

A close-up, profile view of a woman's face and hands. She is looking upwards and to the right, with her hands clasped together in a prayerful gesture near her chin. The lighting is soft, highlighting her features against a dark background.

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

James 5:13-20

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

THE CONTEXT

Prayer Changes Things!



- ▶ Enduring trials & temptation through faith (1:1-16)
- ▶ Being doers of the word by faith (1:17-27)
- ▶ The sin of favoritism / prejudice (2:1-13)
- ▶ The faith that does not save and the ONLY kind of faith that does (2:14-26)
- ▶ The power of the tongue and our need to control it (3:1-12)
- ▶ Two kinds of wisdom & their fruit (3:13-4:12)
- ▶ Making our plans (4:13-17)
- ▶ Those Who Oppress You Will Be Judged - therefore Be Patient (5:1-12)

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

James 5:13–20 (NKJV)

¹³ Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms.

¹⁴ Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up.

And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. ¹⁶ Confess *your* trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.



ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

A DIFFICULT TEXT

- Does this passage promise physical healing for the Christian?
- Is this passage dealing with miraculous Divine healing?
- Is this text applicable today?



ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

Instructions to the Suffering
and Cheerful - Vs. 13

James 5:13 (NKJV)

Is anyone among
you suffering? Let
him pray. Is anyone
cheerful? Let him
sing psalms.

- **Suffering is one of the major challenges to faith** - James throughout the book has been pointing out the various ways that their faith was being tested.
- **The word translated suffering has a broad meaning** - The basic idea: to suffer evil of every type as well as prolonged affliction. The affliction could be outward or within (mental).

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

Instructions to the Suffering
and Cheerful - Vs. 13

James 5:13 (NKJV)

Is anyone among
you suffering? Let
him pray. Is anyone
cheerful? Let him
sing psalms.

- **When troubled - "Let him pray,"**
literally - Present middle imperative,
"let him keep on praying" (RWP)
- **For what should we pray?**
 - ▶ The removal of the suffering
(Luke 22:39-46; 2 Cor. 12:7-10)
 - ▶ Wisdom & strength to endure the
suffering (James 1:5)

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

Instructions to the Suffering
and Cheerful - Vs. 13

James 5:13

(NKJV)

Is anyone among
you suffering? Let
him pray. Is anyone
cheerful? Let him
sing psalms.

■ **In contrast to suffering, "Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms."**

► One who has a "cheerful mind or attitude."

■ **Proper conduct of one who is cheerful:**

► Singing praise has the power to make ANY situation better - Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Acts 16:24,25

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

Instructions to the **sick**
James 5:14-16

James 5:14 (NKJV)

Is anyone among you **sick**? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

► The word sick?

- Does the term, as used in this text, refer to physical health or spiritual health?
- Most commentators and expositors understand James to be speaking of physical health.
- If James is specifically, and merely speaking of physical health, several interpretive problems result.

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

Instructions to the sick
James 5:14-16

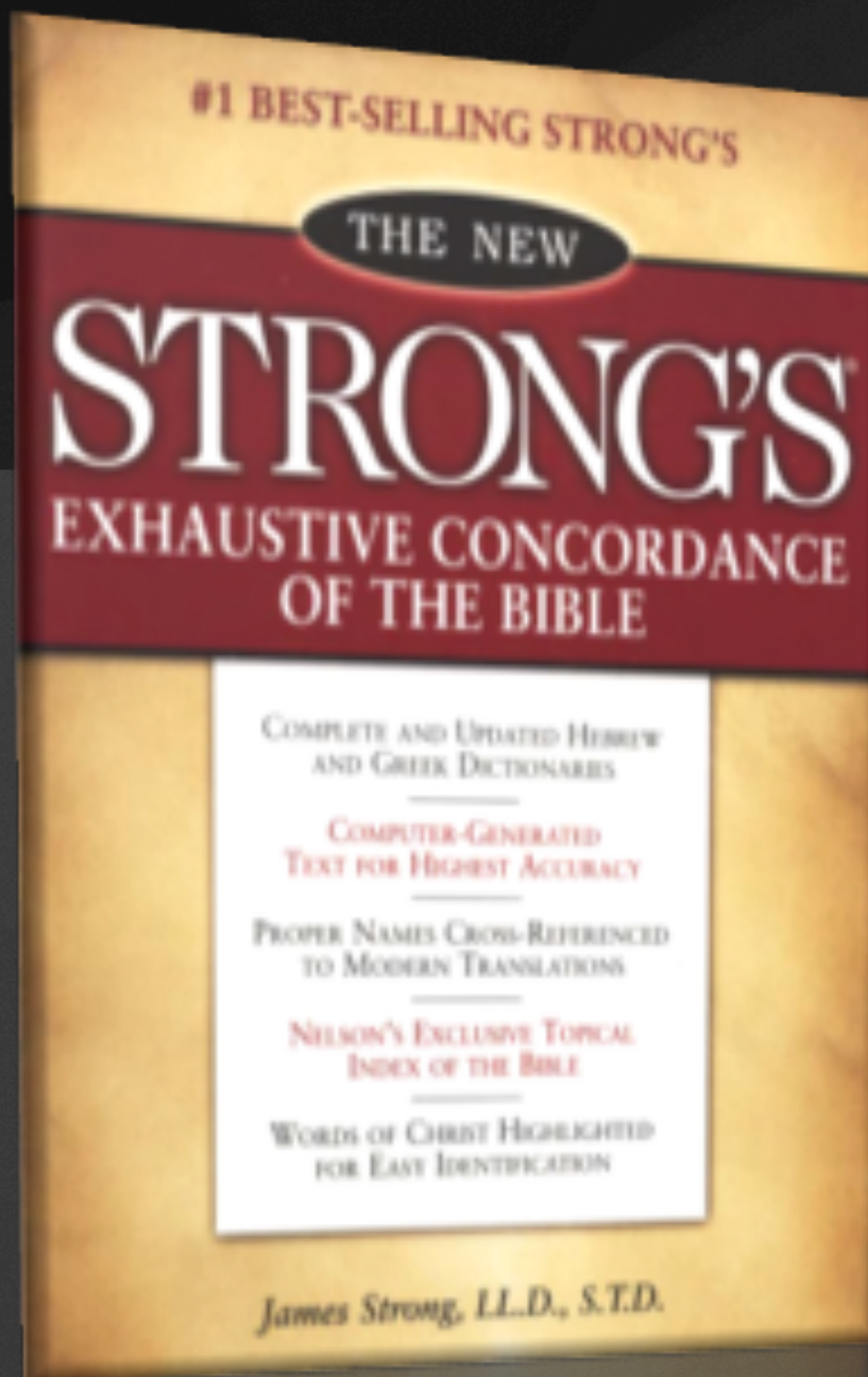
James 5:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ **Is anyone among you sick? ...**

② to experience some personal incapacity or limitation, *be weak* of weakness in general ✎ **2 Cor 12:10**; ἄ. εἰς τινα (**opp.** δυνατεῖν ἐν τινι) *be weak toward someone* **2 Cor 13:3**; cp. vss. 4, 9.—Of weakness caused by fear or caution ✎ **2 Cor 11:21** (for the satire cp. Demosth. 18, 320). Of weakness in determining correct courses of action ✎ **Ro 14:2**; **1 Cor 8:11f**; **2 Cl 17:2**; ἄ. τῇ πίστει *be weak in faith* ✎ **4:19**; **14:1** (**i.e.** over-scrupulous ✎). W. σκανδαλίζεσθαι **Ro 14:21 v.l.** Gener. of faint-heartedness and timidity ✎ **2 Cor 11:29**.—*Be weakened, disabled* (**Oenomaus** in **Eus.**, PE 5, 24, 3; **Jos.**, Bell. 2, 329, Ant. 6, 370; **Sb** 5113, 19) of the law's weakness: ἐν ᾧ ἡσθένει *because it was weakened* ✎ **Ro 8:3**.

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

Instructions to the sick
James 5:14-16

James 5:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Is anyone among you **sick**? ...



Greek Word: ἀσθενέω astheneō

Strong's Number: <G770> English Words used in KJV:
be weak 12; be sick 10; sick 7; weak 3; impotent
man 1; be diseased 1; be made weak 1 [Total: 36]
from <G772> (asthenes); to be feeble (in any
sense) :- be diseased, impotent folk (man), (be)
sick, (be, be made) weak.

Strong's Greek & Hebrew Dictionary.

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

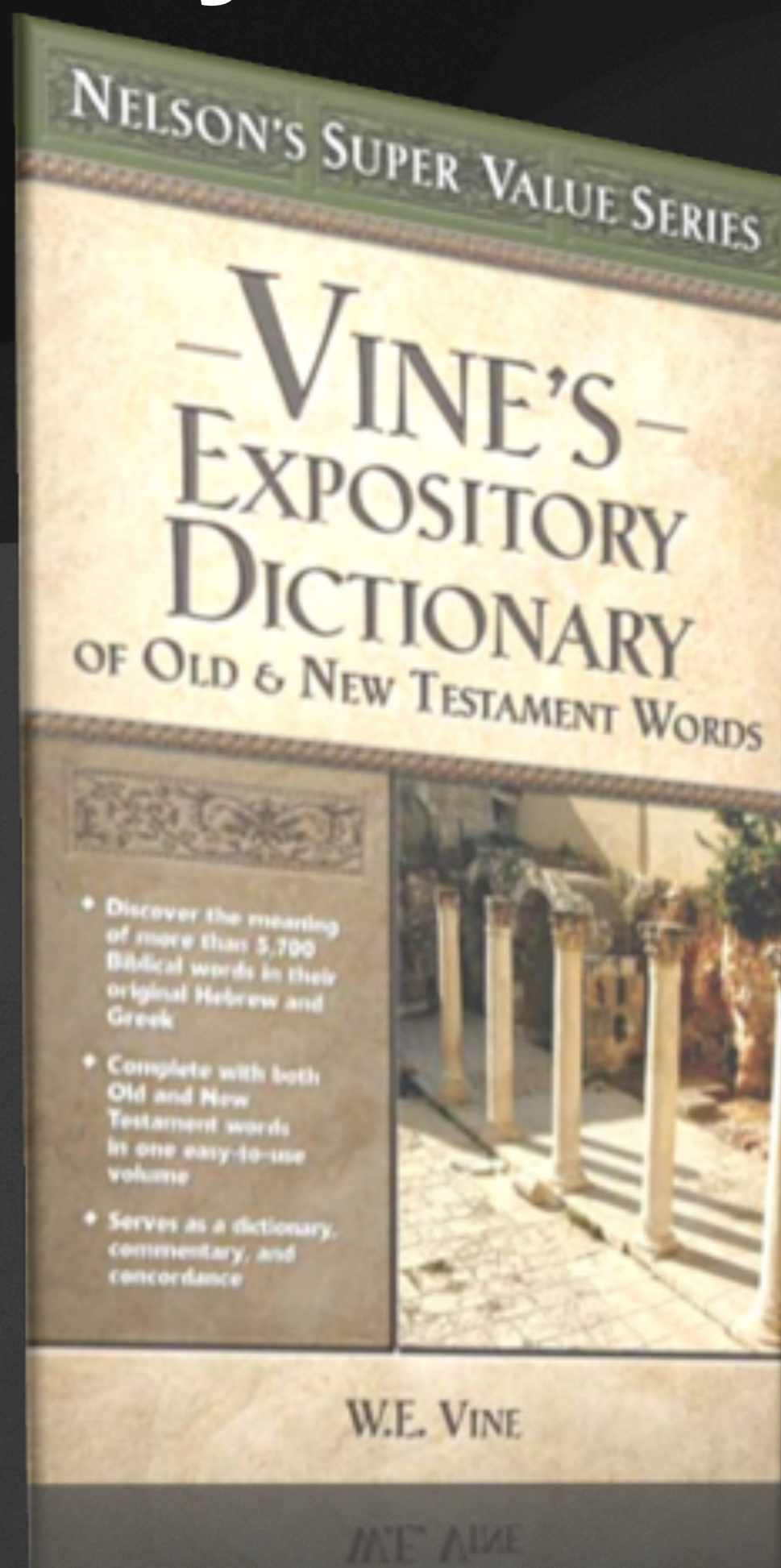
Instructions to the sick
James 5:14-16

James 5:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Is anyone among you **sick? ...**

Greek Word: ἀσθενέω astheneō

Strong's Number: <G770>

Usage Notes: lit., "to be weak, feeble" (a, negative, sthenos, "strength"), is translated "to be sick," e.g., in Matt. 10:8, "(the) sick;" Matt. 25:36; ver. 39 . . . Mark 6:56; Luke 4:40; Luke 7:10 . . . Luke 9:2; John 4:46; John 5:3, . . . John 5:7; John 6:2, . . . John 11:1-3, 6; Acts 9:37; Acts 19:12; Phil. 2:26, 27; 2 Tim. 4:20; Jas. 5:14. See DISEASED, B, No. 1, IMPOTENT, and, especially, WEAK.



Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

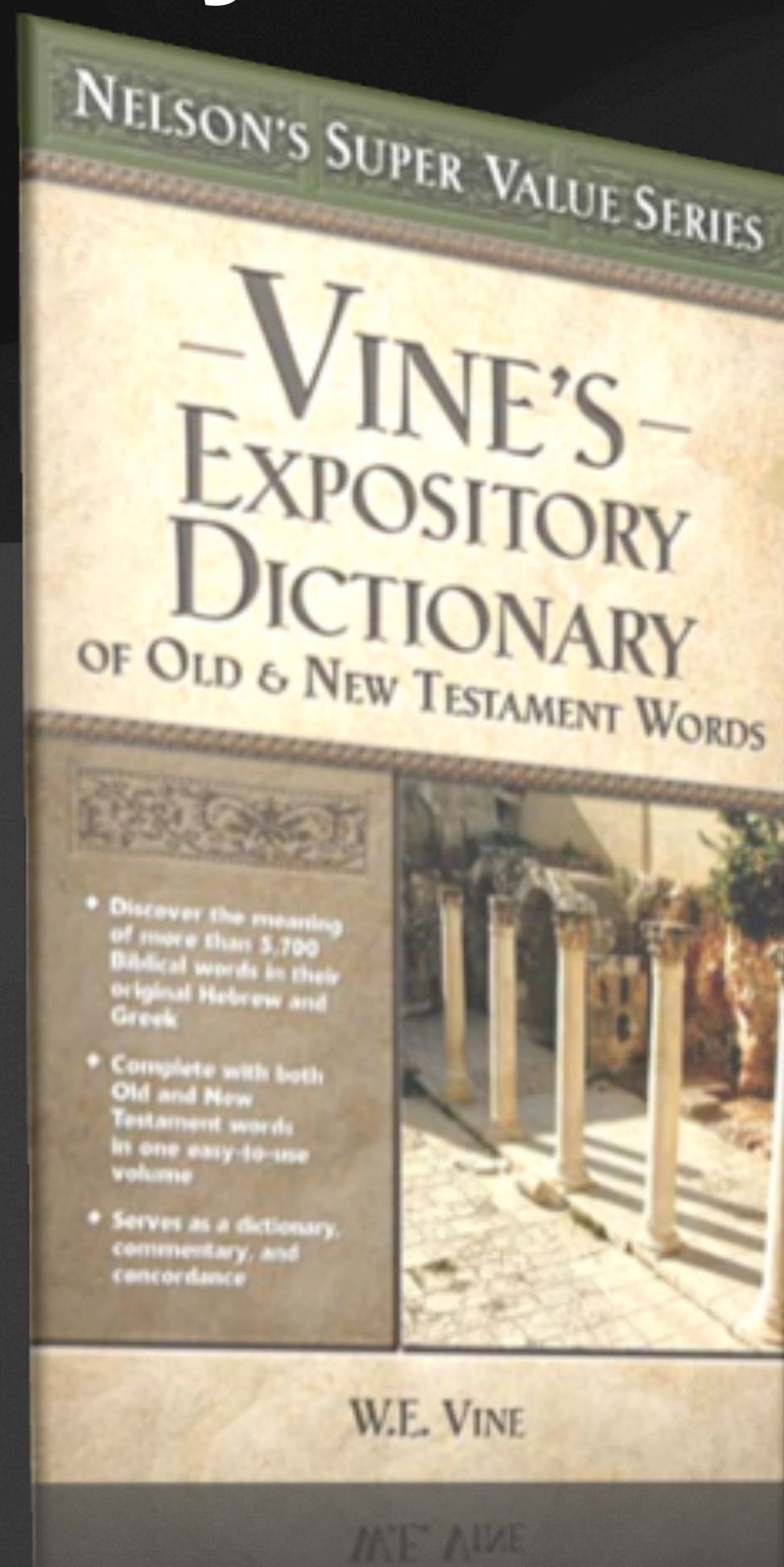
Instructions to the sick
James 5:14-16

James 5:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Is anyone among you **sick**? ...

Greek Word: ἀσθενέω astheneō

Strong's Number: <G770>

Usage Notes: "to lack strength," is used in much the same way as A, No. 1, and translated "being ... weak" in Rom. 4:19, AV (RV, "being weakened"); Rom. 8:3; Rom. 14:1, 2 (in some texts, 1 Cor. 8:9); 2 Cor. 11:21, 29 (twice); 2 Cor. 12:10; 2 Cor. 13:3, 4, 9.



Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

Instructions to the sick
James 5:14-16

<G770> - ἀσθενέω, astheneōlit., "to be weak, feeble" (a, negative, sthenos, "strength")



- **Romans 8:3 (NKJV)** - 3 . . . the law . . . was weak (astheneō) through the flesh
- **Romans 14:1-2 (NKJV)** - 1 Receive one who is weak in the faith, . . . 2 . . . he who is weak (astheneō) eats only vegetables.
- **1 Cor 8:9 (NKJV)** - 9 . . . a stumbling block to those who are weak. (astheneō)
- **2 Cor 13:4 (NKJV)** - 4 . . . He was crucified in weakness, [769] yet He lives by the power of God. we also are weak [770 (astheneō)] in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you.

