TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
IHOP BIBLE STUDY
# 5 James 5: 13 - 20, "Covering a multitude of sins" – with commentary. The purpose of the Letter of James is to describe, “How We Relate To God and Other People.” This is the 5th lesson of 5 sessions.

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Please start by reviewing Section II.

Following our opening devotions, I shared a contextual statement on Gut Trip Analysis. In this statement the "Transcendent Prescription" associated with a dualistic, or supernatural, worldview of heaven and earth, is compared to a "Transparent Prescription" that is associated with the uni-verse that is a post-modern worldview. This document will be sent as a second document.

At the end of our study session, a “Summary Chart of James” was distributed. Also this document will be sent as a third document.

1. Vss. 13 – 18, What is the efficacy of prayer, and what is the role of oil?

**WS:** Prayer is a problem for post-modern society. The basis of this problem is that supernaturalism implies a dual reality of a heaven and an earth. It is easy to think of lifting our prayers to “heaven” who acts as a giant prayer-delivery system on our behalf. On the other hand, post-modern society experiences only a uni-verse with the consequence there no longer is a supernatural delivery system.

For me, almost all prayers that I give, and all those I hear, are more like meditations than prayers: when I am asked to pray I wax eloquent in mini-theological dissertations that all end in an "Amen!" So, what is prayer?

This letter of James is helpful because of its emphasis on actions (works) to demonstrate the significance of our relationship to God. In this way, prayers become like Little Dutch Boys or Girls who discover a hole in the dyke and stick their finger in it until help arrives: prayer is betting your life, or standing in the gap. It is deciding to be the first wave of an invasion force whose job is to make it to the concertina rolls of wire, and then to fall and die there so that the second wave of the invasion force can walk over our dead bodies. This is authentic and undeniable prayer.
For me, this is prayer, and I'm convinced that James would agree with me. Prayer is not supernatural, but it is based on actions and not words. So, where does this leave "prayer time" during church services, before shut-ins or at hospital beds?

Does anybody have an answer?

Prayer is an act by which we place ourselves in-synch with living our intended purpose. In this regard a cow lives as a prayer because it is unable to do anything else. Our human freedom of choice means that we can choose not to be prayers. It is when we pull our human existence through Christ that we begin to become the humane prayers that God created us to be.

What do you think? Please let me know at wsalmon@cox.net.

Comments by IHOPers regarding the use of oil:

Oil is used at Last Rites in some churches. Pastor Bill uses oil to pray for people who are ill, dying or in some need of prayer.

Another IHOPer added: As a sign of power, the High Priest used a horn of oil to be drenched. This would run down over his garments and gather at the bottom of the hem. This is why the “Woman with the issue of blood,” believed she would be healed if only she could touched the hem of Jesus’ garment.

This IHOPer added a rendering of John 10: 10B: There are “Three Promises” in this brief statement: “I have come, that they may have life, and have it to the full (NIV).” The first promise is that Jesus lives with us in the here and now. The second promise is his demonstration of what authentic living is like when we live dependent on God. The Third promise is that by pulling our own lives through this demonstration that life is full or abundant.


EVERYONE RESEARCH CONCERNING ELIJAH

WS: A summary statement regarding Elijah is at the end of this document.

3. Vss. 19 – 20,

What is the experience of “wandering from the truth?”

WS: One IHOPer offered that wandering from the truth is the experience of living as a victim rather than as a victor. I added the “The Truth” is to live the surrendered life in total dependence on God experienced as Perfect At-One-Ment.

What is the experience of turning “a sinner from the error of his/her way?”

WS: To turn a sinner it is necessary for them to be awakened to their intended creation. Sometimes, to do this tough love is necessary. But watch out because the response to tough love is the attempt to kill the messenger.

How does this “save her/him from death?”

WS: Death, in this instance, is used as a metaphor for abandoning “the truth” as described above. This means we are not alive to living the obedient, surrendered,
dependent life that fulfills our intended creation of the humane and gracious life lived while working for justice and mercy.

How does this “cover over a multitude of sins?”

**WS:** Sin comes in a multitude of ways. Gut Trip Analysis treats all sin as that which results in separation which is the antithesis of At-One-Ment. It can be described as the personal experience of failing to fulfill our intended creation; in this way we “miss the mark.” To push this one step deeper, consider that living the *in-humane life* is self-pride or self-depreciation. Also, it can be described as a communal experience of living the *un-humane life* of racism, sexism, and homophobia.
II. Reflect on the following: (GETTING THE BIG PICTURE) **

Part 2 is an exercise in reflecting on the assigned reading through a method of identifying the "Deep Problem" faced by the early church. Sometimes this is known as identifying the underlying contradiction. This is usually hidden behind some particular manifestations. Paul usually addresses this hidden agenda in his "solution" that he offers. Consequently, it is necessary for us to examine his solutions, and then back up to reflect on what is the deeper problem actually being addressed. Usually, this reveals some new insights.

A. What is the SURFACE PROBLEM that is manifested?

At this point, use your intuition to identify the surface problem? USE YOUR INTUITIONS.

