

James 5

vs. 1-3 James names the three substances of wealth of his day, grain, clothes, and precious metals. He says the grain will rot. The clothes will be eaten by moths. The precious metals will rust (which gold and silver can not do normally) and that the rust will eat the flesh of the one who stores it up. Sounds like leprosy. No other book speaks so explosively against social injustice as the Bible. Look into the prophet Amos. James is not speaking against wealth. Grain can not rot that is being used, no clothes are eaten by moths as you wear them, and metals in use do not rust. It is the responsibility of wealth to be used as God directs instead of trusted in as some kind of salvation. James says it is just the opposite, damnation! Luke 6:24

vs. 4- 6 Deuteronomy 24:14-15 A manual laborer made just enough to eat in Biblical times. If wages were withheld he would go hungry. The description here is of a man who is indulgent at the expense of others. In satisfying their own lusts they have forgotten the needs of their fellow man. Like a cow being fattened for slaughter ... what a picture.

vs. 7-9 The early church believed the Second Coming would happen in their generation. Matthew 24:33 James used the same term Jesus used. Why did the early church have this misconception? It may be that the word used for 'generation' also means 'race'. Certainly it encouraged an all out and serious walk with Christ to believe He may return at any moment. Many generations since have believed that the Parousia (His Presence or appearance) would happen in their time, including ours. The term is also used at the appearance of a governor to his province or when an army invaded a country. As usual every application of the word works. Certainly life is short and especially to those of us who love Him. Genesis 29:20 "Do not grumble against each other", is set with the warning of judgement. I don't think we take this injunction nearly as seriously as we should. How many times this week have you grumbled about someone?

vs 10-11 James continues with the thought of patience, now especially related to suffering. He reminds us of the prophets and Job. O. Chambers says, "Sorrow burns up a great amount of shallowness, but it does not always make a man better... You always know the man who has been through the fires of sorrow and received himself, you are certain you can go to him in trouble and find that he has ample leisure for you."

vs.12 Matthew 5:33-37 The value of an oath is only as good as the character of the man who makes it. If the man's character is good, why do you need an oath? The age in which James wrote had a nasty habit of making an oath of everything. If the oath was connected to God it was binding. Like legal language today, the wording of an oath to trick the other party was quite common. James repeats what Jesus taught, just don't bother with making vows.

vs. 13-15 1Corinthians 14:15,26 The early church was always ready to sing! Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16
There is the action prescribed for the sick. This came down through the practice of the Rabbi in the first Century who anointed the sick with oil before they saw a doctor. There

are records of healing by this manner through the third century. One Roman Emperor, Alexander Severus, was healed, after a Christian anointed him with oil and prayed for him..

vs. 16-18 We need to confess our sins to God but there are times when it is helpful to confess them to men. We must exercise wisdom in this as we can do more damage than good if it involves others. I have seen and read of times where God moved in a mighty way through confession. When a righteous man prays earnestly the hand of God is moved. We need men and women today that can pray like this! Will you be one?

vs. 19-20 We often put our greatest focus on soul winning, but today in America there is probably a greater need for soul re-winning. Sedona is especially suited to this need. Many of the cult leaders were church attendees. Who do you know that needs to return to the Way?