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

Instructions to the sick
James 5:14-16

<G770> - ἀσθενέω, astheneōlit., "to be weak, feeble" (a, negative, sthenos, "strength")

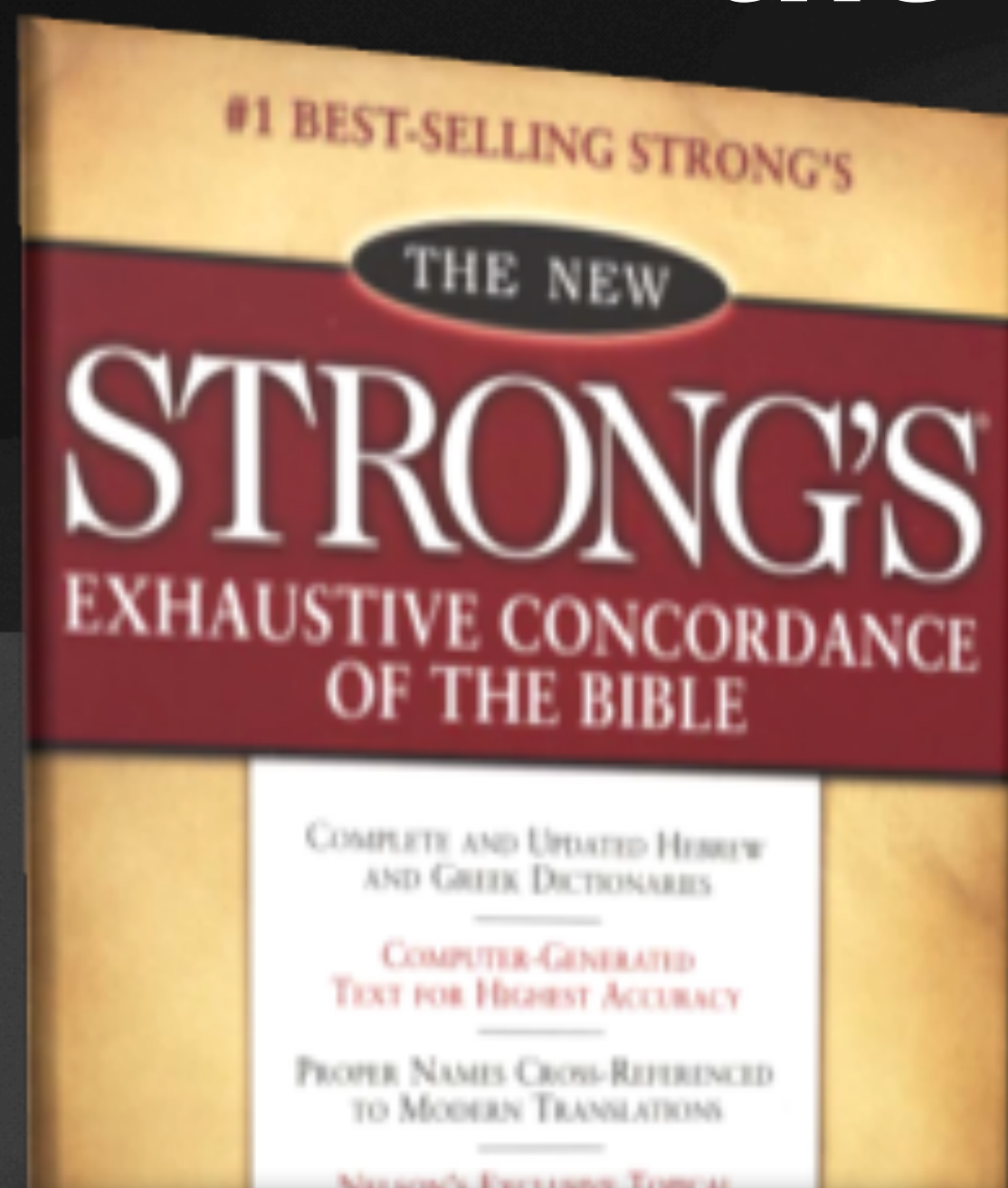


2 Corinthians 12:10 (NKJV)
Therefore I take pleasure in
infirmities, in reproaches, in needs,
in persecutions, in distresses, for
Christ's sake. For when I am weak,
(astheneō) then I am strong.

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

Instructions to the sick
James 5:14-16

“the prayer of faith will save the **sick” vs 15**



**“the prayer of
faith will save
the sick” vs 15**

Greek Word: κάμνω - kamnō

Strong's Number: <G2577> - Part of Speech: v

English Words used in KJV:

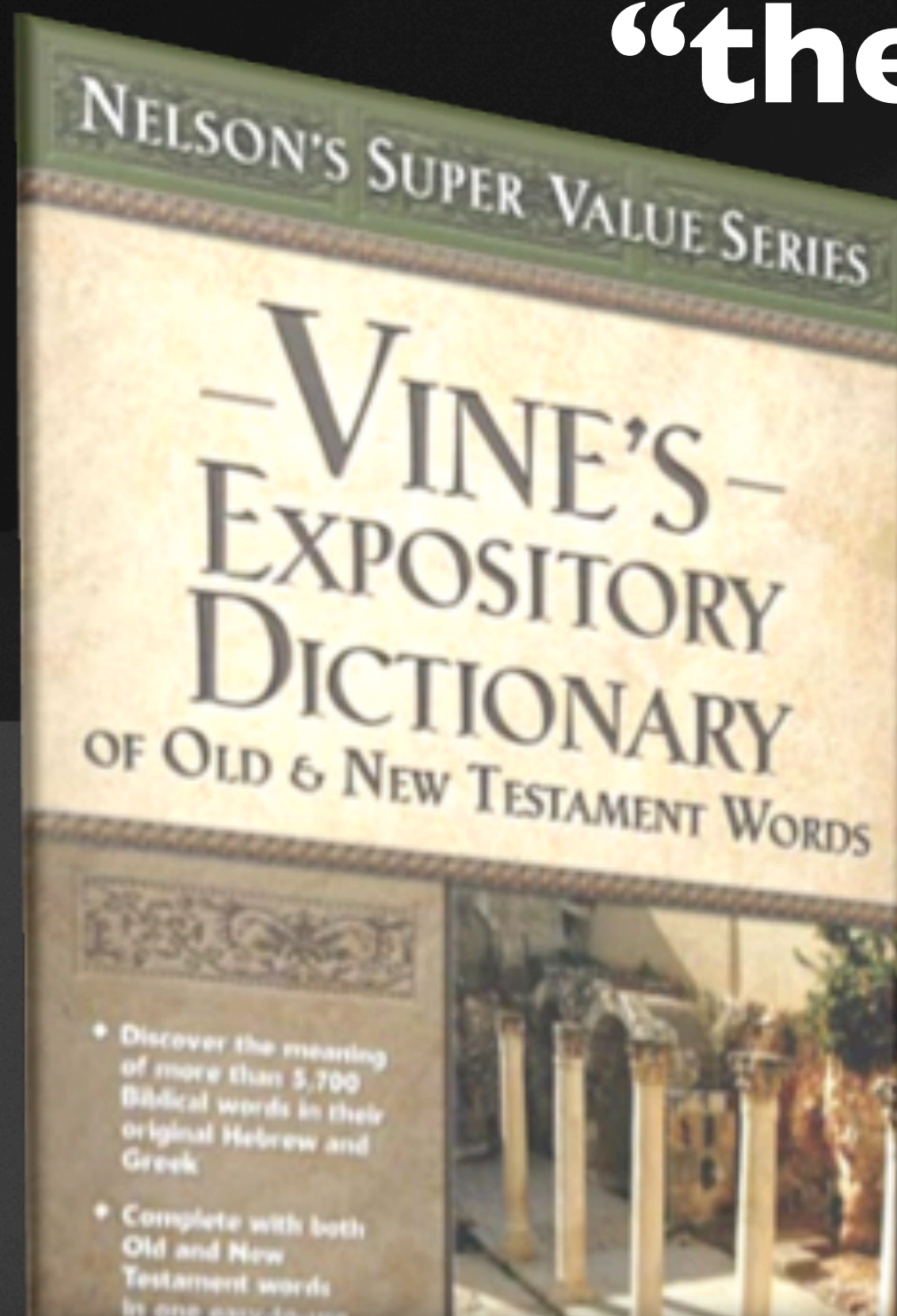
be wearied 1; sick 1; faint 1; [Total Count: 3]
apparently a primary verb; properly to toil, i.e.
(by implication) to tire (figurative faint,
sicken) :- faint, sick, be wearied.

Strong's Talking Greek & Hebrew Dictionary.

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

Instructions to the sick
James 5:14-16

“the prayer of faith will save the **sick” vs 15**



**“the prayer of
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Greek Word: κάμνω - kamnō

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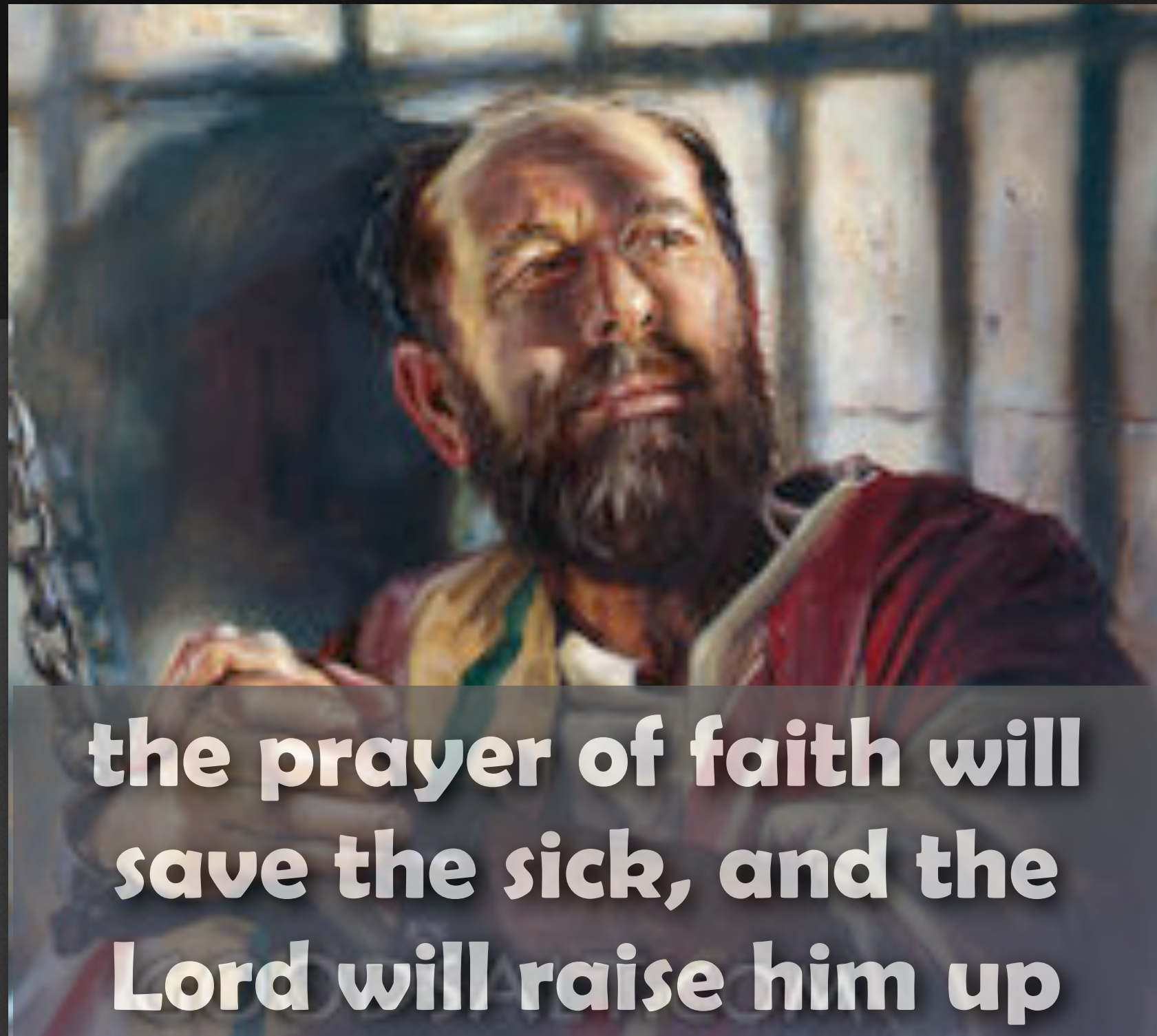
Usage Notes: primarily signified "to work;" then, as the effect of continued labor, "to be weary;" it is used in Heb. 12:3, of becoming "weary" (see also No. 1), RV, "wax not weary;" in Jas. 5:15, of sickness; some mss. have it in Rev. 2:3, AV, "hast (not) fainted," RV, "grown weary." See SICK, WEARY.

Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

Instructions to the sick
James 5:14-16

“the prayer of faith will save the **sick” vs 15**



**the prayer of faith will
save the sick, and the
Lord will raise him up**

Hebrews 12:3–4 (NKJV)

³ For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become **weary** (kamnō) and discouraged in your souls. ⁴ You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

Instructions to the sick
James 5:14-16

James 5:14-16 (NKJV)

¹³ Is anyone among you **suffering**? Let him pray.

kakopatheo (κακοπαθέω, 2553), to suffer physical pain, hardship and distress

¹⁴ Is anyone among you **sick**? Let him call for the elders...

astheneo (ἀσθενέω, 770), akin to A, No. 1, “to lack strength, to be weak, sick,” ...

¹⁵ And the prayer of faith will save the **sick**, and the Lord will raise him up.

kamno (κάμνω, 2577) “to work”; then, as the effect of continued labor, “to be weary”

¹⁶ Confess *your* trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be **healed**.

iaomai (ἰάομαι, 2390), “to heal,” is rendered “to make whole,”

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

Instructions to the sick
James 5:14-16

“IF ANY OF YOU” - POSSIBLE CONDITIONS



INSTRUCTION / RESULT

will save the sick ... the Lord will raise him up ... he will be forgiven.

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

Instructions to the sick
James 5:14-16

IF JAMES IS SPECIFICALLY, AND MERELY SPEAKING OF PHYSICAL HEALTH, SEVERAL INTERPRETIVE PROBLEMS RESULT.



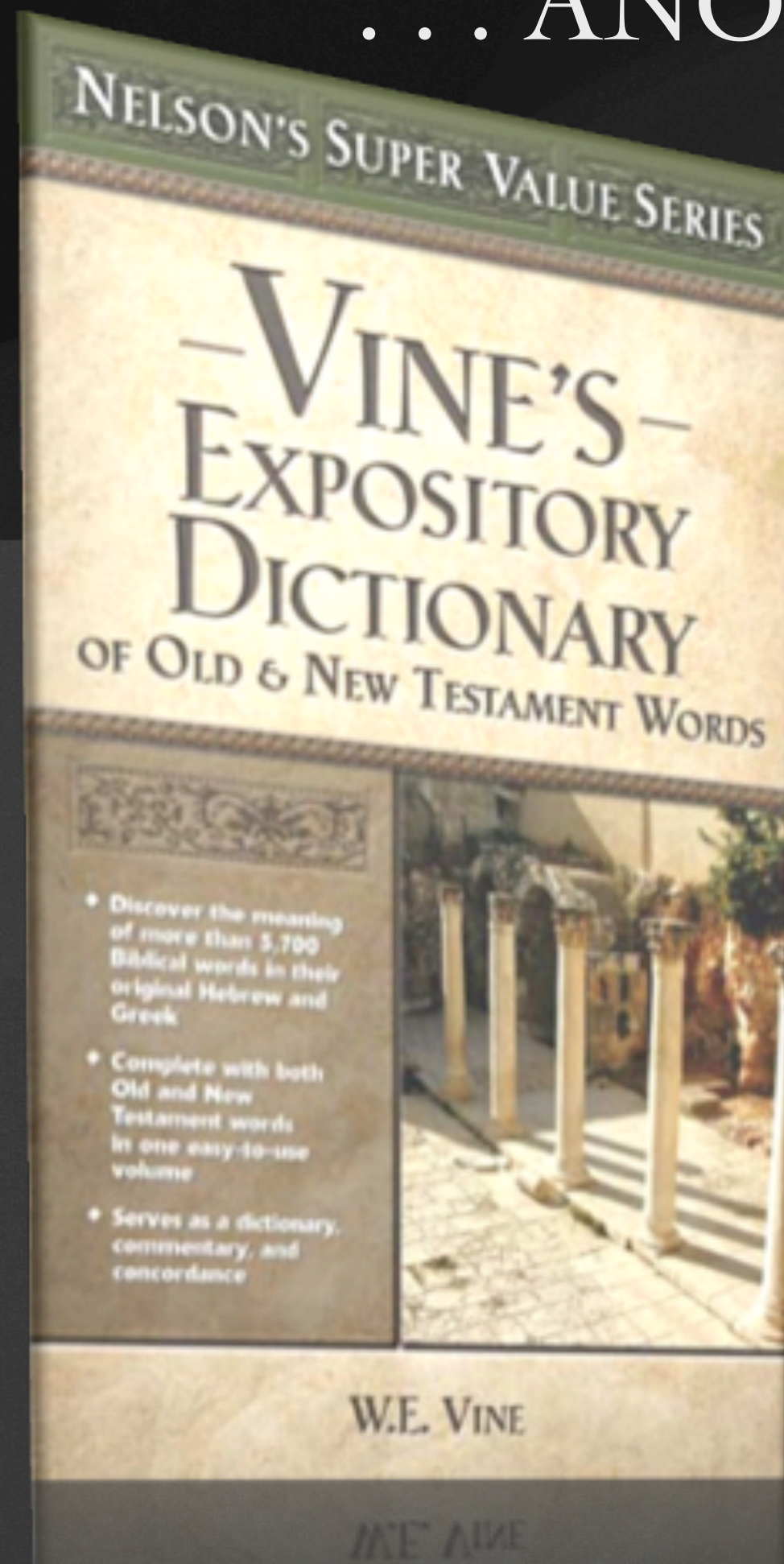
**the prayer of faith will
save the sick, and the
Lord will raise him up**

- Did Paul not pray that his thorn in the flesh be healed by faith – Why didn't he call for the elders? (2 Cor. 12:7-10)
- Why did Paul leave Trophimus in Miletus sick? (2 Tim. 4:20)
- Why did Paul tell Timothy: "No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities." (1 Tim 5:23)
- If this passage is promising physical healing – what would it take for a Christian to die of sickness?

