name and seem to praise him, but they're stained with sin.

00:04:36

Their praise is tainted.

00:04:38

But when we offer up our praise unto God according to his word, according to the truth of the Scriptures as a lying to us, God is pleased.

00:04:49

He's delighted.

00:04:52

He draws near to us in our praise of him.

00:04:58

We see how the Psalms and the Old Testament teaching comes in in a moment.

00:05:04

This is a biblical pattern that

00:05:08

needs to be maintained in our day.

00:05:13

Now James also deals with something here that may be controversial.

00:05:18

This is just a summary of what we're going to look at in a moment, but he deals with a healing ministry, but not what we'd expect.

00:05:30

He gives us an outline and instructions

00:05:34

of how godly elders should be invited by someone who's suffering a terrible illness.

00:05:40

Perhaps the medical staff aren't able to diagnose the issue and the man or the woman who's suffering calls for the elders.

00:05:53

Today we hear healing ministry and we think of faith healers.

00:05:58

We'll see more of that in a moment.

00:06:01

So what about this chapter?

00:06:04

Chapter 5 and verse 13.

00:06:06

Let's think first of all of prayer.

00:06:09

This is just a few remarks.

00:06:11

Prayer.

00:06:12

What is it?

00:06:14

Prayer is a spiritual exercise that is far harder than most people realize.

00:06:22

It involves different elements.

00:06:24

We might look at this another time.

00:06:25

We did a series a few years ago on prayer.

00:06:29

It's not just thanking God, though that's part of it.

00:06:33

It's not even just praising God, though that's another part of it.

00:06:36

Well, the first thing we must remember about prayer is its adoration.

00:06:42

It's adoration.

00:06:45

And in our praying, both private and public, we must have that element of adoration.

00:06:55

How does the psalmist remind us in Psalm 145, I will extol thee

00:07:03

O God, my king.

00:07:08

When you listen to somebody pray, you know whether they know, you know whether they have ever been taught the elements of prayer.

00:07:16

You also know this.

00:07:19

Are they following the biblical order?

00:07:22

Why do we emphasize adoration?

00:07:26

Because God is worthy of adoration.

00:07:28

What's another word for adoration?

00:07:30

Well, extolling.

00:07:33

1.

00:07:35

Worship.

00:07:36

Remember the psalmist says, Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

00:07:44

Are our prayers shaped with that particular frame?

00:07:48

Do we start with the character of God?

00:07:54

It's lovely when someone recites the attributes of God in their prayers.

00:08:02

They don't start with themselves.

00:08:04

They don't even start with the situation around them.

00:08:08

They start with God.

00:08:09

And do you know what happens in that?

00:08:13

It's as if they are opening the doorway to God's throne room.

00:08:20

Each of us have been reminded that the God we worship is not like us.

00:08:27

He is glorious and holy and just

00:08:33

and truth and faithful and all those other attributes.

00:08:38

He's full of loving kindness and tender mercies.

00:08:42

There's a lovely summary in the Psalms.

00:08:47

How little we understand what our forebears would have taken for granted.

00:08:53

Start with the character of God.

00:08:56

Do you know what that does?

00:09:00

not only opens the doorway into the throne room of God, but it reminds us that nothing is too hard for the Lord.

00:09:12

I fall into the same trap as all of us.

00:09:16

I start with thanking and I've had to draw myself back.

00:09:21

The first thing I should remember is the God I'm worshipping, the God I'm praying to before I thank him.

00:09:30

You see, thankfulness is good, but it focuses on what God has done for us.

00:09:35

Adoration turns the tables and focuses on who God is.

00:09:42

You read the Psalms, you read the prayers of Daniel.

00:09:46

I've been reading through Daniel my own time this month and very profitable how he starts with the character of God.

00:09:53

You read Moses prayers.

00:09:56

You read Nehemiah's prayers, even though those are so short.

00:09:59

You read Ezra's prayers, you read any of the prayers in the Old Testament.

00:10:04

You read the Apostle Paul's prayers, you read Peter's prayers.

00:10:08

They all found themselves, established themselves in the character of God.

00:10:14

If there's eight elements, we're not going to go through all eight this morning.

00:10:21

If I can suggest a book to read is Isaac Watts.

