

MAN²MAN

James Chapter 5

V1-6 Throughout history there has been wide gaps among the wealth of people. The poor desire more money so they have a simple life, the rich desire more money just to have more money. James inverts the common thought that riches and wealth will make you happy and he reveals the truth that trusting in riches is an inevitable misery!

I believe the *rich* in this context speaks of those who put their hope and their trust in financial security. This hope is foolish for many reasons, primarily because you do not know what tomorrow will bring. Turn to Matthew 6:19-21 and discuss what Jesus had to say about putting our trust in earthly treasures.

V4- God's view on economy is different than man's view for sure! Where man withholds from his employees simply because it is common practice in the business, God sees a fraudulent employer that is taking from impoverished employees to build personal excess. God is very much aware of motive and methods of business!

V5- James uses the imagery of a cow being fattened up before slaughter. The greedy rich are like that cow; they are happy to have pleasure and luxury and excess, thinking they have it made. They will be held accountable for what they have done.

V7,8- Therefore- In light of the economic realities, *be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord.* Patience requires wisdom and persistence. Wisdom to know how to wait and persistence to stay the course concerning what wisdom has shown you. Patience also requires awareness; being aware that the Lord will return and reconcile all things that matter.

V9- If you want to "*grumble*" then open the door and grumble to the Lord! (not recommended)

V10,11 When we read the Bible with open eyes and humble hearts we see that everyone has trials, heartaches and suffering. What we must remember is that our situations do not determine how God is, even those whose life story He preserved through scripture endured hardship. We learn who God is from the reading of His Word, the revealing truths brought by the Holy Spirit and by faithfully believing what the Bible says. John 3:16 has always been my foundation for understanding the nature and ways of God.

V12- swear- To invoke, call upon... such as "I swear on my mama's grave, I will..." A Christian should not need to show by swearing or taking oath that they will do what they said they would do, "*But let your "Yes" be "Yes." and your "No," "No"..."* judgement- deceit, hypocrisy. Sadly, within the church a person's word does not mean they will do what they said they would do. If you are prone to making excuses, listen to what your 'excuse' is as if it was someone saying that to you. It is not as convincing when we hear what we are saying.

V13-18 Be spiritually alive and active.(Romans 12:9-21

V14- Not all elders have the gift of healing but all who fulfill their calling have the gift of faith. This verse speaks to the elder leaders in the church but is not limited to the ruling group. *Anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.* This 'method' does not have power in the practice, the power comes by faith in the Lord. Anointing with oil is symbolic of the Holy Spirit being invited as well as being present.

V15- Some are healed with the ultimate healing, that is they depart this body and enter into His presence in the heavenly realm. Others experience God's healing touch upon their bodies in this world. The Lord raises up those who seek His forgiveness as they humbly believe in Him.

V16- In some situations this is a public and open personal declaration. I believe you should know the one you are confessing to; is that person prayerful, are they trustworthy, will they come alongside you or will they come down on you.

Righteous- Turn to Philippians 3:9,10 to understand God's description of righteousness

V17, 18- Elijah is presented as a righteous, prayerful, faithful man who believed God would do a great work during the days of Elijah. Elijah did not tell God to do great things, Elijah looked to God to do great things!

V19,20 Look out for each other, help one another! It is important that we consider one another in order to stir up love and good works (Hebrews 10:24). In considering one another, pray for those you are concerned about. After praying then engage with the person who has wandered off course or is 'back-sliding' (think; steep icy hill in a sports car). It is an amazing experience to help someone get traction and see them continue with the Lord.

(1Peter 4:8, Proverbs 10:12)

"Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen." Ephesians 3:20, 21

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