

*By this all people will know
that you are my disciples,
if you have love for one another*

John 13:35



Smoky Hill church of Christ
2023 Theme

“By this the world will know”	John 13:35	January
“Forgiveness and Patience”	Col. 3:13; Eph. 4:32	February
“Honoring one another”	Rom. 12:10	March
“A warm welcome”	1 Pt. 4:9-10; Rom. 16:16, 15:7	April
“Encourage one another”	1 Thess. 5:11; Heb. 3:13	May
“Serve one another”	Gal. 5:13, 6:2; 1 Cor. 12:25; Phil. 2:3-4	June
“Sing and teach”	Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16	July
“Pray and confess”	James 5:16	August
“Show humility to each other”	1 Pt. 5:5; Eph. 5:21; Phil. 2:3	September
“Be like-minded”	Rom. 12:16, 15:5	October
“Admonish one another”	Rom. 15:14; Col. 3:16; Eph. 4:15, 25	November
“The test of our love”	1 John 4:7	December

“Therefore, **confess your sins to one another,**
and **pray for one another,**
that you may be healed. The
prayer of a righteous person has
great power as it is working.”

James 5:16 (ESV)

What this verse is not saying:

- ▶ We confess our sins to each other because we have some kind of power to forgive sin
- ▶ We never see a place in the NT where we confess our sins to man as a means of having them forgiven (1 John 1, Psm 32:5, Heb 9:15)
- ▶ So why confess our sins to others at all?

Confess and Pray:

- ▶ It seems these two commands should be together, what is the purpose of confessing your sins, so others can pray for you
- ▶ So what should we pray for?
 - ▶ that they may be saved (Rom 10:1)
 - ▶ give thanks for them - God gives them wisdom and knowledge of God (Eph 1:16)
 - ▶ They become partners in gospel (Phil 1:3-5)
 - ▶ Thanks for their faith & love - That you can help build their faith (1 Thess 3:9-10)

Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. (Galatians 6:1-3 ESV)

Confess and Pray:

- ▶ If you see someone stumbling in sin, gently and lovingly do something about it
- ▶ “Bear one another’s burdens”
- ▶ We have to reject individualism for us and others to fulfill this command
- ▶ We are a family - in good times - and in bad - we share these burdens together

So what is stopping us:

▶ Pride

- ▶ James 4 - warning regarding worldliness
- ▶ V6 “...“God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”
- ▶ It is humiliating to admit you have made a mistake - even more so to admit you have sinned against God
- ▶ Society has taught us, especially men, not to show weakness

So what is stopping us:

- ▶ Pride

- ▶ Fear

- ▶ Of what - rejection - lowering someone's opinion of you

- ▶ We need to have a bond of love and unity with someone(s) in the church that we feel comfortable enough to go to, talk it out, and pray with (Gal 6)

So what is stopping us:

- ▶ Pride

- ▶ Fear

- ▶ Sin

- ▶ In order to admit sin, we have to be ready to let go of sin

- ▶ Heb 12:1 “...let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely...”

- ▶ We have to let down our guard to establish these kinds of relationships - (1 Cor 13:6-7)

Why do we need pray?

- ▶ The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. (James 5:16 ESV)
- ▶ Prayers of those that turn to sin are an abomination (Prov 28:9)
- ▶ Having one (or a group) righteous person praying for us have “great power as it is working”

Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth.

Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit.

(James 5:17-18 ESV)

Why we want prayers of saints?

- ▶ Elijah did great things but “with a nature like ours”
- ▶ It is God that can do great things - both in nature and spiritually
- ▶ Prayer has great power as it puts our request before the Almighty
- ▶ Why wouldn't you want people praying for you?

We are not alone in our struggles

- ▶ No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. (1 Cor 10:13)
- ▶ We all struggle with sin - Rom 3:23 - for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
- ▶ Let's strive to be the kind of person that people will reach out to help with spiritual needs.
- ▶ Let's not forget to pray