

Better Together

*EXPLORING REAL WAYS
TO LIVE IN AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY*

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STUDY GUIDE
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CONFESS SINS & PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER // *James 5:16*

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Two different Greek words are often translated as “confess.”

- *Homologeō* – *homo* meaning “same” and *logeō* meaning “word.” *Homologeō* means, “to say the same thing.”
- *Exologeō* – The prefix *ex*, meaning “out of,” is added to “*logos*” meaning “word.” Together they form “to speak a word out” or “to profess.”

To confess sin means to openly acknowledge and agree with another. It means “not to deny but freely admit or declare” yourself guilty. Confession is a public admission of sin and testimony of God’s grace.

James calls believers to confess their sins publicly and to pray for one another. Confession is necessary for the one who has sinned and the church. Confession helps the one who has sinned agree with God about their sin – a person acknowledges the reality of what they have done, and acknowledges the need for forgiveness and grace. Confession also restores trust in communal values and ideals.

Confession with “one another” rehearses God’s grace. Together, believers “agree” in their common need for Jesus Christ. Likewise, prayer acknowledges our condition before God and others.

Together, we acknowledge that God is the one who can make us “whole.” Through prayer we become unified as true community.

PRAY:

Ask God to reveal something meaningful through this time of reflection.

READ:

Offer your full care and attention to reading the provided scripture passages.

DISCOVER:

James 5:13-16 Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.

1 Corinthians 11:27-30 Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be answerable for the body and the blood of the Lord. Examine yourselves, and only then eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For all who eat and drink without discerning the body, eat and drink judgment against themselves. For this reason many of you are weak and ill, and some have died.



DISCOVER, CONTINUED:

- 1) *James 5* associates sin with sickness, and confession with health. How would you describe the relationship between sin and sickness?
- 2) Likewise, how would you describe the relationship between confession and health?
- 3) How does the pressure to be “strong” or “spiritual” and the fear of being vulnerable keep you/us from being the community God wants us to be?
- 4) How can we create the kind of community that allows for vulnerability or weakness and encourages confession of sin?

