

Main Idea: When we examine the epistle of James we discover that caring for one another involves four responsibilities involving verbal activity, two negative and two positive.

- I. Caring for one another involves *not* doing some things with our tongues.
 - A. We are not to slander one another (4:11).
 1. When we do this, we’re acting like a judge.
 2. There already is a judge, and it’s not us.
 - B. We are not to grumble against one another (5:9).
 1. If we do so, it indicates we need patience.
 2. To stop doing so, just remember where the Lord is.
- II. Caring for one another involves doing some things with our tongues.
 - A. We are to confess our sins to one another (5:16).
 - B. We are to pray for one another (5:16).
 1. The context is physical sickness.
 2. The intent is healing.
 3. The assurance is that the prayer of a righteous man is effective.
 4. The example is Elijah (17-18).
 5. The effect is to promote restoration (19-20).

Make It Personal: In order to care for one another as we ought, we need to take inventory of how we are using our tongues.

1. Are there things I need to stop doing with my tongue?
2. Are there things I need to start doing with my tongue?

*Does Jesus care when my heart is pained
Too deeply for mirth or song,
As the burdens press,
And the cares distress,
And the way grows weary and long?*

*Does Jesus care when my way is dark
With a nameless dread and fear?
As the daylight fades
Into deep night shades,
Does He care enough to be near?*

*Does Jesus care when I’ve tried and failed
To resist some temptation strong;
When for my deep grief
There is no relief,
Though my tears flow all the night long?*

*Does Jesus care when I’ve said “goodbye”
To the dearest on earth to me,
And my sad heart aches
Till it nearly breaks,
Is it aught to Him? Does He see?*

**Note: This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church. It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

*O yes, He cares, I know He cares,
His heart is touched with my grief;
When the days are weary,
The long night dreary,
I know my Savior cares.¹*

This is wonderful news in a world full of hurt. Jesus cares. The One who gave us life cares. The One who gave His life to rescue us from our sins cares. Not just *cared*, past tense. But *cares*, present tense.

Yet how does Jesus show us He cares? How does the One who died for us, conquered the grave, and returned to heaven now demonstrate His care? As we've been learning in recent months, He does it in two primary ways. One, through *the Book*, and two, through *the Body*. The Book, of course, is the Bible, His Spirit-inspired Word to us, a book that's filled with *promises to live by in the crucible of suffering*. And the Body, of course, is *His Body*, the church. He has given us *a people to live with in the crucible of suffering*. So to experience His amazing care, we need to take advantage of both, the Book and the Body.

By His design, the local church is to be a caring community. We've been learning what's involved in caring, as He defines it, by looking at the "one another" passages in the New Testament. Thus far, we've looked at the "one another" passages in Romans, then in Galatians, then Ephesians, and this morning we come to the epistle of James.

James gives us four one another texts, and they all have to do with the tongue. If we're going to care for one another as we ought, James makes it clear that we need to use our tongues rightly. Your tongue can hurt people. Your tongue can help people. It can cut. It can cure. There is incredible power in a word.

In the beginning God created the universe. How? By speaking a word. And when mankind turned against Him, God once again spoke. How? He sent the *logos* into the world. *The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us*.

To be saved, you must make a confession, again, *with words*. You must say with your mouth, "Jesus Christ is Lord." And when you do, God declares a word. Child. "You are now because of your trust in my Son my forever *child*."

And as His children, as people who now belong to Jesus, we're now called to use our words as He has done, for His redeeming purposes.

And how do we do that? How do we use our words in ways that rightly reflect Him? James shows us.

James wrote this epistle to persecuted, Jewish Christians. "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes scattered among the nations," he says as he begins the letter (1:1).

And what does James have to say to these Christian refugees? He talks to them about perseverance in chapter 1, a faith that works in chapter 2, the power of the tongue in chapter 3, what causes fights in chapter 4, and how to endure suffering and mistreatment in chapter 5.

¹ Words by Frank Graeff, www.cyberhymnal.org.