WS: Wandering from the truth. The "truth" is that to live independently of God is contrary to our intended purpose of living dependently on God. When our lives are troubled then this is the message that we are attempting to live independent of God. When life is harmonious then we are living in-synch with our intended creation.

C. IDENTIFY THE DEEPER UNDERLYING CONTRADICTION facing the Early Church. What is the DEEPER, MORE HIDDEN, agenda that James seeks to address with his solution?

Use your intuitions to identify the deeper problem.

At this point, use your intuition to identify deeper, underlying, problem. USE YOUR INTUITIONS.

Check out Vss. 15B, “The Lord will raise him up.” This statement implies the deep, underlying problem is living out of touch with God.

WHICH OF THE FOUR MASTER PROBLEMS DOES THIS ISSUE REPRESENT? **

__ False Teachings _X_Moral Decay __The Corrupt World __ Church Division

B. What is the SOLUTION James offers to address the Deep Problem?

Speculate on what James is suggesting for the solution.

At this point, use your intuition to identify Paul’s solution. USE YOUR INTUITIONS.

Check out Vss. 20B, The solution is to be turned back from the “error of our ways” to live the dependent life on God.

WHICH OF THE THREE MASTER SOLUTIONS DOES THIS ISSUE REPRESENT?

__Create Authentic Ministry __Use Spiritual Weapons _X_Use Utilize Consciousness Raising

Now, reread Paul’s solution to see if it makes sense.

Alright folks, talk to me!

** Use the "Problems and Solutions" chart previously sent to you. This chart is available in the archived materials at www.triumc.org/web1/biblestudy. Look for the Chart link. WES
Elijah
by Wayne Blank

"Elijah climbed to the top of Carmel, bent down to the ground and put his face between his knees."Go and look toward The Sea," he told his servant. And he went up and looked. "There is nothing there," he said. Seven times Elijah said, "Go back." The seventh time the servant reported, "A cloud as small as a man's hand is rising from the sea." So Elijah said, Go and tell Ahab, 'Hitch up your Chariot and go down before the rain stops you.' Meanwhile the sky grew black with clouds, the wind rose, a heavy rain came on and Ahab rode off to Jezreel. The power of The Lord came upon Elijah and, tucking his cloak into his belt, he ran ahead of Ahab all the way to Jezreel." (1 Kings 18:42-46)

The incident described above occurred on Mount Carmel, near the modern-day city of Haifa. Elijah was sent to confront King Ahab of Israel (see Kings of Israel and Judah) and his infamously-wicked wife Jezebel. Together, the royal couple had corrupted the land with the pagan worship of Baal.

Elijah was one of the most intense and enigmatic people of The Bible. His story makes for a fascinating study.

Elijah the Tishbite is first mentioned in 1 Kings 17:1 as delivering a message from the Lord to King Ahab - "As The Lord, The God of Israel lives, Whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word."

After completing the message to Ahab, Elijah went, according to God's direction, to "the Kerith Ravine, east of The Jordan, and stayed there. The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook." (1 Kings 17:5-6)

When the prophesied drought dried up the brook, God sent him to live with a widow in Zarephath of Sidon, where he remained for over two years. During his time there, he miraculously provided a food supply during the famine, and raised her son, who had died from an illness, Back From The Dead (1 Kings 17:7-24). The time was apparently used by Elijah to study and prepare for his mission.

During the third year of the drought, The Lord sent Elijah back to appear before Ahab. The series of events that followed ended with a confrontation on Mount Carmel between Elijah and hundreds of pagan prophets of Baal and Asherah. The supernatural demonstration of the powers of the True God against the powerless frauds led the people to abandon their idolatry and turn back to The Lord (1 Kings 18:1-40). The end of the punishing drought then immediately came (1 Kings 18:41-46).

After Jezebel discovered that all of her beloved pagan priests of Baal had been killed in the confrontation with Elijah, she attempted to have him killed (1 Kings 19:1-13). Elijah fled south to Beersheba where he hid in despair (1 Kings 19:3-5). An Angel appeared to him twice for strength, and brought him food (1 Kings 19:5-8). He then journeyed for 40 days to Horeb, where God Himself appeared to him (1 Kings 19:9-18). The Lord then sent Elijah back north to Damascus to anoint Hazael king over Syria, and Jehu king over Israel (1 Kings 19:15-18). It was during that journey that Elijah found and commissioned his successor, Elisha, as directed by God (1 Kings 19:16-21).

One of the most controversial events of Elijah's life occurred at the end of his ministry when he was transported away on a "chariot of fire" (2 Kings 2:11). (see Aircraft In The Bible?) Elisha was then promoted from being Elijah's assistant, to Elijah's successor (2 Kings 2:15).

Elijah was a type of John The Baptist, in manner and appearance. John was the Elijah that "must first come" (Matthew 11:11, 14), the forerunner of The Savior as prophesied by Malachi (Malachi 4:5).

Elijah appeared with Moses in the transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-13)

James spoke of Elijah as an example of the power of prayer (James 5:17).

Fact Finder: Did Jesus Christ also refer to Elijah and John the Baptist?
Matthew 17:11-13 Jesus affirms that Elijah already is here!

From: “Daily Bible Study,” on the web. Modified for this article.