

BLUEPRINT

FOR A FAITH THAT WORKS

Sermon-Based Study Guide
Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church
James 5:1-6 | August 18, 2019

Prepared by Rev. Bryan L. Wenger
bryan@gspc.org | 562/493.2553 x116

I. Introduction to this Study

This week the text in James calls out those who have acquired great riches but have not been using Godly wisdom in the stewardship of those resources. Even though you may not consider yourself a "Rich Oppressor" (NIV Passage Heading) and deserve a "Warning" regarding the use of your finances/possessions, Scripture invites all of us to "listen in" and see how close we really are to having our "riches" move us away from God. Bottom line with James: Jesus wants us to be a wise steward with all that He blesses us with each day.

II. Connecting with One Another

- How would you respond if someone asked you, "Are you rich...?"
- What has been the biggest challenge in your life surrounding finances and possessions?

III. Study the Text

- a. As you read the passage in James for today, why should the rich weep and wail?
- b. N.T. Wright comments and then asks a question, "This is one of the sharpest warnings against careless luxury anywhere in the Bible. Why do you think that James took the fact that 'they stored up riches in the last days' so seriously?"
- c. What are the abuses the rich committed (5:3-6)?
- d. How do abuses of the rich occur today? How should Christians be involved?
- e. Does James seem to be condemning all rich people?
- f. How is it a sign of pride and arrogance to practice what James 5:1-6 describes?
- g. Does James teach that it is a sin to be wealthy? Who will be the witness in judgement against the selfish rich?
- h. Explore the term "stewardship" - what comes to mind when you hear that word?
- i. What warnings in the passage today do you see as being relevant to you?
- j. How has your desire for money and possessions affected your spiritual life?

IV. Pray

- a. Ask God to open your heart and hands towards His leading in your life?
- b. Be still...think and reflect how you have been "Blessed to be a blessing..."
- c. Confess to the Lord where the "things of this world" have distracted you from seeking God's Kingdom first...



V. Digging Deeper

- a. Read and reflect on Jesus' words from Matthew 16:26-27, Luke 12:13-34 and Paul's words from 1 Timothy 6:6-9...
- b. How do you navigate life's journey being grateful for, and enjoying, what the Lord blesses you with - and living a life of luxury?
- c. Can you identify other verses in James where he references money, wealth, poverty or riches? What are some other scriptures that come to mind about wealth, money, possessions, etc.?

