



James Lesson 5

REVIEW OF CHAPTER 1-4

In Chapter 5, James is addressing a very specific cultural issue occurring at that time. It can be assumed from the beginning of the chapter that these “rich” (also spoken of in Chapter 2) are considered wicked because of the methods by which they attained their wealth and their selfishness in hoarding it to use on themselves. The luxury of their lives is only bringing rottenness of soul.

James encourages his fellow believers to keep an eternal perspective in light of the

issues they are facing. Watching the wicked prosper makes it difficult to keep their eyes on the prize that will be theirs in eternity. Our flesh longs for temporary satisfaction especially in times of trial. Money provides only a short-lived panacea for the difficulties of life and shouldn’t be depended on as a solution for suffering. Patient endurance would be required for those who would remain faithful to the Gospel to the end.

READ JAMES 5

1. *In verses 1-6, James addresses the “rich.” What characteristics do you see in those people?*

2. *How do those things apply to our world today? In your own life?*

3. *What does James give as the reason that patience is necessary? 5:7-8*



James 5:8 “Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.” The word “stablish” or the Greek “stayridzo” means to set fast or to turn resolutely in one direction (Strong’s Greek Dictionary). This means we must set our hearts fast on the reality of the coming of the Lord and live our lives, through suffering, in the constant awareness of our future life with Him.

“You desire to know the art of living, my friend? It is contained in one phrase: make use of suffering.” - Henri-Frederic Amiel

4. *It appears that living amongst oppression causes discontentment which can lead to comparisons, envy, covetousness, discontentment, and various other ungodly traits. In James 5:9-10 James addresses this tendency and gives encouragement through the example of Job. Read Job 1-2. Who was the source of Job’s suffering and what kind of suffering did he endure?*
5. *What did God bring out of this suffering? What does that tell you about any suffering you may have to endure? Job 42:1-10*
6. *What two things does James encourage us to do as we wait for the return of the Lord? In Romans 12-13, what does Paul say in regard to our preparation for the Lord’s coming?*

7. Compare James 5:12 with Matthew 5:33. Why is it right for believers to merely let their yes or no be sufficient? Why would Jesus say anything beyond that would be evil?



The theme of James up to this point has been focused on suffering and our responses to it as believers. Difficulties, pain, persecution, doubt and despair bring us to places in our faith that can be overwhelming. The kind of persecution these believers were experiencing produced extreme stress upon their spiritual lives. Nothing causes us to fall away from the Lord more quickly than mental, physical or spiritual suffering. James is giving severe warnings about what it will take to stand firm in the faith even when opposition is most difficult. He has discussed trials of double mindedness, lust, temptations, oppression from the rich and powerful, the destruction of our tongue, partiality, false teachers, and quarrels and conflicts amongst ourselves. He has prescribed single-minded faith promoting righteousness and enduring patience in the midst of all this turmoil.

Since James has not deviated from his focus of remaining faithful under extreme pressure, the details of James 5:13-20 must be considered in light of that theme. He is not shifting to teaching on how to heal or have the power to do miracles; he is continuing his encouragement in walking faithfully through persecution for those who are experiencing discouragement, doubt, confusion, and depression. His focal point in these verses is the necessity of prayer in being able to endure their extreme distress. Prayer is the necessary element that can revive and reenergize their weary souls with faith and endurance. It can strengthen their spiritual, physical, and psychological state to one of victory. It can give them new power to resist the devil and walk in newness of life in their faith. Power to live the spiritual life comes through the dynamic connection that believers have with the Father through the Spirit of God in prayer.

8. The words “afflicted” in verses 13 means “to undergo hardship.” What does James say we should do when we are facing affliction or hardship? Do you think James meant we should do that so God could remove the hardship?
9. The word “merry” in verse 13 means “to be cheerful.” What are we to do when we are cheerful?

10. *The word “sick” in verse 14 means “to be feeble or powerless.” How are we to respond to that condition?*
11. *The prayer for the “sick” in verse 15 means “to toil, tire, or faint.” When they are prayed for they “shall be raised up” which means to collect ones faculties, to awaken, or be aroused from sleep or sickness. James has been referring to the problems faced by those suffering persecution and whose faith was weakening or compromised. What other promise does James give them at the end of verse 15? Why would this be problematic if he were referring to physical healing only?*
12. *What command does James give them in verse 16, and why would this be important? Do you find this difficult to do, and if so, why?*
13. *How does verse 20 reinforce all the admonitions that James has given in this letter?*

Prayer requests:

Group time notes:
