

Attacks on the Rich

Pastor Jeff Bucknam | James 5:1–6

NOTE: As a guide, use these questions to help with group discussion. Not all questions are needed. Select the ones that will best serve your group as you grow in Christ together through His Word. Soli Deo Gloria.

ICE BREAKER:

What does it take to be considered rich or wealthy in your community? In the broader culture?
And (classic small group question): What would you do with \$1 million?

UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT IN CONTEXT:

James has a certain group of the 'rich' in mind. They are not just all the people with wealth, but people who are using that wealth in wicked ways. For more about this group, read James 1:9-11 and James 2:1-7. This is not the first time that God has spoken about misused wealth. Describe the similarities in James with Isaiah (Is 13:6) and Jesus (Luke 6:24-25).

How do James' vivid descriptions – of the miseries of money – help drive home his warning in James 5:1-6?

CONNECTING TO JESUS AND HIS GOSPEL:

Jesus gives a helpful diagnostic about wealth: our 'treasure' points to what our heart most values (Luke 12:34). How is that principle illustrated by the young man in Matt 19:16-30, by Zachaeus in Luke 19:1-10, and by the woman in Luke 7:36-50?

LIVING OUT THE TRUTH:

James highlights four ways the rich abuse their wealth: hoarding (v. 4), defrauding (v.5), self-indulgence (v. 5), and leveraging power (v. 5). Are you prone to any of these in particular? Why? Since our treasure is an indication of where our heart is, what does that say about your heart? (Matthew 6:21)?

Read Matthew 6:19-24. What specific action this week will give evidence that you serve God, not money?

Pray for one another: that Christ and His Kingdom will be our greatest treasure.

PARENTING MOMENT AND FAMILY FOCUS:

Read the passage together. Spend some time with your spouse and/or kids talking about the joys and dangers of money. Ask each other how we are to steward what God has given us, whether in plenty or not.

FURTHER STUDY:

From Desiring God ministries (DesiringGod.org), read 'Giving in the Greatest Wealth.'



True Religion

THE BOOK OF JAMES

This page gets us into the text for the next sermon. The more familiarity we have with God's Word, the better we can see God and all that He has for us.

In the days leading up to next weekend, set aside a few minutes to read the text and reflect on these questions. A prayer to start: 'Open my eyes that I may behold wonderful things out of your law' - Psalm 119:18

- 1. What themes and words are most repeated in James 5:7-12?**
- 2. What can we learn from farmers?**
- 3. What connection do you see between some of the commands from James (Be patient [v. 7, 8], do not grumble [v. 9], do not 'swear' [v. 12])? What is James concerned about for his readers?**
- 4. Why does James describe 'the coming of the Lord' right after his instruction to 'establish your hearts' (v. 8)?**
- 5. What in this text confuses you?**
- 6. What in this text compels you?**
- 7. Pray for a steadfast faith (James 5:11). How does the beginning of James help us with being steadfast (James 1:1-12)? What does James describe about God, His character, and His actions (in both James 1:1-12 and James 5:7-12) that encourage us to remain steadfast?**