

James 5

Warning to Rich Oppressors

1 Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming on you. **2** Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes. **3** Your 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. **4** Look! 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. **5** You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter.[a] **6** You have condemned and murdered the innocent one, who was not opposing you.

Patience in Suffering

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.

The Prayer of Faith

13 Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise. **14** Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. **15** And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. **16** Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

17 Elijah was a human being, even as we are. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. **18** Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.

19 My brothers and sisters, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring that person back, **20** remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death and cover over a multitude of sins.

Footnotes:

- a. James 5:5 Or *yourselves as in a day of feasting*

Chapter 5 ||

Day 1

- Read through Chapter 5 at least twice
- Highlight, underline or circle every mention of:
 - God (the Father)
 - Jesus Christ
 - Prayer/Asking
 - Perseverance/Patience

[Use a different colour for each word, and add it to the 'Marking Key' at the start for quick reference next time you're asked to mark the text.]

- Meditate on the key verse for this week and start to try memorising it. You could write it out a few times, or put it somewhere you'll see it often to help you learn it.

Use the space below to note anything that stands out to you from reading this chapter, or any questions you might have of the text:

Day 2 || (v1-6)

The rich people James is addressing are not Christians.

- What is the 'misery' James is referring to in v1 for the rich people?

- How did the rich people described in verse 1-6 displease God?

- Although James is addressing rich non-Christians, examine how this could apply to your attitude to money. Are there ways in which you aim to have things for yourself, rather than to use things for others?

- Is it possible to be rich *and* please God? What might this look like practically?

- Reflect on the wisdom of Proverbs 30:8,9. Could you ask this of God?

Day 3 || (v7-11)

- Who is James addressing from v7 onward? How do we know this?

- Think about patience. Do you know a patient person? Are you good at being patient? In what areas of your life do you have to exercise patience?

- What key future event does James mention twice in verses 7 & 8 as an incentive to demonstrate patience? Think about how this future event should impact on our everyday living.

- James mentions three examples of patient people. Who are they and what can we learn from them?

Day 4 || (v12-14)

- In verse 12, James again highlights the importance of verbal integrity. As believers, why is it so important that our word is trustworthy?

- Read verse 13, to what extent is prayer your first response to both the ups and downs of life?

- In verse 14, what is the sick person commanded to do?

- What are the elders commanded to do?

Day 5 || (v15-20)

Verses 15 and 16 are probably the most difficult in the book of James. So, don't worry if you struggle to answer these questions, we will unpack these verses in our teaching night.

- What do you think James means by 'the prayer offered in faith'?

James talks about sin and the need to confess our sin in v15 & 16. Is sickness sent to us because we have committed specific sin? What do the passages below reveal?

John 9:1-3

1 Corinthians 11:29-32

John 5:14

In verse 16 James talks about confessing our sin to one another and praying for one another.
- What do you think are the spiritual benefits that come from this?

- What can we learn about prayer from the OT prophet Elijah?

- According to verses 19 and 20, how are we responsible for each other?

- In what ways is this an encouragement for you? In what ways is this a challenge for you?