00:10:26

A guide to prayer.

00:10:29

Adoration.

00:10:31

Invocation.

00:10:33

Invocation.

00:10:34

What's that?

00:10:35

It's an old word.

00:10:36

It's a Latin term.

00:10:37

It comes from invocare, which means call on God.

00:10:42

Oh, it's one thing to say, Lord God Almighty, and then we call on thy name.

00:10:50

By the way, the reverent approach to God in prayer pleases God.

00:10:57

And we can take some of these things and then there's, well you could put confession in there or petition or repentance or some element in the sense that you have praised God, you've recalled on God.

00:11:14

Now we're reminded we are sinners before a holy God.

00:11:18

Yes, we're children of God.

00:11:20

Yes, we belong to the Lord.

00:11:22

Yes, he'll never leave us nor forsake us.

00:11:24

But we all have tainted hearts.

00:11:28

We all have tainted minds.

00:11:31

We all have tainted intentions.

00:11:34

Our intentions aren't perfectly pure, though they're definitely more pure than they ever were before our conversion.

00:11:43

And you follow through and that is taken for granted.

00:11:48

in the epistles.

00:11:49

This is taken for granted.

00:11:52

All these writings about prayer isn't modern.

00:11:57

It's based on Old Testament teaching.

00:11:59

The Psalms teach us how to pray.

00:12:01

As I said, Moses, his great prayer.

00:12:06

Moses was a mighty man of prayer.

00:12:10

Elisha is mentioned in the chapter here.

00:12:12

What a prayer he prayed.

00:12:15

We don't know the elements of that prayer.

00:12:16

We don't know the words of that prayer, but we know this.

00:12:20

It was consistent.

00:12:22

It was God honoring.

00:12:23

And God heard and answered that prayer.

00:12:25

And we'll see next time, God willing, what that prayer was.

00:12:30

So what about praise?

00:12:32

Prayer is one aspect, but praise, oh, how should we praise such a glorious God?

00:12:45

Well, we should praise Him as He has ordained to be praised, according to how our forebears praised Him, worshipping Him, not feeling good about ourselves as we sing songs to Him, but worshipping Him.

00:13:04

By the way, I could say this, when we start our services on the Lord's Day morning and the Lord's Day evening, did you notice that every hymn

00:13:15

Almost every Lord's Day, in every service, the service begins with a hymn of adoration.

00:13:28

Why?

00:13:31

Because that reminds us straight away of who we are worshipping.

00:13:38

This is taken for granted by our forebear.

00:13:42

If you go to a church where they only sing psalms, there are psalms that are focused on adoration.

00:13:52

Then you can have a hymn of confession or a hymn of penitence or a hymn that ties in or a psalm that ties in with the psalm.

00:14:00

There should always be two readings in your services as well.

00:14:05

Then, of course, there's a hymn of petition or a hymn of

00:14:09

or a psalm of confession or a psalm of subjective nature.

00:14:15

And then the last hymn or psalm should be a psalm or hymn linked with the sermon.

00:14:20

That's how it used to be.

00:14:24

That's how it was taken for granted.

00:14:26

Now of course we don't have this teaching in James.

00:14:29

James is just speaking about prayer and praise.

00:14:33

But let me give you a few choice quotes.

00:14:37

A good friend of mine used to

00:14:38

do this in his sermons, especially on a Lord's Day morning.

00:14:42

Here's a choice quote from none other than John Bunyan.

00:14:46

Let's start with John Bunyan.

00:14:49

What is prayer?

00:14:51

That's his question.

00:14:53

This is his answer.

00:14:55

Prayer is an ordinance of God that to be used both in public and private

00:15:01

Yea, such an ordinance as brings those that have the spirit of supplication, that's asking of God, into great familiarity with God and is also so prevalent in action that it geteth of God both for the person that prayeth and for them that are prayed for great things.

00:15:19

What's he speaking about?

00:15:21

It's an ordinance of God.

00:15:24

When we have a prayer meeting in the midweek, that's a God's ordinance.

00:15:28

God has ordained it so.

00:15:30

He is appointed that the church should pray.

00:15:34

That was one of the marks of the New Testament church.

