

Life Group Homework

Wealth Viewed From Eternity

James 5:1-6

Let's Get Started

Read **James 5:1-6**: *“Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you. ²Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten. ³Your gold and silver have corroded, and their corrosion will be evidence against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have laid up treasure in the last days. ⁴Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, are crying out against you, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts. ⁵You have lived on the earth in luxury and in self-indulgence. You have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. ⁶You have condemned and murdered the righteous person. He does not resist you.”*

Have you ever thought you might want to be rich? Very few people would say, “No thanks, I’m not interested.” But I think a lot of us might say something like, “I know it’s better to be poor and happy than rich and miserable, but Lord, couldn’t you work out something in the middle so I’m just a little wealthy and maybe just a little moody instead of miserable?”

Sometimes it seems as if more money would solve a whole lot of our problems. But, we often forget that wealth can create a lot of problems as well.

What kind of problems can wealth create?

What is wrong with the following statement?

Money is the root of all evil.

Let's Go Deeper

Have you heard of John Steinbeck’s novel titled *The Pearl*? It’s the story of a poor pearl diver who dreams of finding the perfect pearl. One day, he actually finds it. The rest of the story unfolds how his once contented life turns into a growing nightmare as everyone else desperately tries to take his treasure from him.

When combined with the fallen, greedy, selfish human heart, money can quickly corrupt.

Most of us are familiar the story of Jesus' conversation with the rich young ruler in **Matthew 19:16-22**. Read it together.

After the exchange between Jesus and the rich young ruler, Jesus has a conversation with His disciples and he makes several statements in verses 23-26: *"And Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly, I say to you, only with difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven."²⁴ Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God."²⁵ When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?"²⁶ But Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."*

Now read **Luke 12:21**. In your own words, what does it mean to be "rich toward God?"

Have you always been rich toward God, or was there a time when you may have been "poor toward God?" What was the path that led you from being "poor" to "rich" towards God?

Why do you think Jesus connected the dots between excessive wealth and salvation?

James 5:2-3 says: *"Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten.³ Your gold and silver have corroded, and their corrosion will be evidence against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have laid up treasure in the last days."*

What is being judged in these verses? Is it the wealth that people have accumulated? Or is something else falling under judgement?

James 5:4-6 says: *"Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, are crying out against you, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts.⁵ You have lived on the earth in luxury and in self-indulgence. You have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.⁶ You have condemned and murdered the righteous person. He does not resist you."*

Here, James makes some very serious charges against those who use their wealth and power to abuse others.

What types of abuse can you identify in this passage?

Look up each passage below. Write down the lesson you discover in each one relative to the Bible's perspective on the abuse of power.

Ezekiel 34:4

1 Peter 5:1-3

Matthew 20:20-28

Let's Live It Out Together

*“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal,²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.” - **Matthew 6:19-20***

In your group time together, have a discussion based on the following question: What specific types of treasures should we, as end-time Christians, be laying up for ourselves?

Don't forget to pray for one another, for those in authority, and the spread of the Gospel around the world.

