



LESSON 15 - JAMES 5:12 (STUDENT)

1. What changes did you make as a result of last week's lesson?

2. What highly importance admonition is being given in verse 12? How does it fit with the previous two paragraphs? (Hint: What vows/obligations could the mistreated believers possibly have had with those in verses 5:1-6?)

James 5:1-6	James 5:7-11	James 5:12
The rich are to weep over the mistreatment of the poor believers.	The mistreated believers are to patiently wait for God to judge the wicked.	

3. List out the prohibition, instruction, and reason given in verse 12.
Prohibition: Do not _____.
Instruction: But let your _____.
Reason: So that _____.
4. Look up and define the word swear (*omnymi* - G3660) in a Strong's Concordance or Bible Dictionary.
Note: This word (*omnymi*) does not refer to cursing or any other four-letter illicit speech as used in our American culture.

5. Notice that verse 12 does not say, "Don't swear an oath." Look up *Genesis 26:3* (referring to *Genesis 12* and *15*); *Deuteronomy 1:34-35*; *Hebrews 6:16-20*. How does God feel about oaths, and why does He make them?

6. How did God instruct the Israelites to swear (*Deuteronomy 6:13*; *10:20-22*)? Why should they swear in that manner?

7. James introduces this verse with the words, "But above all..." This implies the importance of restraint that believers must use in this matter of swearing. What was happening and what did Jesus take issue with (*Matthew 5:33-37*; *Matthew 23:16-23*)?

8. Swearing by objects is only one way to make a foolish vow. Read *Leviticus 5:4-6*, *Joshua 9:3-14*, and *Judges 11:30-36*. Describe the way each person's vow was made and the consequences that resulted.

9. Has there been a time when you have sworn a binding oath before God and witnesses (*Matthew 19:6*)? What was/is your obligation to keep that oath? What are the only two conditions given for breaking this vow (*Matthew 19:9*; *1 Corinthians 7:39*)? Have you ever been tempted to break this oath?

10. What special provisions did God give to women regarding making and keeping vows (Numbers 30)? For what reasons? Describe what you learn about vows and the persons involved below.

A. Single woman (vs. 4-5)

B. Married woman (6-8)

C. Widow (9-12)

D. Husband's Responsibility (13-15)

E. Are any of these principles from Numbers 30 still valid in light of Ephesians 5:22-24 and 6:1-2?

11. As Christians, we don't need to make binding oaths in order to be a person of integrity. What does James say we need to do in verse 12?

"Let your _____ be _____." How would you say this in your own words?

12. Look in a Bible Concordance and find where Jesus made a similar statement. What commentary does He add to this statement and why (John 8:44)?

13. As someone who has been born of God, what should the pattern of our speech reflect (Zechariah 8:16; Ephesians 4:25; Colossians 3:9-10)?

14. According to verse 12, what will happen to those who carelessly swear idle oaths as a pattern of their lives?

15. People sometimes try to make their promises more convincing by using phrases such as: "Cross my heart," or "I swear to you/to God," or "I'm not kidding—trust me!" If I don't keep my word then you can..." How, if at all, does James 5:12 speak to these kinds of exclamations?¹

APPLICATION

16. Not only are we as Christians to be set apart in keeping our oaths, but also in being people of our word. **Evaluate your commitments.** Are you a woman of your word? Where do you need to make changes in this area, that you may reflect the faithfulness of God in your life?

¹ MacArthur John *James: Guidelines for a Happy Christian Life*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.,2007.

- **Wives:** What areas do you need come under your husband's authority when it comes to making commitments? Are you a wife whose word can be trusted?

- **Mothers:** Do you make promises to your children that you cannot keep? Do you ever say, "We'll do that tomorrow" but you are not really sure if you can? How can you change this in order to be a woman of your word?