

THE BOOK OF JAMES
Chapter 5 Part 1
“Establishing Your Heart”

Return To
All Commentary

One day when my two sons Rob and Mike were still in elementary school, **unknown to their mother and I**, they were dismissed from school a couple of hours early that day.

We had gone to run a few errands, planning to be back home by the time they arrived home from school.

When we arrived at our house, there was Rob and Mike sitting out front on the front door step crying their eyes out.

“We thought the Rapture came and we were left...”

Now, even at just 7 years old they were living their life as if Jesus could come at any moment...and they were concerned about how they were living...if they were ready...

- ☞ **I think that sometimes** as adults, we get so caught up in today's demands that we forget that what we are doing right now, is not all there is.
- ☞ **We forget** that we are the final generation that will be here on the earth when Jesus returns, and that Jesus is coming for us at any moment.

In verse 7 of this final chapter of the Book of James that we are in today, a simple reminder:

James 5

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

Patience in all of the things that you are going to be busily doing this coming week.

- ☞ **Patience in knowing that** *“All I can do next week is the best I can do, and then the rest I will just have to commit it to the Lord...”*
- ☞ **Patience in realizing** that whatever I need to do next week, that these things are not my life...my life is Jesus and He can come for me at any moment.

1 Thessalonians 4:16

For the Lord Jesus Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God

What will you be doing when Gabriel blows the trumpet blast and Jesus descends out of heaven on His way to earth to Rapture out all those that love Him?

- ☞ **Will you be so busy** that you hadn't given a thought to the fact that the Lord is about to come?
- ☞ **Will you be so caught up** in the difficulties and hurts of your life that you are feeling like your life is over?

"...This is all there is for me...this is how my life is...it is never going to get any better..."

The Book of James is written by the brother of Jesus who didn't even believe that He was the Son of God, the Savior of the World until after Jesus was resurrected from the dead.

- ☞ **But James has a wonderful way** of challenging us to really think about this new life that Jesus has given to us.
- ☞ **How we live is determined by what we believe.**

If I really believe that Jesus is going to come for me at any moment, then it is going to effect every other part of my life.

- ☞ **Accumulating things** will not be my goal, obtaining Jesus and holding on to Him, will be my goal.
- ☞ **I won't be focused on my problems**, I will be focused on the fact that all these problem are just temporary anyway, soon I am going to see the King of Glory face to face!

James focuses on our everyday life, where we live, how we live, and reminds us who we are supposed to be living for:

James 5

- 1 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.

It is not a mystery that most of the people on the earth today are in a non stop pursuit of riches. Trying to get them, worried about them, dreaming of what they can buy with them...

I think that sometimes as believers in Jesus, we believe that wealth and possessions are only for the people of the world, but not for us who belong to Jesus.

- ☞ **In reality**, God did not make the wealth and Riches of the universe for those who do not love Him, He made it for those who do love Him.
- ☞ **Wealth is not evil**, but for the immature Christian, the believer that is not yet Rooted and Grounded in The Word of God, Riches can be a tremendous hindrance to their growth.
- ☞ **For the people** who have not yet accepted Jesus into their life, wealth can actually prevent them from being saved at all.

Jesus told the story of a “Rich young ruler” who came to Him with a question...

Matthew 19:16-26

16 Now behold, one came and said to Him, **“Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?”**

17 So Jesus said to him, **“Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.”**

18 He said to Him, “Which ones?” Jesus said, “‘You shall not murder,’ ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ ‘You shall not steal,’ ‘You shall not bear false witness,’

19 ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ ”

20 The young man said to Him, **“All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?”**

21 Jesus said to him, **“If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”**

22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

23 Then Jesus said to His disciples, “Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.

24 And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”

25 When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, **“Who then can be saved?”**

26 But Jesus looked at them and said to them, “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

This wealthy young man realized that something was missing in his life, and he recognized that Jesus was the One who could fill that missing place...

But, he made 3 mistakes about Jesus:

1. **His first mistake** was that he saw Jesus as just a “*Good Teacher*”, instead of the fact that **Jesus is God** and the only way that this young man could have eternal life.
2. **His second mistake** was that he saw the keeping of the law, the 10 commandments as the way that he could be accepted by God.
3. **His third mistake** was that when Jesus explained everything to him and said “*Come and Follow Me*”, the Wealth and the Pride of this young man kept him from following Jesus and obtaining eternal life.

First of all, The young man calls Jesus “**Good Teacher**”.

- ☞ **Jesus asks him:** *“Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God”*
- ☞ **Jesus is telling him,** *“Either you recognize that because I am good, I am God, or you must realize that I am not a good man.*
- ☞ **Only God is Good,** men are not good, **so do you realize that I am God?**
- ☞ **Do you realize** that I am more than just a *“Good teacher?”*

Do you realize this yourself? Jesus is God, He is therefore able to take care of all of the things you cannot do or don't know how to do...Jesus is not just a great teacher, Jesus is your God!

