



# Sunday Teaching Guide

## Five Directions, Week 3

### August 20, 2023

#### Bible Texts

- Proverbs 27:17
- Hebrews 10:24-25
- James 5:13-16

#### Important Terms

- Spur: give an incentive or encouragement to someone.

#### Sermon Notes

- We all need those intentional relationships in our lives where someone knows exactly who we are, but loves us enough to not leave us that way. The problem for many of us is that we don't have the systems in place to create these kinds of relationships. A lot of us have incidental relationships, built on the short conversation, the quick hello, or the nod to a familiar face.
- What we need is that person who asks how we're doing and really means it. We all need that person who knows when things aren't cool and when we've walked alone for far too long. Maybe we don't create a lot of intentional relationships like that out of a sense of fear, rejection, or judgment. The only way for us to authentically encourage or spur each other on is to know where we need encouragement, support, and accountability.
- We need to be spurred on by others into the people God wants us to be, but there are times we fail. Rather than sit in that reality, James wants us to confess to each other, pray for each other, and find healing and wholeness with each other.
- Most of us are afraid of confessing this stuff because we wonder what other people will think of us. However, those people likely have the same fears. All of us have something big going on in our lives. We all need encouragement and support from those around us. All of us need to be invited and invite others, but we all need to be willing to reach out our hands and grasp the hand of another in our church community as we walk this journey we call faith. We weren't made to do it alone. We need each other.

#### Reflection Questions

- Why do you think we have a tendency to avoid intentional relationships and gravitate toward incidental relationships? What do we fear when we open ourselves up to other people?
- Which people in your life do you have incidental relationships with?
- Which people in your life do you have intentional relationships with?
- Is there someone in your life that you make it a point to provide encouragement and support to? What do you do?
- How would you explain to someone who is reluctant to engage in community the importance of community for Christians?
- In what ways do you think Jesus encouraged us in his life and teachings to engage in community with one another?

#### Prayer for the Week

- God, you call us to love and serve you with body, mind, and spirit through loving your creation and our sisters and brothers. Open our hearts to those around us to join in community with one another, spurring each other on to better love and serve you. Amen.

#### Additional Readings

- Romans 15:1-4
- 1 Thessalonians 5:11
- 2 Corinthians 1:4-5