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

Instructions to the sick
James 5:14-16

CALL THE ELDERS, LET THEM PRAY,
... ANOINTING WITH OIL, IN THE NAME OF JESUS (14)



aleipho (ἀλείφω, 218) is a general term used for “an anointing” of any kind, whether of physical refreshment after washing, e.g., in the Sept. of Ruth 3:3; 2 Sam. 12:20; Dan. 10:3; Micah 6:15; in the NT, Matt. 6:17; Luke 7:38, 46; John 11:2; 12:3; or of the sick, Mark 6:13; Jas. 5:14; or a dead body, Mark 16:1.

Vine, W. E., Unger, M. F., & White, W., Jr. (1996). Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words. Nashville, TN: T. Nelson.

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

Instructions to the sick
James 5:14-16

CALL THE ELDERS, LET THEM PRAY,
... ANOINTING WITH OIL, IN THE NAME OF JESUS (14)



The word “anoint” is aleipsantes (“rub with oil”) not chriō (“ceremonially anoint”). The former is the “mundane” word and the latter is “the sacred and religious word”

(Richard Chenevix Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament*, ninth ed. Reprint. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1950, pp. 136-7).

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

Instructions to the sick
James 5:14-16

CALL THE ELDERS, LET THEM PRAY,
... ANOINTING WITH OIL, IN THE NAME OF JESUS (14)



“... James is not suggesting a ceremonial or ritual anointing as a means of divine healing; Instead, he is referring to the common practice of using oil as a means of bestowing honor, refreshment, and grooming”

(Daniel R. Hayden, “Calling the Elders to Pray,” Bibliotheca Sacra 138.
July-September 1981:264).

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

Instructions to the sick
James 5:14-16

CALL THE ELDERS, LET THEM PRAY,
... ANOINTING WITH OIL, IN THE NAME OF JESUS (14)

Luke 10:34



So he went to him and
bandaged his wounds,
pouring on oil and wine;

she kissed His feet and
anointed them with the
fragrant oil.



Luke 7:38

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

Instructions to the sick
James 5:14-16

CALL THE ELDERS, LET THEM PRAY,
... ANOINTING WITH OIL, IN THE NAME OF JESUS (14)



- LXX “³ Therefore wash yourself and anoint yourself, put on your *best* garment” (Ruth 3:3)
- A host “put oil” (aleiphō) on the head of his guest (Luke 7:46).
- A person who is fasting should not be sad and ungroomed, but should “put oil” (aleiphō) on his head, and wash his face (Matt. 6:17).
- ² It was *that* Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, (John. 11:2; 12:3)

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

Instructions to the sick
James 5:14-16

CALL THE ELDERS, LET THEM PRAY,
... ANOINTING WITH OIL, IN THE NAME OF JESUS (14)

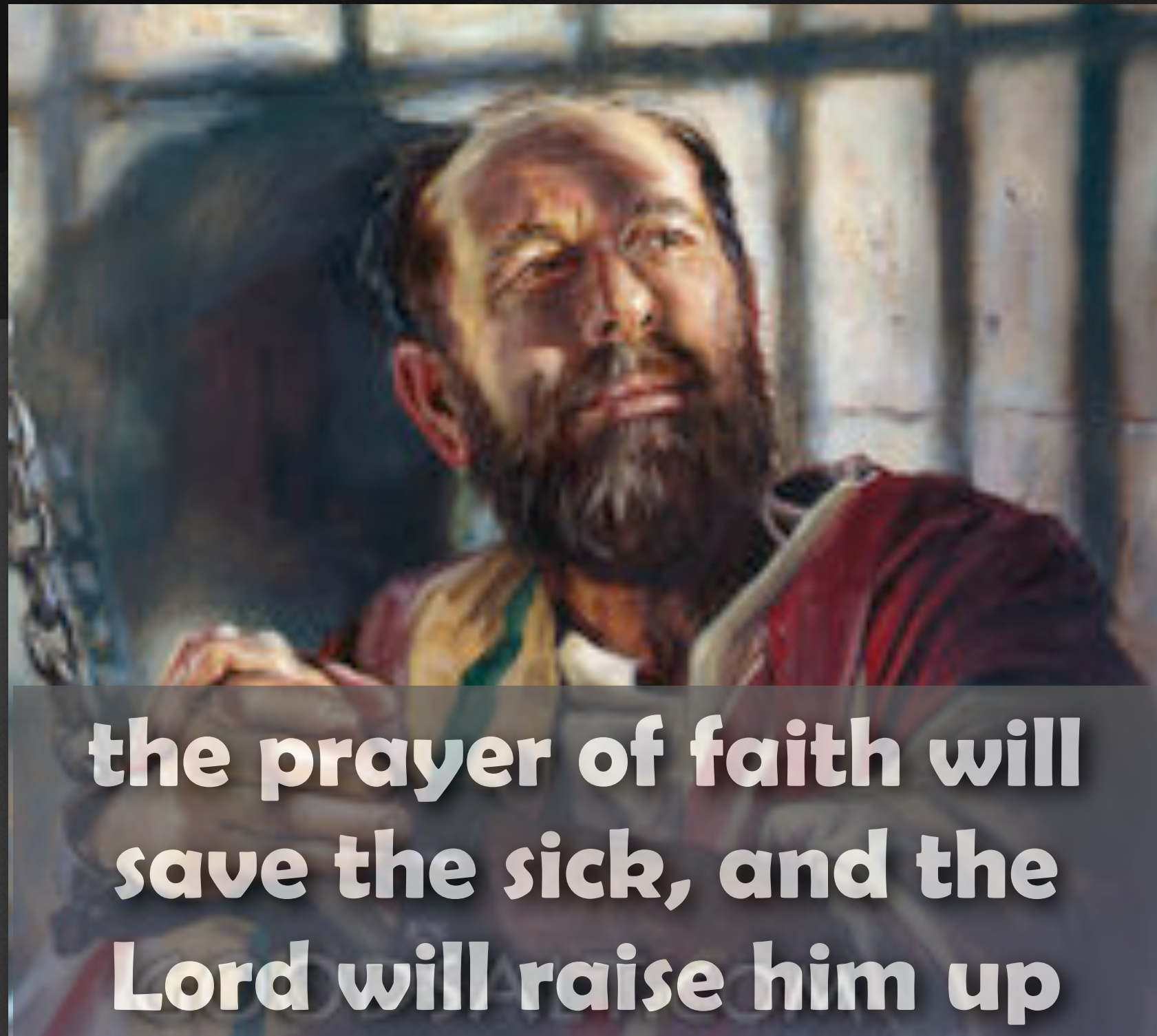


- Thus James' point is that the “weak” (asthenei) and “weary” (kamnonta) would be encouraged, uplifted, and strengthened to return to service by the elders who prayed for them and refreshed them by pouring oil on the despondents' heads.