Secondly, Jesus challenges this rich young mans claim that he was righteous because he had kept the commandments of God.

- ☞ *“What other good thing must I do Jesus to have eternal life...”* he asks Jesus?
- ☞ **In reality,** Jesus is telling this young man that there is nothing that any person can do that is “Good enough” to compel God to give them eternal life, except follow Jesus.
- ☞ **But Jesus will meet us right where we are at,** and this young man thinks that he can be saved by keeping the 10 commandments, so Jesus will challenge that claim:

Jesus tells him that if he wants to enter heaven: *“Keep the commandments” ““You shall not murder,’ “You shall not commit adultery,’ “You shall not steal,’ “You shall not bear false witness,’*

- ☞ *“Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’*

It is interesting that Jesus quotes the last 6 of the 10 commandments that deal with how we are to treat and relate to other human beings.

- ☞ **The young man says** *“All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?”*
- ☞ **Then Jesus takes him** to the first 4 commandments that deal with how we are to treat God.
- ☞ **If you will examine the first 4 of the 10 commandments,** you will see that they are about:

“Loving the Lord first in our life, and Loving the Lord more than any other thing in our life.”

- ☞ **Jesus tells him to** *“Go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”*

The wealth that this young man had was keeping the young man from making the Lord first in his life, in fact it prevented him from really loving Jesus, because he loved the things he had more...

- ☞ **Yes, he had the 6 parts of the law** down that deal with how he was to treat other people, but he had not made the first 4 parts of the law a part of his life, that deal with making the Lord first in our life.
- ☞ **The young mans own life** and all the things he had were what was really first in his life.

Matthew 19

21 Jesus said to him, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and **come, follow Me.**”

22 But **when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful**, for he had great possessions.

- ☞ **Jesus told him:** “*Just come and follow me...*”

“Forget all about everything else, forget about your struggles with your possessions, forget about your own weaknesses and failures, forget what everyone else is doing...You just come and follow me...”

- ☞ **This was the third** and final mistake the young man made...**He failed to just come and follow Jesus...**

The same command that Jesus is giving to us this morning...

- ☞ **Stop trying** to get ahead in this life.
- ☞ **Stop worrying** about how you are going to pay the bills.
- ☞ **Stop focusing** on getting more stuff.
- ☞ **Get your eyes off** of what other people have **done to you.**
- ☞ **Don't dwell anymore** on your failures in the past.
- ☞ **Don't focus any longer** on your weaknesses and inabilities...'

“Just come and follow me...”

But, the wealth that the young man had, became the one hindrance that would prevent him from going to heaven and being saved.

Then Jesus commented on this:

Matthew 19:23-24

23 Then Jesus said to His disciples, “Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.

24 And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”

- ☞ **The disciples have been hearing and watching** all of this going on and they are just shocked...
- ☞ *“If a man cannot be saved by keeping the 10 commandments, then how is it possible at all that anyone could ever be saved...”*

Matthew 19

25 When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, “**Who then can be saved?**” (If you can’t be saved by keeping Gods Law?)

26 But Jesus looked at them and said to them, “**With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.**” (Yes it is impossible for man to save himself by being good, but I can save you if you will just give your life to me)

Jesus made it clear that not one person will ever be saved by their own attempts at being “good Enough”.

- ☞ *“But...With God, all things are possible...”*
- ☞ **The salvation** that is impossible for any man or woman to obtain on their own goodness, Jesus came to make it possible, just by a simple faith and trust in what Jesus did on the Cross...paid for all of your sin.
- ☞ **All you have to do** is accept what Jesus did for you, and then “*Come and follow Him*”, by living the rest of your life for Jesus...

I believe that if the young man had said to Jesus: “*Yes Lord I would gladly give up everything else to have the opportunity to come and follow you...*”

- ☞ **Jesus would have turned to this young man** and said to him what He said to Abraham back in the book of Genesis:

As Abraham had been called by the Lord to offer up his only son Isaac on the altar as a Burnt Offering, Abraham raised the knife in obedience to God and was just about to plunge it into Isaac when...

- ☞ **The Lord stopped Abraham** and said to him: “*Abraham, Now I know that I am truly first in your life, don’t harm your son Isaac.*”
- ☞ **Then the Lord provided a lamb** to Abraham to offer instead, as a sacrifice.

The Lord was also saying to Abraham, “*What I really want most of all Abraham is you, all of you, your heart, your soul, your mind and all of your strength...*”

“...and by the way, you can’t win my acceptance by doing some kind of sacrifice yourself, I will provide the sacrifice for you, in 2,000 years, my son Jesus Will Die for you...”

- ☞ **A picture** of how Jesus was provided for us as our lamb, to take our place and forgive our sins.

Is there something in our own life today that is hindering us from just coming and following Jesus with all of our heart?