James gives us a very practical epistle. He hits the issues of real life, and one of the topics he addresses again and again is *the tongue*. He talks about it in chapter 1 (“Be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to become angry” 1:19), in chapter 2 (“Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom” 2:12), in chapter 3 (“The tongue is a small part of the body but it makes great boasts” 3:5), and as we’ll see, with four one another commands involving the tongue in chapters 4 & 5.

Brothers and sisters, caring for one another involves many things, but James makes it clear that one of the most critical is our *tongue*. To be a caring community, we must learn how to use our tongues in God-pleasing ways.

At first, you might think persecuted believers wouldn’t need such instruction. After all, when the world is attacking you, you’re going to naturally come together and help each other, right? No. When sinners, even redeemed sinners, do what comes naturally, they don’t come together and help each other. They think of themselves.

If I took a tube of toothpaste and started squeezing it, what would happen? The pressure from without would reveal the contents within, right? That’s what happens when the church is put under pressure. The pressure reveals what’s inside.

Jesus said, “Out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks (Matt 12:34).” So our words are revealers. They reveal thoughts and desires that are lurking in our hearts, and all it takes is a little pressure to see them come spewing out.

So even believers that are willing to suffer for their faith need help with their tongues, and James gives it. When we examine the epistle of James we discover that caring for one another involves four responsibilities involving verbal activity, two negative and two positive. Or to put it another way, we have two assignments, one is something we *shouldn’t* do, the other is something we *should* do.

I. Caring for one another involves *not* doing some things with our tongues.

Did you ever wonder why people fight? I don’t know of a better answer anywhere than the one the Spirit of God directed James to give at the beginning of chapter four.

Verse 1—“What causes fights and quarrels *among you*?” So it’s not just the unregenerate. Christians can fight, too. And why? What would cause blood-bought, redeemed, loved by God followers of Jesus to fight with each other? Here’s James’ answer:

“What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don’t get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures (4:1-3).”

So there’s the culprit. Our desires cause our fights. A husband comes home after a hard day and wants some time to kick back and read his paper, but his wife, after a long day of caring for a trying two-year-old wants some quality adult communication time. Put those competing desires together, and you’ve got a recipe for a fight, says James. And if you squeeze on that toothpaste tube hard enough, those desires will come bursting out in the form of hurtful words.

But it’s not just our competing desires that cause fights. James identifies another culprit in verses 4-10. *Pride*. “God opposes the proud,” says James in verse 6. What’s

needed? “He gives grace to the *humble*,” says verse 6. “Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up,” says verse 10.

So competing desires and pride. Those two heart issues lurk beneath every quarrel and fight. When we tap into the power of the gospel, we can slay those dragons. When we don’t, those dragons will raise their ugly heads and spew forth words.

What kind of words? The kind of words that James identifies and calls on us to eliminate with two one another commandments. Here’s the first.

A. We are not to slander one another (4:11). “Brothers,” he begins verse 11. James loves this family term and uses it 18 times in five chapters. He begins the letter, “My brothers, count it all joy when you face various trials (1:2).” And again and again, he reminds his hearers that they are *brothers*.

He says in verse 11, “Brothers, do not slander one another.”

Do not *slander* one another. “Do not speak evil against one another,” says the ESV. “Speak not evil one of another,” says the AV. The Greek verb *katalaleite* comes from two root words (*kata*, down, and *laleo*, to talk) and literally means “to talk down.” We *talk down* a person when we mention something about that person to another person in a way that lowers the second person’s estimation of the first person. That’s what slander is. We slander when we speak without hard facts.

But we can also slander when we have the facts. Just because something is true doesn’t give us the right to say it to someone else. In fact, James says...

1. *When we do this, we’re acting like a judge.* Listen to the rest of verse 11, “Anyone who speaks against his brother or judges him speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it.”

So when we *talk down* regarding a brother to another brother, we’re talking down regarding the law, which James refers to as “the royal law” back in 2:8, the law of love.

And who gave that law? God did. He said we are always to do what is in the best interest of our brother. That’s what love is, and that’s what the law of love calls us to do.

When we slander, we’re ignoring God’s law. We’re setting up our own law, a law that says, “I have a right to use and spread information about another person.” And in so doing, I am now acting like a judge. That, of course, is unacceptable. Why? Because..

