

Living in light of the Lord's Coming James 5:1-12 "Faith Works"

Intro: Good morning – we are in a verse by verse study in the book of James –

➤ **Winding down to the end – 3 more studies.**

A) And if you are joining us for the first time –

B) This might feel a little bit like you are walking into the **tail end of the movie.**

1) All these **studies are online – Website – App**

C) But if you are joining us for the first time: or you haven't been here in a while –

1) James is the Lord's brother – Jesus' Brother –

D) And during Jesus' whole earthly ministry:

James was not a follower of Jesus

1) Actually tried to have Jesus – **institutionalized** for his claims of being the messiah.

But after the death of Jesus – something Changed for James

A) Started this study – asking – If you had a Brother – what would it take for your brother to suddenly believe you were the SON OF GOD?

B) What would it take for your brother to leave everything and devote his life to following you.

C) **NEVER GOING TO HAPPEN – NOTHING THAT COULD CONVINCHE HIM**

For James it was the Resurrection – He watched his brother die on a Cross – brutally beaten – unrecognizable –

A) Then he saw his brother Risen from the dead – **JAMES IS LIKE OK – I AM CONVINCED.**

B) Great apologetic for the defense of Jesus being God in human flesh is his brothers conversion story.

So that who wrote this book.

A) If you are coming into this story mid way through you can also get the impression sometimes in this letter – **James got up on the wrong side bed.**

B) **James is not really big on self esteem.** He is direct – he doesn't use a lot of tact – he doesn't soften anything.

1) Saw last week – Your life – let me sum it up for you – VAPOR - PUFF OF SMOKE

C) We are going to see this again today in what James says to the Rich.

Reminder: One of the things we have continued to say week in and week out in this study is the Christian life is NOT about perfection – it's about PROGRESS

A) Never going to be perfect – never going to arrive – this side of heaven – never going to be the perfect – Husband/ Wife etc.

B) Not saying that to give you an excuse to sin – or to be lazy –

C) **But to remind you the Christian life is about Progress not Perfection.**

1) A true genuine Christian is going to be Progressing in every area of his life

D) Because **True Faith/Works:** Genuine Faith impacts our lives

1) This is what we have seen - It affects the way we approach trials – the way we deal with temptation – the way we treat others – Plan for the Future.

E) Today: – Genuine faith should affect how we approach living in light of the Lord's coming

Come now, you rich, Let's stop for a second because some of you just went, "Okay, not talking to me." – NOT RICH!

A) According to the Global Rich list - Website: If you make \$25,000 a year, you are in the wealthiest 2 percent of the world. Did you hear me?

B) If you make \$25,000 a year, you're in the wealthiest 2 percent of the world.

1) I'm telling you that you're actually, by global standards, wealthy. You are someone's Bill Gates.

C) Now that I have made your day – Good news – Wealthy – Bad news – I always feel broke: So let's continue.

Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you! 2 Your

riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. 3 Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days. 4 Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept **back by fraud**, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. 5 You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter. 6 You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you.

Now in reading this you might think: **James obviously doesn't like Rich folk**

A) And if you have been tracking with us in this study of the book of James you know this isn't the first time **James had something to say to the Rich.**

B) Ch.1:10 The Rich are boastful – Ch.2:6 **The rich oppress you and drag you into court.**

C) Here again Ch.5 James is sort of harshly exhorting the rich – So Does James have something against rich people?

1) We know James grew up poor - Nazareth was Slum Ville –

D) Joseph and Mary were so poor – couldn't afford to offer a lamb **but birds – offering of the poor.**

1) Is James bitter against rich people? – Because he grew up on the wrong side of the tracks?

Remind you the Bible is inspired by God – God's words – James is just the human instrument.

A) God choose a guy who was strong – didn't candy coat things – to deliver this message.

B) The issue is not about being Rich – Money is not evil – Money is neutral

1) What is evil – is the Love of Money - 1 Tim. 6:10 **“The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil.”**

C) What is evil is the misuse of money – taking advantage of others

D) That is what has James upset about here –

1) How the rich were using their **good fortune** to capitalize on the **misfortunes of others.**

E) Two things he wants the rich to understand.

#1 Riches don't last: Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. 3 Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire.

Wealth and material possessions fade:

A) Christmas day 8yrs old: 1st new Bike Purple, Stingray – Washed and Waxed it every week. – Determined keep it shining.

B) **First scratch – quit washing – more scratches**

C) **Pretty soon – going off jumps letting go – playing chicken – friends**

1) Turned it into a chopper

D) **First new Car** – HS Grad – Subaru Hatchback - \$4K – Drove it for years

1) Moved here – Parking lot – stolen – crashed in ditch.