00:15:38

The first public meeting we read about of the church of the New Testament was a prayer meeting, Acts chapter one.

00:15:45

Let's hear Thomas Watson.

00:15:46

What does he think of prayer?

00:15:48

Prayer is the soul's traffic with heaven.

00:15:52

Prayer is spiritual when it is prayed with knowledge and then he gives a whole series of texts

00:15:59

2, 1 Corinthians 14, verse 15, and so on.

00:16:06

I love the way Watson is so pithy, so succinct.

00:16:12

It's a soul's traffic with heaven.

00:16:16

It's this way and that way.

00:16:19

We offer up our praises and our prayers unto God.

00:16:23

God hears our prayers, receives our prayers,

00:16:26

and answers our prayers.

00:16:30

Not always according to how we would expect, nor even in the time frame we would have presumed upon.

00:16:41

Bunyan, again, gives us a definition of prayer now.

00:16:45

This is his definition.

00:16:46

Prayer is a sincere, sensible,

00:16:50

That means rational, affectionate, pouring out of the heart or soul to God through Christ in the strength and assistance of the Holy Spirit for such things as God has promised.

00:17:01

Now notice what he says.

00:17:03

What has God promised in the Word?

00:17:05

That's what we can pray with absolute confidence.

00:17:09

See the difference here.

00:17:12

God had promised or according to the Word for the good of the church.

00:17:16

Notice where he starts.

00:17:17

with submission in faith to the will of God.

00:17:23

Now think about that.

00:17:26

It's sincere.

00:17:29

It's for a sincere heart.

00:17:31

It's sensible.

00:17:33

It's not irrational.

00:17:36

It's not insensible.

00:17:39

It's not about emotions.

00:17:42

It's affectionate.

00:17:43

That's pouring out our hearts with fervency, with earnestness.

00:17:48

That's the idea here.

00:17:50

And pouring out of our heart or soul to God.

00:17:54

How?

00:17:55

Through Christ, the Savior, the Mediator, the Redeemer.

00:17:58

This is all presumed.

00:18:02

With whose help?

00:18:04

With the assistance of the Holy Spirit.

00:18:07

See how the Trinity is involved in our praying?

00:18:11

Father, God,

00:18:12

Son Christ the Holy Spirit the comforter Such things as God has promised that's what we why we need to know our Bible so well So we can bring God's truth back to him The old Puritans repeated this so often Watson was one of them, but there's so many of them Bunyan as well God delights to hear his word prayed back to him What a contrast

00:18:44

Last thing.

00:18:45

How about praising?

00:18:46

I've given you much of prayer.

00:18:48

Now let's look at praise.

00:18:50

This is Thomas Watson again.

00:18:52

Praising God is one of the highest and purest acts of religion.

00:18:58

We would say Christian faith.

00:18:59

In prayer we act like men.

00:19:02

In praise we act like angels.

00:19:07

Notice that.

00:19:09

In praise

00:19:11

Prayer, we act like men, depending upon God, trusting in God, relying upon God, calling on God.

00:19:20

But in praise, we act like angels.

00:19:23

What do the angels do in God's presence continuously?

00:19:28

They praise His name.

00:19:31

Some of them feel their own creatureliness, that they veil their faces

00:19:40

and veil their feet with their wings.

00:19:48

So let's look at prayer and praise in verse 13.

00:19:52

That's just a general overview.

00:19:56

Let's look at prayer and praise.

00:20:00

Verse 13, Is any among you afflicted?

00:20:02

Let him pray.

00:20:04

Is any merry?

00:20:06

Let him sing psalms.

00:20:12

Here's two contrasting situations.

00:20:16

It's the same person.

00:20:19

Is any among you sick?

00:20:22

Let him pray.

00:20:25

Is he afflicted?

00:20:27

That word is a very interesting word.

00:20:30

It literally means to undergo hardship.

00:20:34

It's deep trouble.

00:20:37

strained, sickness, pain, bereavement, disappointment.

00:20:45

Even it can refer to persecution.

00:20:50

Afflicted.

00:20:52

Afflicted.

00:20:54

It's not a nice word.

00:20:57

It's a deep word.

00:21:00

And what is he to do if he's afflicted in any of these ways?

00:21:04

He's to pray.

00:21:07

She's to pray.