2. *There already is a judge, and it’s not us.* James says in verse 12, “There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor?”

So slandering one another must go. When that activity is permitted in a church, that church will *not* be a caring community.

But here’s the challenge. No slanderer ever begins his or her conversation with the words, “Now I’m about to slander my brother in what I’m going to tell you.” Never. We know better. So we disguise our motives with statements like these...

“Now stop me if I’m wrong, but did you know that so-and-so...” Or...

“Perhaps I shouldn’t say this about so-and-so, but...”

When you hear those words, I urge you to interrupt quickly and say, “Really? You shouldn’t say it? Then why are you saying it to me?”

“So we’re never to speak words that would imply another person is out of line?” you ask. Good question. And the answer is, yes, if my brother is out of line with God’s

Word, then I do need to say something. Not to you, or anybody else, but first, to my *brother*.

Jesus said in Matthew 18:15, “If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over.”

And if he doesn’t listen? Then you do talk to someone else, perhaps two people. Isn’t that slander? No, because you’re not talking down about your brother. You’re enlisting two others to help you rescue your brother. That’s what Jesus said in Matthew 18:16, “But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’”

And if he won’t listen to you and your brothers? Then you tell some other people, the church in fact, says Jesus in Matthew 18:17. And that’s not slander either, for the purpose of this use of your church members’ tongues is the recovery of your brother, the purity of the church, and the glory of God.

God is not glorified when we use our tongues simply to *talk down* our brother. That’s gossip, if it’s not true; or slander, perhaps, if it is true. And if it is true that my brother has unrepentant sin, then God is glorified when I talk to the right people and in the right way about my brother and for the good of my brother.

James gives a second negative one another command in chapter 5. Let’s look at the flow of the passage that connects our two texts.

In 4:13 James says, “Now listen, you who *say*.” Notice he confronts another misuse of the tongue, in this case a person who boasts about the plans he has for his life (see verses 13-16). And then James confronts a particular kind of boaster, rich people, in 5:1-7. Boasters, and particularly rich boasters, were making life very difficult for the persecuted Christians that James is addressing.

What did the brothers need to do? Verse 7—“Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord’s coming.” The Lord’s going to take care of boasters. Just wait. Verse 8—“You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord’s coming is near.”

But until He comes, there’s something else that’s needed. All this boasting you’re hearing can wear on you, and if you’re not careful, like the squeezed toothpaste tube, it can squeeze some pretty ugly stuff out of our hearts. Hence, James’ next one another command...

B. We are not to grumble against one another (5:9). “Don’t grumble against each other, brothers.”² “Do not complain,” says the NASV. “Grudge not one against another,” says the AV.

After a while, it can wear on you, listening to the rich boasters in the world. “Why do they have it so good, and I have it so hard?” And if you’re not careful, you can let that same thought sour your perspective on your brothers. “Why do *they* have it so good, and I have it so hard?”

Don’t do that, says James. Don’t grumble against each other. Why not? “Or you will be judged,” says verse 9. The boasters are going to be judged, but so are you if you live with their mindset that all that matters is the here and now. So don’t grumble.

1. *If we do so, it indicates we need patience.* “Be patient,” says verse 7. “Be patient,” says verse 8. In verse 10 James cites the prophets as “an example of patience in the face of suffering.” That’s what we need, patience. The suffering we’re

² James uses *allelon*, the same word translated “one another” in our other “one another” texts.

facing now won't last forever. So no grumbling about how easy you think you're brother has it compared to you.

You say, "I need some help here. Give me something practical that will help me get rid of this negative, grumbling heart and mouth." Okay, here it is. James concludes verse 9, "The Judge is standing at the door!" In other words...

2. *To stop doing so, just remember where the Lord is.* He's not far off. He's right here, standing at the door, a reference to His second coming. If someone is standing at your front door, it changes the way you live inside the house, doesn't it?

I find it interesting to see how people respond when I make a home visit. I walk up to the door and I hear sounds coming from within. Maybe a television blaring, or once in a while, people yelling at each other. And then I knock, or ring the bell, and someone peeks out the window. And I hear, "It's the pastor. Knock it off! Turn off that television!"

It makes a big difference when you know someone's standing at the door. Friends, *the Judge* is standing at the door, and He's going to come through that door very soon. Do we need any more incentive than that to curb our grumbling?

So, if we're going to be a caring community, talking down and grumbling about one another must go. There's no place for those negative uses of our tongues.

II. Caring for one another involves doing some things with our tongues.

James mentions two in verse 16, "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." So we have two positive, one another assignments involving our tongues.

A. We are to confess our sins to one another (5:16). And secondly...

B. We are to pray for one another (5:16). James links these two verbal activities together, confessing sins to each other and praying for each other. But as you'll notice, these two commands come at the end of a paragraph, indicating there's a context for these two responsibilities, and we need to see it.

Go back to verse 13. James asks a series of questions. "Is any one of you in trouble?" Now there's an appropriate question for persecuted Christians! Most were quite familiar with trouble. What should a person in trouble do? James says, "He should pray."

The Lord gives His troubled followers direct access to His throne 24/7. "Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need," says Hebrews 4:16.

Next question. "Is anyone happy?" Even in troubled times, there's cause for happiness. What should a person do who's happy? "Let him sing songs of praise," says James, for singing praise songs brings attention to the source of the happiness.

Then a third question. Verse 14—"Is any one of you sick?" The Greek word is *astheneo*, which can mean either "to be sick," or more generally "to be weak." Sickness causes weakness, but so do other things, including, in this case, relentless persecution.

John MacArthur suggests the context fits the later use of this term. He prefers, "Is any one of you *weak*?" Weak, that is, beat down by the hardness of life, discouraged by

the challenges of being hated for your faith. MacArthur says that's the person James is addressing here, not a physically sick person, but one beat down by the hardness of life.³

What's that person, the *weak* person, need to do? He needs to get some spiritual backup in place. Call for the elders. Let them pray. Let them anoint him with oil, an activity that speaks of bringing spiritual refreshment (as in Psalm 23:5, "You have anointed my head with oil.").

And what will that accomplish? This, says James in verse 15. "And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick [i.e. 'weak'] person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven." So as a result of the elders' prayer, this weak, overwhelmed brother will be lifted up, bolstered again in his faith, and fortified to stand and fight again in the battle.

That's MacArthur's interpretation, and I think it has great merit. James is writing to persecuted Christians, and some of them were weak, and they desperately needed to call for reinforcements to pray.

Having said that, I'm not convinced that this text applies *only* to the spiritually weak. Since *ashtheneo* can go both ways, "to be sick" and "to be weak," I don't see any reason to limit it to weakness of soul. Persecution isn't the only challenge that James' readers were facing. Persecuted Christians get physically sick too, and that too can wear on a believer, especially if it persists. So it seems to me, whatever the cause of the weakness, whether persecution or physical sickness, James gives us a helpful directive.

As I walk through this one another text I notice five things.

1. *The context is physical sickness.* The commands to "confess your sins to one another" and "pray for each other so you may be healed" occur at the end of a text that begins with a question to those who are *sick*? "Is any one of you sick?"

So what should a *sick* person do? Pray? Yes, that's a given from verse 13. A person in trouble should pray. But there's something else that James encourages the sick person to do as well. Look carefully at verse 14. James says, "He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord."

Call the elders, says James, referring to the pastors, the shepherds, the spiritual leaders. And specifically, the elders *of the church*, James clarifies. This is a ministry of the local church, which means the sick person doing the calling is a known quantity to the shepherds who are coming.

And why are they asked to come? *To pray*, says James. That's what this man needs most, to be lifted up to God, to be prayed for.

More specifically, to be prayed *over*. James says *to pray over him, over him* because the person is down low, literally if he is on a bed of affliction, and figuratively if his affliction has weighed down his soul. And so the elders pray over him.

And anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord, adds James. Some say the oil is medicinal. Since oil in the ancient world was used for medicinal purposes, that's possible but not likely, since James links the anointing with the phrase "in the name of the Lord." The Roman Catholic Church says it's sacramental, which the text doesn't support, nor the practice of the sacrament of extreme unction, where the dying person is anointed with oil

³ MacArthur explains, "The weak are those who have been defeated in the spiritual battle, who have lost the ability to endure their suffering. They are the fallen spiritual warriors, the exhausted, weary, depressed, defeated Christians. They have tried to draw on God's power through prayer, but have lost motivation, even falling into sinful attitudes." MacArthur Commentary on James, page 277.

so as to remove any remnant of sin and strengthen the soul for dying. That's certainly not supported by this (or any other) passage, for James says the anointing is to promote healing, not to ease dying.⁴

It seems to me that the anointing with oil is symbolic. Kent Hughes explains, "Anointing in the Scriptures is usually associated with consecrating or setting apart someone for special service or attention. In this respect oil is also a symbol of the Holy Spirit, who indwells and watches over each believer (4:5). So the applying of oil to the sick is a rich symbolic act—setting the sick apart to be ministered to in a special way by the Holy Spirit. When applied by the loving hands of the elders, it is a profound vehicle for comfort and encouragement."⁵

What's the intent of this praying and anointing?

2. *The intent is healing.* Verse 15—"And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven." So the aim of the calling and praying and anointing is the physical and spiritual healing of this afflicted brother.

But there's something quite shocking, even controversial, about verse 15. You can't help but notice James' emphatic verbs. *Will* make the sick person well. The Lord *will* raise him up. Is James saying that every time the elders pray over and anoint a sick person that the result will be healing?

No, that's not what he says. He gives a specific stipulation. He says *the prayer offered in faith* will result in healing.

Whose prayer offered in faith? The sick person's? No. The elders. They're doing the praying. James says that when elders offer a prayer of faith, the result will be, not *may* be, but *will be* healing.

Again, that strong language gets our attention because we know the Bible is full of examples to the contrary. You don't have to look far to find godly people who were sick and *didn't* get well, even when other godly people were apparently praying for them. Case in point? Paul himself. Paul said he had to leave "Trophimus sick in Miletus" (2 Tim 4:20). Paul also said his dear friend Epaphroditus was "ill and almost died" (Phil 2:27). And there's Paul's comment about Timothy's stomach ailment, and his encouragement to drink a little wine for medicinal purposes (1 Tim 5:23). And Paul himself prayed three times regarding his own "weakness" (noun form of the same word Greek word used by James, *astheneia*), but there was no removing, no healing of his "thorn."

Again, surely Paul prayed for his sick friends, as he did regarding his own ailment. So does that mean the lack of healing was the result of his lack of faith? Certainly not. No one had more faith than the apostle Paul.

The question is, what does James mean when he says "the prayer offered in faith" will make the sick person well? I take it from James' wording that not all prayers for the sick are "prayers offered in faith," or literally, "the prayer of faith."

All faith is a gift from God (Eph 2:8). He gives saving faith. But He also gives the spiritual gift of faith, which Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 12:9; 13:2. This special gift of faith is the Spirit-generated assurance that God will do what's being asked.⁶ It's

⁴ Kent Hughes makes this helpful observation; p. 256.

⁵ Kent Hughes, p. 256.

⁶ See a helpful explanation by Douglas Moo, *James*, p. 182.

significant that in 1 Corinthians 12:9, this gift of faith is mentioned right before gifts of healing.

So this prayer of faith is a particular kind of prayer that the Lord, in some cases, enables the elders to pray. Or we might say a prayer with particular assurance.

Hughes' explanation is helpful, "The prayer of faith is not something we can manufacture by saying 'I believe, I believe, I believe, I really believe, I truly believe, I double believe!' *It is a gift from God.* As John Blanchard has said, 'the *prayer offered in faith* is circular in shape; it begins and ends in heaven, in the sovereign will of God."⁷

So James says that when the sick person calls, and the elders pray and anoint oil, and when God grants the elders the gift of faith which grants them assurance that He will indeed answer their prayer, then their prayer *will* make the sick person well, and God *will* raise him up.

What's more, says James, *if he has sinned, he will be forgiven.* That's interesting. We know that not all sickness is directly connected to a person's sin (Jesus made that point regarding Lazarus's sickness in John 11:4). But sometimes sickness is connected to sin (see Mark 2:1-12; 1 Cor 5:5; 1 Cor 11:27-30). And if that's the case, when such a sick person humbles himself, repents of his sin and gives the fruit of that repentance by calling for the elders, the result will be physical healing, if it's God's will, but most assuredly spiritual healing. "If he has sinned, he *will* be forgiven."

And that brings us to our one another commands. *Therefore*, says James as he begins verse 16. Don't miss the connection. With the account of the brother who humbles himself and calls for the elders of the church in mind, James identifies two general assignments for every church member.

"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." There's the context for our final one another commands. He just talked about a brother confessing his need for the elders, and the elders demonstrating their love for this brother by praying. And now he says to the whole church, you're all to engage in these same two verbal activities.

Confessing and praying. First, *confess your sins to each other.* And then, *pray for each other.* And notice something. The intended result of both activities is the same. The intent is *healing.* Just as it was with the brother on his bed of affliction. The goal of our mutual confession of sin and prayer is to see people restored, made whole, mended, brought back to a place of proper function in the body.

Could it be that one of the reasons the American church today is so anemic is connected to our neglect of these two commands? Would we see stronger churches if we saw more confessing of sin and praying? Bring that closer to home. Would *we* be a stronger church if *we* engaged in confessing our sins to each other and praying for each other? Would we see our people experience the kind of spiritual and even physical healing that James is describing?

Friends, when I have unconfessed sin in my life, my loving Father allows me to experience certain wake-up-call consequences. Anxieties, fears, weaknesses, even bodily ailments. This is so practical. I can be restored, says James, these maladies can be *healed*, says James, if I will do this...*confess my sins to my brothers*, and have my brothers *pray for me.*

⁷ Kent Hughes, p. 258.

That raises some important questions. All my sins? Do I need to confess *all* my sins to my brothers? And what does it mean to *confess* my sins to my brothers? How much detail is necessary and appropriate? And when James says, *to each other*, who does he mean? Should I confess my sins to *all* my brothers, or just a few, or just one accountability partner? And what's the purpose of the confession? Do I unload on my brothers just so I'll feel better, without considering how learning about my sin might affect them?

And then there are some questions about the prayer responsibility. *Pray for each other*, says James, *so that you may be healed*. Who is to do this praying, and when, and how? Again, this isn't just something the elders are to do. This is a *one another* assignment. That being the case, what can we do as a church to facilitate this kind of praying? How can we create a good environment for it?

And this question. Is healing our primary prayer request for a sick brother? While God does heal, many times He chooses *not* to heal. And the Bible makes it clear that *it is appointed unto man once to die* (Heb 9:27), so eventually, every person will face some affliction for which there will *not* be healing in this life. Are there other requests we should make for the afflicted?

I had originally intended to cover this in one week, but there's more here than time. So, though you still have some blanks in your sermon outline, we'll hit the pause button for now, and we'll come back to those questions next week, the Lord willing, as we continue to learn what it means to be a caring community.

There is one more question that I do want to address. James says to confess our sins to each other. The question is, why? What good it is to confess my sins to my brothers? What can they do about my sin problem? And the answer is, they can't do anything about my sin problem, as far as fixing it. But they know Someone who can. And they can share Him with me, and minister His Word to me, and talk to Him for me.

That's good news if you're here this morning and struggling with sin. There is a Savior in heaven and He demonstrates His care for us through His people. He came to earth, died on a cruel cross to pay sin's penalty, rose from the dead, returned to heaven, and sent His Spirit to establish the church. And now He says to the sinner who needs help, "I've given you My Body. Open up your life to my people. They'll bring you to Me."

Next Time:

3. *The assurance is that the prayer of a righteous man is effective.*
4. *The example is Elijah (17-18).*
5. *The effect is to promote restoration (19-20).*

Make It Personal: In order to care for one another as we ought, we need to take inventory of how we are using our tongues.

1. *Are there things I need to stop doing with my tongue?*
2. *Are there things I need to start doing with my tongue?*