

Book of James Study

Men of Grace

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James 5:1 - 12

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Outline of James 5:1 - 12

I. The Three Themes Expanded

(2:1-5:18)

A. Trials and Temptations (4:13-5:18)

1. *Planning apart from God's Will (4:13-17)*
2. *Responding to Oppression (5:1-12)*
 - a. *Judgment Announced for the Oppressors (vs. 1-6)*
 - b. *Prophetic Patience Enjoined on the Oppressed (vs. 7-11)*
 - c. *Oaths Proscribed to Avoid Unrealistic Promises (v 12)*
3. *Anointing Prayer for Serious Illness (5:13-18)*

II. Closing (5:19-20)

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James 5:1-12

Main Idea

Christians should respond to oppression not by usurping God's role as avenger, nor by making unrealistic promises to their oppressors, but with a persevering and prophetic patience. Only God can fully and fairly right all wrongs, and he has promised to do so at the parousia.

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Outline of James 5:1-12 Expanded

I. The Three Themes Expanded

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A. Trials and Temptations (4:13-5:18)

1. *Planning apart from God's Will (4:13-17)*
2. *Responding to Oppression (5:1-12)*
 - a. *Christians should not try to wreak vengeance on their oppressors because God has promised to take care of that (vs. 1-6).*

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Outline of James 5:1-12 Expanded - con't

- i. *The rich oppressors are called to lament their coming miseries (vs. 1).*
- ii. *Their judgments are enumerated (vs 2-3b).*
- iii. *Their sins of oppression are illustrated (vs. 3c-6).*
- b. *Christians should respond to oppression with a persevering and prophetic patience (vs. 7-11).*
 - i. *Christians can remain patient because the judgment day is near (vs. 7-9).*
 - ii. *Christian patience must be persevering and prophetic (vs. 10-11).*
 - iii. *Christians must persevere in faith until they see God's great compassion (vs. 11).*

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Outline of James 5:1-12 Expanded - con't

- c. *Christians should not be tempted to fend off creditors with unrealistic promises (vs. 12).*
 - i. *They should not promise what they can't deliver (vs. 12a).*
 - ii. *They should be individuals of impeccable integrity (vs. 12b).*

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Why does James denounce the wealthy non-Christian landowners in a letter to Christians?

1. **So that the Christians will not envy these rich non-Christians.**
2. **So that the Christians would know that God will avenge the wrongs they have suffered at the hands of these wealthy non-Christians.**

The four (4) Indictments of the wealthy non-Christian landowners (cf. D. Moo):

1. **The worthlessness of the worldly goods they have so carefully accumulated (vs 2-3).**
2. **They have defrauded their workers of their pay (vs 4).**
3. **Their pursuit of a luxurious lifestyle is selfish, self-indulgent and uncaring for the needs of others (vs 5).**
4. **They have condemned and killed the poor and needy by their failure to share their possessions and to pay the wages of their workers (vs 6).**

19 Jesus said, "There was a certain rich man who was splendidly clothed in purple and fine linen and who lived each day in luxury. 20 At his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus who was covered with sores. 21 As Lazarus lay there longing for scraps from the rich man's table, the dogs would come and lick his open sores. 22 "Finally, the poor man died and was carried by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried, 23 and his soul went to the place of the dead. There, in torment, he saw Abraham in the far distance with Lazarus at his side.

24 "The rich man shouted, 'Father Abraham, have some pity! Send Lazarus over here to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue. I am in anguish in these flames.'
25 "But Abraham said to him, 'Son, remember that during your lifetime you had everything you wanted, and Lazarus had nothing. So now he is here being comforted, and you are in anguish. 26 And besides, there is a great chasm separating us. No one can cross over to you from here, and no one can cross over to us from there.'

27 "Then the rich man said, 'Please, Father Abraham, at least send him to my father's home. 28 For I have five brothers, and I want him to warn them so they don't end up in this place of torment.'
29 "But Abraham said, 'Moses and the prophets have warned them. Your brothers can read what they wrote.'
30 "The rich man replied, 'No, Father Abraham! But if someone is sent to them from the dead, then they will repent of their sins and turn to God.'
31 "But Abraham said, 'If they won't listen to Moses and the prophets, they won't listen even if someone rises from the dead.'"

