

THE BOOK OF JAMES

LIFE LIVING LESSONS

Session 9: Better Things Don't Always Make Things Better James 5:1-12

Wealth Survey:

Circle the appropriate answer to this question: I would be happier if I had more money?

True False

James 5:1-6

¹Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming on you. ²Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes. ³Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days. ⁴Look! The wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty. ⁵You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter. ⁶You have condemned and murdered the innocent one, who was not opposing you.

Managing Wealth

The Lie

Wealth accumulation can be like a fragile bubble that can burst and be gone in a moment. Don't believe the lie of the bubble:

My _____ and _____ are measured by the quality and quantity of the things I _____ because they provide me with _____ and _____.

The Truth

God is not opposed to wealth. God opposes the misuse and abuse of wealth.

Wrong Uses of Wealth – 4 Warnings

1. Don't _____ it. (v. 2-3)
2. Don't _____ it. (v. 4)

How might we steal from others today? _____

3. Don't _____ it. (v. 5)

James uses *luxury and self-indulgence* in the same sentence. What might he be warning against? _____

4. Don't _____ it. (v. 6)

Wealth Survey:

Circle the appropriate answer: If I gave away more money, I would be happier?

True False

Developing Patience

James 5:7-12

⁷ Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. ⁸ You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. ⁹ Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!

¹⁰ Brothers and sisters, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹ As you know, we count as blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy. ¹² Above all, my brothers and sisters, do not swear—not by heaven or by earth or by anything else. All you need to say is a simple "Yes" or "No." Otherwise you will be condemned.

When Should I be Patient?

When circumstances are _____ (v. 7)

When people are _____ (v. 10)

When problems are _____ (v. 11)

Why is it Important to be Patient?

Because God is _____ of your circumstance. (v. 7-9)

Because God is _____ things out. (v. 11)

What Should I do While I am Waiting?

Wait _____. (v. 7)

Wait _____. (v. 9)

Wait _____. (v. 11)

Considering what James has written about patience/perseverance, do you see it differently than you have before? If so, how do you see differently? _____

Conclusion

Better things, and more better things, don't always make things better. In the opening of chapter 5 James gives a warning about the proper use of wealth. Acquiring wealth is not sinful, but it can be when we push out God believing our wealth will give us security and control. Remember, bubbles often burst. Building a bubble of wealth and relying on it brings no lasting security. James reminds his readers God is aware of the circumstances of His children. Instead of worldly wealth, rely on the all-powerful creator of the Word. When you are in need, or in a difficult circumstance, wait patiently and expectantly on God.