00:21:10

Now here, in this sense, James is particularly thinking of one aspect of prayer.

00:21:17

Yes, we can adore God.

00:21:20

We can rejoice always, even in trial.

00:21:24

But here James has been very pastoral.

00:21:27

He's speaking here of petition, of asking God to have our needs supplied

00:21:36

our sorrows removed, our comfort in our affliction.

00:21:43

That's the difference.

00:21:45

Here he's saying, let him pray and ask of God to be helped, to be strengthened, to be comforted, or to have the affliction removed, whatever is according to his will.

00:22:04

What an example that is.

00:22:07

Some of us know what it is to be afflicted.

00:22:10

Some of us know what it is to go through hardship, trial, difficulty, sadness, sorrow, sickness, long-term illness, bereavement, disappointment, and yet we still pray.

00:22:28

Do you know the world just finds that amusing at some times?

00:22:32

Sometimes it finds it confusing.

00:22:36

Even some of our relatives and they're very close to us and very dear to us.

00:22:39

When we go through affliction, we continue praying.

00:22:45

And they ask us, How can you keep your faith?

00:22:48

Do you know what the real answer should be?

00:22:53

We don't keep the faith.

00:22:54

The Lord keeps us in the faith.

00:22:56

But we're not as quick as that sometimes, are we?

00:23:00

But when we're afflicted, when we're tried, the world looks at us even more closely.

00:23:06

Oh, he's going to deny his God.

00:23:08

Oh, she's going to give up on the church.

00:23:10

Oh, she's going to stop praying.

00:23:14

No, we're like Job.

00:23:17

Though he slay me, I will yet praise him.

00:23:22

What a contrast.

00:23:24

What a contrast to an unbelieving world that thinks that

00:23:29

and even an unbelieving church age which thinks that if affliction comes then it's something to do with the faith of the person who's struggling or suffering or in sickness or it's a problem that they have something in their lives that God is punishing.

00:23:44

Both are wrong.

00:23:48

But here's the thing.

00:23:50

What an example to younger believers.

00:23:54

Here's a young Christian

00:23:57

just fresh into the family of God.

00:24:02

Just freshly become a Christian.

00:24:06

And they have this wonderful relationship with the Lord that they never had before and they enjoy prayer and they enjoy speaking with the Lord and they're reading the word and the word is so alive to them.

00:24:22

Do you remember this?

00:24:24

Sure we all do.

00:24:26

Some here might be young Christians.

00:24:29

And you see an older Christian going through hardship.

00:24:36

Maybe someone in the prayer meeting who's not able to be out anymore because they're not well.

00:24:41

Maybe somebody who's open years in their twilight years and the body just is failing and frail.

00:24:51

And yet when the young Christian hears this person praying,

00:24:55

There's no complaint.

00:24:58

There's no mumbling.

00:24:59

There's no grumbling.

00:25:02

There's no questioning of God's love.

00:25:06

There's just patient, prayerful submission.

00:25:17

That's the example an older believer going through a trial or affliction can be to a younger believer.

00:25:23

Now what should we pray?

00:25:26

In our affliction, we can pray the promises of God.

00:25:30

Let me give you a few.

00:25:36

Let's start with Moses, Deuteronomy 33 verse 27.

00:25:40

The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee and shall destroy them.

00:25:48

Of course, this is related to Israel, to God's chosen people.

00:25:54

But it also applies to God's people today.

00:25:57

Is God not still the eternal God?

00:26:01

Is he not the eternal refuge and underneath his church, his people are his everlasting arms?

00:26:09

How's about Isaiah?

00:26:11

We could have had other ones, but here's a couple.

00:26:13

Here's a sample.

00:26:14

Isaiah 40 and verse 31, They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.

00:26:19

That speaks of prayer.

00:26:22

When we're praying, we're waiting.

00:26:24

We're not rushing ahead.

00:26:25

We're waiting.

00:26:27

They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.

00:26:30

They shall mount up with wings as eagles.

00:26:32

They shall run and not be wearied.

00:26:35

They shall walk and not faint.

00:26:46

I found this poetic image.

00:26:47

Maybe it'll help someone.

00:26:50

When sorrow sang, her notes were like the low sweet call of a nightingale.

