

James 5:1-6
THE WORLD HAS
CHANGED
Making Money



The world has changed for us.

From our perspective it feels like so much has been disrupted.
Feel this as much as ever in our economy.

While for many us... our personal finances are OK...
you don't need me to tell you...

that money can be unstable and confidence in money can be devastated.

I think striking 2000yrs ago James gave financial advice perfectly relevant today:

- 1:2 – there's a blessing in trial... which can include financial hardship because God grows perseverance in faith and godliness through it.
- 1:9 – humble financial circumstances are reason for pride.
- 1:10-11 – wealth will fade away... and those who depend on their wealth.
- 1:27 – pure religion uses wealth to look after/provide for vulnerable people (widows and orphans)
- 2:1-4 – no place for Christians favouring rich over poor.
- 2:5 – God is biased toward poor who love him.
- 4.1-2 – fights among believers are because of jealous desire for what we the other has that we don't.
- 4:13 – James warns merchants about their over-confident self-confident ability to make money plans apart from God.

Then we arrive at Ch 5 – read a moment ago.

This is a kind of prophetic wisdom.

James doesn't tell us what TO DO...

As much as makes wise observation about world, humanity, eternity.

Leaves us to reflect in a sobering way on where we sit in this.

[v1]

Riches

THIS is the pattern of the rich:

- 5:2-3
- **Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes. Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days.**
 - – hoard their wealth, without eye on God’s eternal timeline.
- 5:4
- **Look! The wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty.**
 - – dishonest in handling money and rip off others to gain more.
- 5:5
- **You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter.**
 - – self-indulgent
- 5:6
- **You have condemned and murdered the innocent one, who was not opposing you.**
 - – murderous intent... like Judas who sold out on Jesus for money.

But written here FOR believers – addressed directly again in v7.

These verses from James disrupt our life like a global pandemic.

Supposed to be uncomfortable... make us reflect on how we make money.

Paul Tripp’s weekly devotional on money (last week):

Money will either bless you or curse you.

It can be a rescuing blessing in the hands of your Savior.

And an invitation to experience blessing by being a blessing

But money can also be spiritually dangerous and should be handled with extreme caution.

- 1. Money can cause you to forget God.**
- 2. Money can change the way you think about you and cause you to look down on others**
- 3. Money can weaken your resolve to fight temptation.**
- 4. Money can finance your allegiance to the kingdom of self.**

This is so true today and every day.

Our confidence in a changing world is not in making money...

but in an unchangeable God

As we open our lives to his grace and wisdom...

money is a blessing for living under good rule of Jesus.

‘Now listen, you rich people...’

Note... often wisdom literature doesn’t tell us what TO DO.

Wise person describes the world as it IS... rather than tell us how it should BE.

We're to see it as it is... see ourselves as we are...

Severe WARNING about riches, wealth and material prosperity.

Bittersweet COMFORT for believers facing financial hardship this side of eternity.

Slow down and think... where am I headed? What should I do?

How do I pursue the subtle art of living well... when money is plentiful?

So please listen again to James' observation – sit it in it.

READ 5:1-7

Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming on you. Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes. Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days. Look! The wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty. You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter. You have condemned and murdered the innocent one, who was not opposing you. Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming.