

James 5:19-20 Bearing Burden of Restoration (not Evangelism)

I am going to disagree with a very popular interpretation among the some of the commentaries I most commonly use.

- v. 19 “among you” “is caused to stray from the Truth” – could be taken for failing Christian, or a lost church member, **but not if** Galatians 6:1 (and v 10) is considered as a parallel passage!
I John 5:16-17 definite parallel with Galatians 6:1
- v. 20a “save a soul from death” again, could refer to unsaved members, **but not if** in parallel with I John 5:16-17
- v. 20b “cover a multitude of sin” again, could refer to unsaved members, **but not if** James is describing restoration as an act of love, citing Proverbs 10:12. Peter also cites the passage in specific regard to love based in I Peter 4:8-9.

Bottom line, this passage may reasonably be interpreted as regarding the evangelism of lost church members, but the most natural interpretation, and one which is expanded in the next NT book written (Galatians), is that this refers to restoring a Christian who has become caught up in sin.

ⁱ http://www.westpalmbeachchurchofchrist.com/articles/diff_quest/anointing_oil.html

ⁱⁱ SBTS Louisville, KY, Th.M 1888

ⁱⁱⁱ Historian 37-100 AD

^{iv} Example, Mishnah Beruah, section 202, paragraph 80