

A STUDY OF JAMES—PRACTICAL LIVING

LESSON 5

RICH OPPRESSORS WILL BE JUDGED

“Truly God is good to Israel, to those whose hearts are pure. But as for me, I almost lost my footing. My feet were slipping, and I was almost gone. For I envied the proud when I saw them prosper despite their wickedness.”

(Psalm 73:1-3, NLT)

“Don’t worry about the wicked or envy those who do wrong. For like grass, they soon fade away. Like spring flowers, they soon wither.”

(Psalm 37:1-2, NLT)

“Don’t fret because of evildoers; don’t envy the wicked. For evil people have no future; the light of the wicked will be snuffed out.”

(Proverbs 24:19-20, NLT)

“No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money.” (Luke 16:13, NLT)

“Don’t store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.” (Matthew 6:19-21, NLT)

How one handles finances speaks clearly to their view of God. Nothing more clearly reveals the state of a person's heart than his or her view of money and material possessions.

The accumulations of the wicked and evil will slip through their hands like water.

BE PATIENT AND PERSEVERING

Definition - able to accept or tolerate delays, problems, or suffering without becoming annoyed or anxious

ARE YOU A PATIENT PERSON???

“But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!” (Galatians 5:22-23, NLT)

“James is encouraging believers to maintain an attitude of patience while suffering injustices. Though every effort should be made to improve conditions and achieve justice, believers must keep a spirit of patient endurance, even in the midst of cruel treatment. Those James was writing to lived in the expectation of the imminent coming of Christ. Their hope was that at that time, justice would be handed to the oppressor and the oppressed. Wrongs would then be made right and believers would be rewarded for their faithfulness.”

Remember the Lord of Sabaoth—Lord of hosts—Lord of armies—the Master of Creation—He is the One who stands up for the poor and the oppressed. He is their Defender and will return to make things right.

A. EXAMPLES OF PATIENCE

1. Prophets
2. Job

Conclusion: The Lord is very COMPASSIONATE and MERCIFUL!!!

B. SWEARING VS. OATH

1. Believers are not forbidden from taking an oath!
2. Believers are forbidden from swearing. To do so gives credibility to the object or person in whose name or being we swear to. The implication was that those objects contained spirits. This is likened to idolatry as only the Name of Jesus has any power vested in it!!!

THE POWER OF PRAYER

A. Elders - older persons—pastors—bishops— those responsible for pastoral supervision and spiritual leadership

B. Anointing Him With Oil

This could have been actual medical treatment or actual healing by the Holy Spirit, for all healing is ultimately from the Lord.

C. If He Has Committed Sin

Some sicknesses are the result of actual sins, but this is not always the case. Remember, we live in a fallen world and are subject to all its ills and faults. Though we are not of this world, we yet remain in this world. This blows up the prosperity gospel teachings that Christians do not get sick or suffer!

“As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. “Rabbi,” his disciples asked him, “why was this man born blind? Was it because of his own sins or his parents’ sins?” “It was not because of his sins or his parents’ sins,” Jesus answered. “This happened so the power of God could be seen in him.” (John 9:1-3, NLT)

“Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results. Elijah was as human as we are, and yet when he prayed earnestly that no rain would fall, none fell for three and a half years! Then, when he prayed again, the sky sent down rain and the earth began to yield its crops.” (James 5:16-18, NLT)

RESTORE WANDERING BELIEVERS

James’ writing of his book is intended to arouse the believers to examine themselves for righteous actions to support their verbal profession of Jesus as Lord. His great concern was that no one be deceived about his or her salvation.

“Not everyone who calls out to me, ‘Lord! Lord!’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter. On judgment day many will say to me, ‘Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.’ But I will reply, ‘I never knew you. Get away from me, you who break God’s laws.” (Matthew 7:21-23, NLT)

The history of the church is this:

1. There have always been tares among the wheat.
2. There have always been rocky, shallow, thorny soils that produce no spiritual fruit.
3. There have always been those who draw near to God but their hearts are far from Him.
4. There have always been hearers of the Word but not doers.

Spiritual Evaluation

1. Proper response to trials
2. Proper response to temptations
3. Reverence for the Word of God
4. Holy living
5. Proper response to people of various social classes
6. Manifestation of righteous deeds
7. Proper speech, wisdom, and not being a friend of the world
8. Proper view of money
9. Humility and submission to the will of God
10. Truthfulness

Ultimately, James is calling us to evangelism. Those who have true saving faith are to engage those exhibiting dead faith and seek to lead them back to what they say they are committed to—that is Christ and the works that represent Him.

TRUE DISCIPLES CONTINUE IN THE WORD!!!

“There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.”
(Proverbs 14:12, NKJV)

May we, the people of God not be deceived, but instead, BE FOUND FAITHFUL!