

WARNING THE WEALTHY

JAMES 5:1-6

SERMON POINTS

Dangers that come from wealth

- Hoarding over contentment
- Oppression and fraud over justice and truth
- Self-Indulgence over discipline and peace
- Violence over love

MAIN IDEA: The wealthy in this life are warned because of the temptation to put our hope, happiness, and trust in created things instead of the creator himself.

QUESTIONS

READ: Fidelity Investments did a survey of their own clients and found that...

“More than four out of ten American millionaires say they do not feel rich. Indeed many would need to have at least \$7.5 million in order to feel they were truly rich, according to a Fidelity Investments survey. Some 42 percent of the more than 1,000 millionaires surveyed by Fidelity said they did not feel wealthy. Respondents had at least \$1 million in investable assets, excluding any real estate or retirement accounts. “Every person in the survey is wealthy,” said the president of National Financial, a unit of Fidelity. The average age of respondents was 56 years old with a mean of \$3.5 million of investable assets. **“They compare themselves to their peer group ...”¹**

Q: The rich are warned, but here’s the problem-almost nobody believes they are rich. Why do you think that is? (see the Fidelity article below). How much money do you think it would take before you felt “rich”? Why?

Q: Do you think we (as average Americans) should consider ourselves rich? Why or why not.

Q: Are stuff and money inherently evil? If not, why does Jesus say its almost impossible for the rich to enter the kingdom of God?

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<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-fidelity-survey/u-s-millionaires-say-7-million-not-enough-to-be-rich-idUSTRE72D3RK20110314?sp=true>

Q: James warns about hoarding over contentment. Why doesn't it make sense (according to James and the Bible) to hoard stuff?

Q: James also warns about self-indulgence. We eat when we aren't hungry. We buy more clothes when our closets are full. We upgrade to a new car, a new house, or a new kitchen when the ones we have are fine. What does self-indulgence tell us about the human heart?

Q: As people living in the wealthiest nation in the history of human civilization, it would seem that we should take James' warning seriously. What would it look like for us to do so?

OTHER PASSAGES

Matthew 19:23–24

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."

QUOTES:

C.S. Lewis (Mere Christianity)

"The long terrible story of man...the trying to have something other than God which will make him happy...God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from Himself, because it is not there. There is no such thing."

Dan Doriani, "Acquiring wealth to cure the problem of meaninglessness is like drinking coffee to solve the problem of exhaustion."