00:26:56

And in her eyes was the unexpected gaze of one who had ceased to look for coming gladness.

00:27:02

She could weep in tender sympathy with those who weep, but to rejoice with those who rejoice was unknown to her.

00:27:10

Maybe someone this morning is in that place.

00:27:13

But what does the psalmist say in contrast to this?

00:27:16

Psalms 130 verse 5, Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

00:27:32

So that's the first phrase, Is any among you afflicted, let him pray.

00:27:38

And the other phrase is in complete contrast.

00:27:43

Is Annie merry?

00:27:45

Let him sing psalms.

00:27:50

What does it mean to be merry?

00:27:53

We have in the New Testament a reference by the Lord Jesus to a man who had everything the world could give him.

00:28:01

He had a bumper harvest and he said eat, drink and be merry.

00:28:06

What does it mean to be merry according to James' epistle?

00:28:09

Well, it means to gladden.

00:28:12

to make cheerful, to bring joy.

00:28:16

Of course, the greatest message of joy ever given to this lost sinful world was the joy on the night that our Savior was born.

00:28:28

I bring you great glad tidings of great joy.

00:28:35

Incarnation is the greatest joyful message that has ever been sounded forth.

00:28:41

But there are other messages that can gladden the heart.

00:28:46

The Lord has delivered.

00:28:48

The Lord has been with us.

00:28:50

The Lord has sustained us.

00:28:53

Maybe somebody here is merry because they've had some good news, whatever that news might be.

00:29:02

Maybe it's something you've been praying for for a long time.

00:29:06

Maybe it's a job promotion.

00:29:08

Maybe it's something like that.

00:29:10

Maybe it's somebody in the family who are beginning to seek the Lord.

00:29:13

Whatever it is, the word here, euthomeo, is to put in good spirits.

00:29:21

Is Annie merry?

00:29:22

Notice the question here.

00:29:26

There's only three words in the English language.

00:29:29

Is Annie merry?

00:29:30

Is Annie joyful?

00:29:32

Is Annie glad?

00:29:34

Is Annie cheerful?

00:29:36

He doesn't say, is any man cheerful or any woman cheerful?

00:29:39

He just puts it out as a general question.

00:29:44

What are they to do?

00:29:47

Well, of course, the world would say, enjoy the merriment.

00:29:52

Have a party.

00:29:55

What does a Christian do?

00:29:58

Let him sing songs.

00:30:02

You see how different this is.

00:30:04

What a contrast.

00:30:07

Let him sing psalms.

00:30:11

Here we have this praise.

00:30:14

The highest form of prayer is springing up from a grateful, cheerful heart.

00:30:27

9 and 1 Corinthians 14:15 pick this up.

00:30:32

We should praise the Lord in times of joy.

00:30:38

We should praise the Lord in times of prosperity, in times of comfort.

00:30:47

How often and we're all guilty of this I'm sure and some of us more than others that we do not praise God when things are going well.

00:30:58

We think it's because of

00:31:01

something we've done or something we've deserved.

00:31:07

But here's the thing.

00:31:09

We praise God when we have favour in our lives.

00:31:17

Let him sing psalms.

00:31:24

One man puts it like this, Friends, we are not to express our cheerfulness in riotous uncontrolled.

00:31:29

I didn't know all this would link with this past couple of weeks, but uncontrolled, that's the word riotous, uncontrolled, no limit, no restraint.

00:31:40

That's not what he's saying.

00:31:42

But in praise and gratitude to an almighty, loving, gracious God and our Heavenly Father.

00:31:51

That's what our praise should be

00:31:54

tempered with.

00:31:56

Gratitude.

00:31:58

Gratitude.

00:32:01

I heard this many years ago.

00:32:02

Gratitude is the best attitude.

00:32:05

A smiling believer because of God's favor is often an encouragement to a struggling, another struggling believer because we are going to remind them that God is in control of this.

00:32:17

And indeed, prayer and praise can be experienced by the same person

00:32:24

over a period of time.

00:32:26

Maybe someone here this morning has gone through a time of trial and difficulty and yet a little while ago there was a time of praise, a time of thankfulness, a time of joy.

00:32:39

Both are real experiences for the Christian.