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

Instructions to the sick
James 5:14-16

<G770> - ἀσθενέω, astheneōlit., "to be weak, feeble" (a, negative, sthenos, "strength")



**the prayer of faith will
save the sick, and the
Lord will raise him up**

- **Need for FAITH in trials – 1:2-6**
- **Blessed is the man that endures temptation – 1:13**
- **Prosecuted by the rich – 2:6,7**
- **Submission, repentance, humility - the Lord will lift us up – 4:7-9**
- **Poor Christians being defrauded – 5:4**
- **Need for patience in suffering – 5:7-12**

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

Instructions to the sick
James 5:14-16



- The need for qualified elders!
(1 Tim 3:1-7)
- The need for elders to feed the flock
(Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2)
- The need for elders to watch over the
souls of those whom they are
overseers (Heb 13:17; 1 Pet 5:2)
- The need for Christians to call the
elders when they are weak (Ja 5:14)

ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

Instructions to the sick
James 5:14-16

THE POWER OF PRAYER (VERSE 16)

¹⁶ Confess *your* trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

- Confess your sins, or trespasses (1 John 1:9,10)
- Confess to one another (Prov 28:13; Mat 18:15)
- That you may be healed (Heb 12:12,13)
- "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" - thus the need to call for the elders (Gen. 18:23–32; Num. 11:2; Job 42:8; Jno. 9:31).






ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

James 5:13-20

- The text promises God's aide and deliverance in times of suffering IF WE TRUST AND OBEY HIM!
- If our faith is weak - are we willing to call for someone whose faith is strong?
- If we have sinned - are we willing to confess our sin that we may be forgiven?



ACCESSING SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH THE PRAYER OF FAITH

James 5:13-20

Charts by Don McClain

Preached November 26, 2023

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Verse 14

Concerning Sickness

"Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord;"

"Is anyone among you sick?"-As you probably have guessed there are a number of questions in this section of Scripture. Is this a physical illness or a spiritual illness? While the word translated "sick" is usually used in reference to physical illness, the word translated "sick" in is only used for a spiritual condition. The word in this verse literally means to be feeble, sick, weak or lack strength. Arndt says, "of bodily weakness, be sick" (p. 115).

The interpretation of spiritual sickness would allege that here is an individual who may or may not have committed sins (). He might be discouraged or depressed, spiritually weak and calls upon the elders of the church for assistance.

"Let him call for the elders of the church"-Note the personal responsibility that is stressed. "We are not to get sick and then complain that no one cares and comes to see us. We are commanded to call the elders and tell them we are sick. We as a people have a responsibility to inform those who lead us of the needs we have" (Draper p. 159). "The sick person is to take the initiative; others do not do it for him" (Kent p. 188).

Points To Note:

1. The individuals being called are the elders of the local congregation. Far from being an office that **"evolved"** in the early church, we find a plurality of elders shepherding local congregations early on in the history of the church ([Acts 14:23](#)). 2. Note that the elders are called, "Nor are these persons priests, as the Catholic Douay Version mistakenly translates" (Kent p. 188). For other passages on elders see [Acts 20:17](#); [Acts 20:28](#); [Philippians 1:1](#); [Titus 1:5](#) ff; [1 Peter 5:1-3](#); [1 Thessalonians 5:12](#); [Hebrews 13:17](#); [1 Timothy 3:1](#) ff.

"and let them pray over him"-that is to pray on his behalf.

"anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord"-Some view this as a figurative expression, i.e. when the elders are praying for him they are figuratively anointing him with oil. To me it seems that the statement is literal, but let it be noted that this doesn't mean that there are inherent miraculous healing properties in the oil being used. This oil is administered by the elders and the healing under consideration is linked with the prayer of faith and not the oil itself (). McGarvey notes, "The anointing of the sick with oil was not expected to contribute to the cure; for, apart from its inadequacy as a remedy, it could not, in the nature of the case, contribute to a miraculous cure. This was the anointing of a man who was about to be cured-----this was preparatory to going forth once more into the enjoyments of life" (Matthew/Mark, p. 301). See [Mark 6:3](#). Or, in other words the anointing with oil was to a way of saying, "Be prepared to get back to your regular duties in life". Being anointed with oil in that culture was comparable to a person in our culture who has been sick taking a bath, shaving, or putting on makeup-it was a clear indication that you would be getting better. Note that there is nothing magical about the oil, for Jesus healed at times without using any oil ([Mark 7:1-37](#), [John 9:1-41](#)).

Extreme Unction

The Roman Catholic Church appeals to [James 5:14](#) to support the doctrine of **"Extreme Unction"**. In this doctrine the anointing is considered a sacrament conveying spiritual grace (assuring pardon of unforgiven sins) to the sick in danger of death. But as Kent notes, "Yet that was clearly not the purpose in mind of James, who gave this procedure for restoration of health, not in preparation for death. Not until the end of the eighth century is there any record in the church of anointing with oil to prepare for imminent death (except among a few Gnostic sects)" (p. 189). Once again note the differences between what James presents and the practice of extreme unction: 1. Elders are called for-not priests. 2. Recovery is promised (5:15), rather than impending death. 3. Forgiveness of sins is not due to the oil, or the prayers of the elders per se. But rather, the person who is sick is demonstrating an attitude of wanting and needing help. 4. This person isn't in the last stages of life, for they have called for the elders.

Christians And Healing

1. Some say that the point of the above passage is that we are to pray and then do everything physically necessary, go see the doctor, take medication, and so on. While such is often true, it isn't the point being made in the above passage. The Bible doesn't have anything against physicians ([Matthew](#)