

JAMES

Wealth

mercy coming body know without Father comes
coming sin clothes whole
ask keep Lord among
world Devil poor
take anyone fire rich
deeds person law show
wisdom man one God good
sisters like life go save even
listen word gives away come

SUMMARY of LAST WEEK

Wisdom -- 1:5-8; 3:13-18

- True Wisdom
 - Comes from God, given to all who ask w/o doubt
 - Is pure, peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial & sincere
 - Possessors of such wisdom demonstrate it by a good life; by deeds done in humility

SUMMARY of LAST WEEK

Wisdom -- 1:5-8; 3:13-18

- Demonic Wisdom
 - Claim to wisdom that
 - Hides a heart harboring envy and selfish ambition
 - Leads to disorder and every evil practice

THIS WEEK

Wealth

- James 1:9-11
- James 1:16-18
- James 5:1-6

THIS WEEK

Wealth

- Jesus
 - Talked about money more than any other topic except the kingdom of God
 - Used money as the topic of eleven of his thirty-nine parables in scripture
- Not surprisingly, James also refers frequently to wealth and poverty

WEALTH

- READ James 1:9-11

WEALTH

James 1:9-11

- What is the context for this passage?
 - 1:2-4 has just introduced the topic of persevering under trials to lead us to maturity.
 - That was immediately followed by part of last week's lesson in 1:5-8 pointing to wisdom received from God when we ask w/o doubt

WEALTH

James 1:9-11

- CONTEXT continued
 - After this passage, 1:12-15 we return to the topics of perseverance under trial and the source of temptation
 - Sooooo it looks like this passage is related to the trials facing the Jews scattered abroad

WEALTH

James 1:9-11

- CONTEXT continued
 - Indeed issues of wealth and poverty are part and parcel of the trials faced by many people of any age
 - This passage also relates to the topic of “favoritism” which we will deal with later

WEALTH

James 1:9-11

- What is the “high position” of believers in “humble circumstances?”
 - Relatively poor in material wealth but rich in spiritual wealth as a child of God.
 - Secure position present and future promised by God to all believers

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James 1:9-11

- How is that contrasted with “the rich” in their “humiliation?”
 - Rich may have pride in their current wealth and all it provides in comfort, security and position
 - But apart from God it is a false pride and will end in humiliation -- possibly in this life, surely in the next

WEALTH

James 1:9-11

- Is being rich a good thing or a bad thing in this passage?
 - In this passage and in all of scripture being rich or poor is neither bad nor good
 - More important:
 - How we acquire money, What we do with money, How we regard money

WEALTH

James 1:9-11

- Any parallels to The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)?
 - None noted

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James 1:9-11

- What do you see relevant to hypocrisy vs integrity?
 - Person of integrity is content with his circumstances resting in the promises of a loving, caring, and all-sufficient God.

WEALTH

James 1:16-18

- READ James 1:16-18

WEALTH

James 1:16-18

- What is the context of this passage?
 - Looks like its a part of general discourse on perseverance during trials and testing leading to maturity
 - Again it looks like dealing with money and those who have it or don't have it may have been a part of the trials and testing

WEALTH

James 1:16-18

- What is the deception that James warns about in this passage?
 - We aren't told but context would suggest that it could be:
 - Seeing material wealth as the source of a good life
 - Seeing trials and testing as things “bad” and perhaps “unfair”

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James 1:16-18

- How do verses 17-18 contrast with that deception?
 - Every good and perfect gift comes from the eternal God who does not change
 - We are born again through the word of truth
 - Sounds like reminder that we don't need to be anxious, we ought not complain but trust God to love us, care for us, and only allow what can perfect and mature us

WEALTH

James 1:16-18

- What is meant by “the Father of the heavenly lights?”
 - Basic meaning is surely that God is the origin of all of the physical lights of the heavens
 - But just as likely that it also alludes to God as the source of all light; Jesus stated, “I am the light of the world.”
 - Also likely emphasizing that God is always the source of good and light, never of evil & darkness

WEALTH

James 1:16-18

- How would this passage be an encouragement to its readers?
 - God is on their side. If He has allowed difficulties in their lives, perhaps even poverty, it is always for their perfection and completeness
 - God is the source of light and goodness. Satan is the source of darkness and evil.

WEALTH

James 1:16-18

- How is it an encouragement to you?