How to respond to difficult and "unfair" circumstances:

1. **Be "patient" (4 times) and "endure" (2 times).**
2. **"Until the coming of the Lord" - to bless and deliver faithful believers and to judge the non-believing oppressors.**
3. **Examples of patience and endurance:**
 - a. **The farmer (vs 7b)**
 - b. **The prophets (vs 10)**
 - c. **Job (vs 11)**
4. **Don't grumble and complain (vs 9)**

James 5:12

Prohibition against "oaths"

1. These are voluntary oaths – does not apply to official courtroom oaths
2. Underlying issue: rash unrealistic vows (promises) that are often broken, thus impugning the oath taker's character and Christian witness.
3. The key point is: always be truthfull

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James 5:12 – con't

4. *Interesting application (cf. James Baker): these poor Christians might be "tempted to use oaths to fend off creditors or to obtain credit for food and other necessities," even knowing that prompt payment would be possible only with a miracle.*
--- Do I hear credit cards!?

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James 5:1 – 12

Discussion Questions

1. *Can we Christians slip into some of the sins of the non-Christian rich described in 5:1-6? What are they?*
2. *What is the focus or goal of our patience, endurance and waiting? Is that your focus today? How can we sharpen that focus?*

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Thank You

JAMES S: 1-12

5:1 LOOK HERE, YOU RICH PEOPLE:

WEEP AND GROWL WITH ANGUISH

BECAUSE OF ALL THE TERRIBLE TROUBLES

AHEAD OF YOU.

2. YOUR WEALTH IS ROTTING AWAY,
AND

YOUR FINE CLOTHES ARE NOW EATEN RAGS.

3. YOUR GOLD AND SILVER HAVE BECOME WORTHLESS.

THE VERY WEALTH YOU WERE COUNTING ON

WILL BURN AWAY AT YOUR FLESH LIKE FIRE.

THIS TREASURE YOU HAVE ACCUMULATED

WILL STAND AS EVIDENCE AGAINST YOU

ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

4. FOR LISTEN!

HEAR THE CRIES OF THE FIELD WORKERS

WHOM YOU HAVE CREATED OF THEIR PAY.

THE WAGES YOU HELD BACK CRY OUT AGAINST YOU.

THE CRIES OF THOSE WHO HARVEST YOUR FIELDS

HAVE REACHED THE EARS

OF THE LORD OF HEAVEN'S ARMIES.

5:5 YOU HAVE SPENT YOUR YEARS ON EARTH IN LUXURY,
SATISFYING YOUR EVERY DESIRE.

YOU HAVE FATTERED YOURSELVES

FOR THE DAY OF SLAUGHTER.

6. YOU HAVE CONDEMNED AND KILLED INNOCENT PEOPLE

WHO DO NOT RESIST YOU.

7. DEAR BROTHERS,

BE PATIENT AS YOU WAIT FOR THE LORD'S RETURN.

CONSIDER THE FARMERS

WHO WAIT PATIENTLY FOR THE RAINS

IN THE FALL AND IN THE SPRING.

THEY EAGERLY LOOK FOR THE VALUABLE HARVEST
TO RISEN.

8. YOU, TOO, MUST BE PATIENT.

TAKE COURAGE

FOR THE COMING OF THE LORD IS NEAR (IMMINENT)

9. DON'T GUMBLE ABOUT EACH OTHER, BROTHERS,

OR YOU WILL BE JUDGED.

FOR LOOK

— THE JUDGE IS STANDING AT THE DOOR.

5:10

FOR EXAMPLES OF PATIENCE IN SUFFERING,
DEAR BROTHERS,
LOOK AT THE PROPHETS
WHO SPOKE IN THE NAME OF THE LORD.

11. WE GIVE GREAT HONOR

TO THOSE WHO ENDURE UNDER SUFFERING.

FOR INSTANCE,

YOU KNOW ABOUT JOB,

A MAN OF GREAT ENDURANCE.

YOU CAN SEE HOW THE LORD WAS KIND TO HIM

AT THE END,

FOR THE LORD IS FULL OF TENDERNESS

AND MERCY.

12. BUT MOST OF ALL, MY BROTHERS,

NEVER TAKE AN OATH,

BY HEAVEN OR EARTH OR ANYTHING ELSE.

JUST SAY A SIMPLE YES OR NO,

SO THAT YOU WILL NOT SIN

AND BE CONDEMNED.