

# Faith in Action - James

[James 5:1-6](#) - "Laying up Treasure in Heaven" - November 1, 2020



## Introduction

In the passage today, James' pulls back the curtain of the divine courtroom to show the future judgment of the rich who oppressed the church. The aim is twofold: it brings comfort to believers who have been wronged and are awaiting justice. Secondly, it warns the believers of this danger themselves. James considers the poor to be those who are unable to provide for their own everyday basic needs then holds them in contrast to the rich. As Randy Alcorn says, "statistically if you have sufficient food, decent clothes, live in a house that keeps the weather out, and own a reliable means of transportation than you are in among the top 15% of the worlds wealthy." Therefore, many of us in America will quickly fall into the biblical category of rich. James has a lot for us to consider as we read and reflect today.

## Pray

Before you begin, take some time to ask God to help you understand His word, to reveal what needs to change in you, and for the grace to follow Him in response. To help, use [Psalm 119:33-40](#) as a prayer for God to open His word up to you.

## Big Idea

Christian hope endures difficult days, by seeing the end God has for the wicked.

## Read & Discuss

Read [5:1-6](#)

How did the rich get to the place where they are in such misery? James shows us three things the rich here are guilty of and condemned by in the courtroom of God:

1. Hoarding ([vs 1-3](#))

Are there ways that you are hoarding your treasures and resources in which God has given you? Wealth is not meant to be hoarded. Like perishable goods, wealth has an expiration date and can turn rotten. What are some ways you may be able to turn patterns of hoarding into a blessing to others for the Lord's glory? We are reminded by James that hoarded wealth is evidence against us on the final day. Are there ways you are tempted to find refuge or comfort in your bank account? Do you in some way feel the pull of this world to define your significance or status in what you own or stockpile? God gives so that we can give to others and we are called to trust Him by our generosity for he has given freely to us.

2. Fraud ([v 4](#))

Fraud is a serious thing. It's keeping back from others what is rightly owed to them. If you've been wronged with an injustice in this world these verses should bring encouragement. There is a God who will make right what is wrong in your life. However, have there been times when you yourself have disadvantaged others to advantage yourself? If you manage others, do those under you receive a fair wage? If you are an employee, are you putting in a full day's worth of work? As Christians we are called to love our neighbor as ourselves ([2:8](#)).

### 3. Self-Indulgence ([vs 5-6](#))

The self-indulgence James has in mind here is a self-centered demand for luxury coupled with an uncaring attitude for the needs of others. It's a life that so focused on gaining luxury it doesn't care when it comes at another person's expense (or life). Take time this week to reflect on what you spend your money and time on. Would you say that pattern of your life so far shows more signs of self-indulgence than generosity towards others?

What are three *appropriate* uses of wealth?

1. Provide for basic needs: food, shelter, and clothing. ([1 Tim 6:8](#))
2. To enjoy God's gifts. ([1 Tim 6:17](#))
3. To be generous and to share with those in need. ([1 Tim 6:18](#))

**Additional Reading:** [Luke 16:19-31](#), [James 1:10](#), [Matthew 6:19-24](#)

Also recommended is [Money, Possessions, and Eternity by Randy Alcorn](#),

### **Prayer of Response**

- 1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to confess? From what do I need to *repent*?
- 2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand, believe, desire, or do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come.

If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at <https://fbcum.org/sermons-new/>

**\*Next week's sermon text:** we turn to [James 5:7-12](#) "**Patience in Suffering**"