E) Nothing last:

Matthew 6:19-21 **“Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.”**

Inheritance in Heaven: Doesn't Rust - Moth's cannot destroy – thieves can't break in and steal.

A) **Later is longer!** – This life is NOTHING – compared to ETERNITY

B) What would you think if some guy invested his life savings – cashed out his 401k – sold all his stocks –

3 month vacation – blew it all

1) **YOU WOULD THINK** – that guy is an idiot right?

C) Isn't it sort of similar when we invest everything we have in this life? – on what we have on planet earth – **where NOTHING LAST?**

D) **Our life here is like a 3 month vacation compared to eternity.**

1) **Can't take it with you but you can send it ahead.**

Author John Piper gave this insight into what happens when we lose sight of eternity.

"I am wired by nature to love the same toys the world loves. I start to fit in. I start to love what others love. I start to call Earth home, and before you know it, I'm calling luxuries needs, and I'm using my money just the way unbelievers do. I begin to forget the war we are in. I don't think much about people perishing. Missions and unreached people drop out of my mind. I stop dreaming about the triumphs of grace. I sink into a secular mindset that looks first at what man can do, not at what God can do." – John Piper

All RELATE - So easy to slip into that mindset

So the first thing James wants the rich to understand is Riches and Material possessions don't last.

#2 You will be held accountable.

A)V.3 Is a heavy statement – the **corrosion** of your goods will be a witness against you.

B)Like **the pile of junk that is left behind**, all the things wasted and discarded given to Goodwill – taken to the dump

1) is going to be a Witness against you in court of Judgment of everything that was wasted.

C)The other indictment against them is they made their wealth by taking advantage of others.

V.3b You have heaped up treasure in the last days. 4 Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. 5 You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter.

D)The Problem with these rich people is they were using these **tough times of persecution** to take advantage of others.

E)The implication that James was pointing out – is you have been taking advantage of your brothers in this tough season.

1)**You think you are getting away with** it – but the Lord knows what you are up to and **HE IS NOT HAPPY!**

Studying Nehemiah in January on Wed nights – Will see a similar thing happened in the Book of Nehemiah.

A)Nehemiah found out – the rich were taking advantage of the poor in the tough years of dispersion – only a remnant

B)Giving loans – and calling for people to put up their children as collateral

1)When they couldn't pay – they would take their kids and make them slaves

C)Nehemiah gets wind of this and goes to the rich guys and PULLS THEIR HAIR OUT.

1)Physically attacks them – and makes them give the kids back and the money.

D)You should be willing to take care of those in need – not take advantage of them

Here is something that the Lord wants us to understand: ALL OF US – Rich is RELATIVE: those who have been blessed with more.

A)have been blessed in order to be Generous not stingy.

B)God is a giver and he wants us to be givers too – See how we can bless those around us who are less fortunate.

C)So James is wanting the rich to Realize:

#1 Your riches are not going to last

#2 You will be held accountable for what you did with what you had.

D)How you invested in the Kingdom – how you helped those who were less fortunate.

1)ESPECIALLY in light of the Lord's SOON COMING – which is the backdrop to this passage in

Ch.5 – introduces in v.7

7 Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord.

When Jesus ascended – the apostles heard the Angels say:

A)Jesus is going to return the same way you saw him leave.

B)Early church lived with that in mind – they believed in the soon return of Christ.

1) Problem for some is – that was over 2,000 yrs ago – Jesus hasn't come yet

C) **So some in the Church – Complain: Scoff** – You Prophecy guys – you are always talking about the coming of the Lord

You know what I do when I hear that – I say: Can I take a picture with you?

A) Right now you are fulfilling Bible Prophecy – 2 Peter 3:3 **“Scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, “Where is the promise of His coming?”**”

B) Hear that – take a picture and post it on Instagram –

1) **“Just met a guy who is a fulfillment of Bible Prophecy – A Scoffer.”**

C) We are Living in the Last days my friends:

1) Jesus said: **No one knows the day or the hour of the coming.....**

D) Don't know the day – but we can see the signs

E) **Like a weather man tracking the weather – look – see a storm coming – El Nino**

1) **LAST DAYS STORM CLOUDS – BREWING**

SIGNS

Russia's increased presence in the Middle East:

A) **Headline out of the UK on Thursday: More than 800,000 refugees RETURNING to Syria as Putin OBLITERATES Islamic State**

B) **Russia's relationship with Iran:**

1) **Russia Modernizing S-300 Missile system for Iran**

C) **Arms deal that went all the way back to 2007 but had been stalled –**

B) **April 2105 Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree allowing for the contract to Proceed.**

C) **Iran has a new Missile that can Destroy enemy targets up to 2,000 KM away**

1) **Still too far away to hit Israel? Not if they are firing them from Syria**

Russia and Iran have been working with Syria against ISIS

A) **So Russia has strengthened it's relationship with Iran and with Syria**

B) **Significance? Ezekiel 38 Alliance – Russia & Persia – Iran – and several other Islamic countries –**

C) **Are going to COME against – Israel**

1) **But God intervenes in protecting Israel. -**

D) **What we're seeing could be the Stage being set: Russia and Iran's presence in Syria - a bordering country to Israel.**

E) **Damascus is the Syrian Capital - Isaiah 17:1 “The burden against Damascus. “Behold, Damascus will cease from being a city, And it will be a ruinous heap.”**

F) **So Missiles fired – Israel retaliates**

Cashless society in the last days – Antichrist comes on the scene - sets up a Cashless system:

A) **Police are for it – affect drug deals – bank robberies**

B) **CNBC – report on the World's most Cashless countries**

8. United States

80% of consumer payments are non-cash payments

➤ **72% of the population uses a debit card**

5. Sweden

89% of consumer payments are non-cash payments

➤ **96% of the population uses a debit card**

Bank robberies dropped from 110 in 2008 to 5 in 2012

4. United Kingdom

89% of consumer payments are non-cash payments

➤ **88% of the population uses a debit card**

1. Belgium

93% of consumer payments are non-cash payments

➤ **86% of the population uses a debit card**

Chip cards – microchips for tracking in dogs – people

Days of Noah: Increase Violence – Self
Days of Sodom – Increase of Sexual perversity, immorality – Homosexuality

Matthew 24:12

Because of increase of wickedness the love of many would grow cold –

How many of You – know someone – who was once on Fire/ Excited about Jesus/ all about Jesus – No More ?

A)Lukewarm – Distracted – Not walking

B)All of this are signs that we are living in the last days that the coming of the Lord is soon!

C)So here is the question that James addresses – 1)How should we be living in light of the Lord's soon coming?

What is the Message? Freak out – Get discouraged – depressed – Isolate

A)Be Patient – 7 Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord.

Patient how? Like a Farmer

See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. 8 You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

B)Learn from the farmer – Approach living in the last days – how the farmer approaches his farm

C)What does a farmer do? They plow – work – plowing the field

1)There is prep work involved –

D)They Plant – Seed

1)They Water –

2)They Wait – then they Harvest

You be patient like that:

A)You keep plowing the field – keep your hand to the plow – don't look back – don't get side tracked – straight rows

B)You keep planting the seed of God's word into hearts / planting the gospel

1)Don't necessarily expect immediate results - FARMER – GREAT PICTURE

C)You keep watering that seed – don't water down the message.

1)Keep Waiting

Be Patient personally – Realize – God is doing something in you.

A)Seed is working – SEASON IN OUR LIVES

B)Sometimes – Winter – cold – not a lot of fruit – persevere

C)Then comes Spring

D)Be Patient like a Farmer – waiting for the Lord's coming like he waits for a Harvest

#2 Be Patient with each other

9 Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!

A)All a work in progress – none of us have arrived – none of us have it all together

B)There is only one Judge – who really knows hearts – Be patient with each other.

#3 Be patient in suffering V.10-11

10 My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. 11 Indeed we count them blessed who endure.

A)The Prophets prophesied – ministry – JEREMIAH – no converts

B)Isaiah great persecution – The prophets are great examples of patience in suffering/ DIDN'T GIVE UP

1)THEY REMAINED FAITHFUL to their calling – NO RESULTS – bad reactions

C)People look at us the wrong way and we shrink back –

1)No one is putting us in Prison – Isaiah – Sawn in half – We are so weak

D)As it is getting worse – Don't give up - Be patient in suffering

Just in case you think your life can compare with what the Prophets went through – HE BRINGS UP JOB

A)**NO ONE CAN TRUMP JOB** – when it comes to suffering.

You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.

B)Loses his possessions – His wealth – his kids get killed – friends are accusing him – YOUR SIN

1)**BODY IS COVERED WITH BOILS** – Wife says – Curse God and die

C)**Take her and leave the dog!**

Job is this incredible example of patience in suffering:

A)Though he may slay me yet I will PRAISE him

#4 Be Faithful in your testimony V.12

12 But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your “Yes” be “Yes,” and your “No,” “No,” lest you fall into judgment.

Be the kind of person that others can count on!

Best employees

Best neighbors

Living in a selfish world –

Selflessness SHINES

JESUS – CALVARY – EXAMPLE