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James 1:16-18

- Do you find any parallels in the Sermon on the Mount?
 - No
 - But in John 8:12 -- Jesus says, “I am the light of the world.”
 - And John 3:3 -- Jesus says, “No one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.”

WEALTH

James 1:16-18

- What do you see that relates to hypocrisy vs. integrity?
 - A believer is “integrous” when they are content in receiving all that God has for them, allows into their life as good and perfect gifts.

WEALTH

James 5:1-6

- READ James 5:1-6

WEALTH

James 5:1-6

- What is the context for this passage?
 - 4:13-17 has just described the arrogance of assuming we can scheme and plan to make money
 - 5:7-11 speaks of patience in perseverance during difficult times. This may well allude to financial difficulties, the oppression of the wealthy, and even envy of the wealthy

WEALTH

James 5:1-6

- Who are the wealthy in this passage?
 - Possible that there are some wealthy among the believers
 - BUT more likely that its focus is wealthy who are oppressing the believers and are part of the believers' trials and testings

WEALTH

James 5:1-6

- What are the complaints against them?
 - Hoarded wealth v 3
 - Failed to pay wages v 4
 - Lived in luxury & self-indulgence v 5
 - Condemned & murdered the innocent one v 6

WEALTH

James 5:1-6

- What is “...the day of slaughter.” in V 5?
 - Probably an analogy to fattening animals leading up to the day of their slaughter
 - Just so the rich in their self-indulgence are preparing themselves for God’s judgment

WEALTH

James 5:1-6

- Who is “...the innocent one...” in v 6?
 - Perhaps referring particularly to Jesus
 - Perhaps referring to any and all just, good people powerless to resist and oppose the rich

WEALTH

James 5:1-6

- How is the passage relevant to James' audience?
 - Most of the believers in James' audience are probably relatively poor and are being oppressed by the rich and powerful

WEALTH

James 5:1-6

- How is the passage relevant to James' audience?
 - The passage reminds the believers of the temporal nature of wealth and power
 - To discourage them from envy & covetousness
 - To encourage them in patience & perseverance
 - To assure them of coming judgment

WEALTH

James 5:1-6

- How is it relevant to you?

WEALTH

James 5:1-6

- To what is “...the misery that is coming on you...” referring?
 - Certainly to THE coming day of judgment when Jesus returns
 - But probably including the ordinary temporal nature of wealth and power

WEALTH

James 5:1-6

- Do you find any parallels in the Sermon on the Mount?
 - Matthew 6:19-24, Treasures in Heaven

WEALTH

James 5:1-6

- What do you see that relates to hypocrisy vs. integrity?
 - If talking about rich believers then these are hypocrites failing to demonstrate their faith by their actions
 - If talking about ungodly rich the only relevance might be a believer who envies the rich or blames God for oppression by the rich

SUMMARY

- James 1:16-18 probably belonged in our trials, testing and temptation section. While it might include wealth it focuses on reinforcing the idea that
 - God may use trials and testing to perfect our faith
 - God never tempts us to do evil; that's Satan's role
 - Every good and perfect gift comes from God, the light of the world; Darkness and evil come from Satan

SUMMARY

- When considering the rich
 - Remember who we are in Christ and what we have in Him now and in the future
 - Remember the temporal nature of earthly riches now and in the future
 - Remember that wealth and power cannot stand against the judgment of God

SUMMARY

- Improper use of wealth
 - Hoarding
 - Self-indulgence
 - Oppression of others
 - Withholding what is due to others

QUESTIONS and/or COMMENTS

NEXT WEEK

Anger 1:19-21; Doing 1:22-25; Religion 1:26-27

- For each passage:
 - What is the context?
 - Any parallels with The Sermon on the Mount?
 - Relevance to hypocrisy vs integrity

NEXT WEEK

Anger 1:19-21

- How does James tie together listening, speaking, anger and righteousness in this passage?
- Why does James refer to “human” anger in v 20?
- In v 21 what are the two tasks that James assigns which he says, “...can save you.”?

NEXT WEEK

Doing 1:22-25

- How do we deceive ourselves in v 22?
- What does James use for an analogy to listening to the word without doing what it says?
- What is “the perfect law that gives freedom” in v24?
- What practice leads to blessing?

NEXT WEEK

Religion 1:26-27

- What does James give as an example of a worthless religion in v 26?
- How does James describe a pure and faultless religion in v 27?
- Why does James link care of widows and orphans with pure and faultless religion?