00:32:43

And both lead us to prayer and to praise.

00:32:54

We'll come back next time to look at the next section.

00:32:59

But I want us just to pause for a moment and ask ourselves this simple question.

00:33:07

How different the world would see the Christian if we were those who go through affliction

00:33:22

our faith still shines forth.

00:33:26

And when God has blessed us, our faith equally shines forth.

00:33:32

What does the Savior say to us?

00:33:34

Let our light so shine before men that they may see our good works and give glory to God in heaven.

00:33:44

Dear friends, to be a Christian is the most marvelous thing in the world.

00:33:50

to be a child of God, to belong to God, to be one who's a member of God's family, to be one who's carried through to this time is a testimony to His faithfulness, to His goodness, to His grace.

00:34:14

And I'll say this, sometimes as believers

00:34:19

We think that our testimony or our story of how we became a Christian is not very important and not very significant.

00:34:29

Maybe it's because we haven't had a Damascus road experience.

00:34:32

But what's the difference between somebody who's had a Damascus road experience and somebody who's gone on with the Lord all these decades?

00:34:44

The person with the Damascus road experience may

00:34:49

may have fallen by the wayside.

00:34:53

I've seen it over the years.

00:34:56

25 to 30 years you see a lot of things as a Christian.

00:35:02

Some of us have been on the pilgrimage a long time and we haven't had some great moment where God suddenly spoke to us suddenly, suddenly knew we were Christians and yet here we are this morning.

00:35:16

sitting in a congregation.

00:35:19

Last week we read our Bibles, we read the Scriptures, we prayed, we each day sought the Lord.

00:35:30

Our walk has continued all these years.

00:35:35

There are some of us here who have been through times of great sickness.

00:35:39

The medics all but gave up on us.

00:35:42

And they said, We can't do anything for you now.

00:35:46

And God stepped in.

00:35:50

Some of us here have been through great trials.

00:35:54

And as I said in the address, the world looks at us, our friends look at us, our family look at us and say, How can you still worship God?

00:36:06

Look at all you're going through.

00:36:08

And our simple answer is this, He's loved me with an everlasting love.

00:36:14

He's never promised to make it easy for me, but He's always promised to keep me.

00:36:21

Do you know, one of the greatest testimonies, the greatest proofs to the Christian faith, to the genuineness of our faith in Christ, is our perseverance in our walk with God.

00:36:36

And I often say this to people, we don't persevere in our perseverance.

00:36:42

God preserves us in our perseverance by His grace.

00:36:47

He gives us the grace to persevere through thick and thin, in times of riches and times of poverty, in sickness and in health, until we see Him face to face.

00:37:05

So the testimony of James and the testimony of all of God's people throughout the ages is there will be in our lives, in our walk with God, in our pilgrimage, times of prayer and times of praise.

00:37:22

And we will, in the end, come to that place where we'll hear those words, Well done, thou good and faithful.

00:37:35

servant.

00:37:38

And it would all be because of Calvary.

00:37:42

All because Christ came from heaven's glory to save us from our sins, to be punished in our place, to secure our peace and pardon with God, to wash away all our sins.

00:37:56

So that all the way through this life and into the next

00:38:04

He has honoured his word.

00:38:08

He will never leave us nor forsake us.

00:38:13

Amen.

00:38:16

Let us pray.

00:38:17

O gracious and glorious God, we thank thee that thou art our God in heaven and thou dost love us with an everlasting love

00:38:26

and that we can offer up our prayers and our praises unto thee and know that thou hast heard our prayers even this day throughout our lives.

00:38:35

We thank thee, Lord, for walking with us and watching over us.

00:38:39

We thank thee, Lord, that one day we will see the Saviour in all his glory and splendour and power.

00:38:45

And we pray that many more will be gathered in into the family of God by the grace of God.

00:38:51

We pray, Lord, that we would always seek to lead people to the open side of Christ, to the sheep for whom their shepherd died.

00:39:01

Oh, that the shepherd of his sheep would indeed keep us and preserve us is one thing, but that he would draw many more into the sheepfold in the days to come by his Spirit.

00:39:12

Bless us now and keep us and forgive us all our sin in the precious name of Jesus Christ our Lord for his sake.