- ☞ **Is the pursuit** of material things stopping us?
- ☞ **Is a person** or a relationship stopping us?

- ⊞ **Is there a job**, a goal stopping us.
- ⊞ **Perhaps a hurt** that someone has done to us, or a sin that we have done in the past that is stopping us?

Matthew 16:26

For what profit is it to a man if he **gains the whole world, and loses his own soul**? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

What if you actually gain this one thing or things that you desire most in your life, but then you find out in the end, you missed eternal life?

- ⊞ **Would it** have been worth it?
- ⊞ **A couple years** of having something on this earth, in exchange for having everything in the universe as your own, forever and ever?
- ⊞ **What are you** exchanging today for your own soul?
- ⊞ **Is it** really worth it?

Jesus said: “*Come and follow Me!*”

This is how chapter 5 of James begins:

James 5

1 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.

For the person who is pursuing a job or wealth or material things more than they are pursuing Jesus, there will come a day when it will all seem like it was a great waste of time...and then it will be too late!

“Weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you...your riches are rotten...”

- ⊞ **Verse 4**, “...the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth...”
- ⊞ **When we turn our ears and eyes** from those who we could have helped by the resources that we had in this life, but did not help them...
- ⊞ *“It has reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth”.*

“Lord of Sabaoth” means “The Lord of Hosts” Jesus is “The Lord of the Hosts of the armies of heaven...”

- ⊞ **This is another name for Jesus**, He is the commander of the armies of angels in heaven.
- ⊞ **This verse says** that when people cry out to the Lord for help and we do not help them, He hears their cries, and He will hold us accountable why we did not use what we had to help them.
- ⊞ **You see, whatever we have** in our life, Jesus is the One that gave it to us.
- ⊞ **He did not give to us all that we have**, just for us, but He gave it to us to share with other people.

So chapter 5 begins by a serious call to us to examine our priorities:

- ☞ **What is first in our life?** We can tell by what we spend the most time on.
- ☞ **Who is first in our life?** We know who is first in our life by who our thoughts and focus are at, **is it us who is first, what we want**, or is it the Lord who is first, what He wants, what is important to Jesus...

James 5

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

In Israel, when they planted their crops in the field, they depended upon the rains to water their crops.

- ☞ **Israel has the** “*Early rains*” that come in November at just about the time the crops are planted, that softened and prepared the ground for the seed.
- ☞ **And then they have** “*Later rains*” that came in April when the crops were up and growing, rains that filled the plants with moisture and made them ready to harvest.

If the later rains did not come, the crops would not ever mature and could not be harvested.

Deuteronomy 11:13-20

13 “And it shall be that **if you earnestly obey My commandments** which I command you today, **to love the LORD your God and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul,**

14 **then I will give you the rain for your land in its season,** the early rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your grain,

16 **Take heed** to yourselves, **lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them,**

17 lest the LORD’S anger be aroused against you, and **He shut up the heavens so that there be no rain,** and the land yield no produce, and you perish quickly from the good land which the LORD is giving you.

18 “Therefore **you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul,** and bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.

19 You shall **teach them to your children, speaking of them** when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.

20 And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates,

The promise from the Lord, that if you will make Him first in your life. Above all other things, then He will take care of everything else for you...

Following Jesus, belonging to Him, living for Him, is why we are gathered here together this morning.

- ☞ **We need to be taught** from Gods Word, what our priorities in this life are to be.
- ☞ **We need to be reminded** of who and what we are supposed to be living for.

James uses the example of the Farmer and his crops to illustrate the point...

- ☞ **A farmer** prepares his field by plowing it.
- ☞ **Then he sows** the seeds in the field.
- ☞ **Then he fertilizes** it.

As he is doing all of these things, he realizes that the final outcome of how great a crop he will have, how much fruit comes from his fields, is totally out of his control...

- ☞ **He is dependant** on powers and forces that are outside of himself.
- ☞ **He cannot make** the seed come up.
- ☞ **He cannot produce the rain** and the sunshine that is needed to water and grow his crop.

He knows that after he has done his best, he is still dependant on God to make it all work out.

Even as in Your life, an my life...

- ☞ **We try to prepare ourselves** to do the things that we believe we need to do.
- ☞ **We try to sow** the right things in our life.
- ☞ **We try to nurture** our relationships with people.

But we have to realize that the final outcome of all of these things that we are doing right now in our life...it is really in Gods hands!

- ☞ **We are dependant on the Lords power and might** to make everything turns out right.
- ☞ **We cannot make things** turn out the way they are supposed to.
- ☞ **We cannot make people love us** and be faithful to us.

Even after we have done our best, we are still dependant on the Lord to make it all work out.

James 5

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

A very, very, important thing that we must do..."Establish out heart"

- ☞ **Settle it right here, right now**, either "*Jesus is Lord of all, or He isn't Lord at all.*"

- ☞ **Unless we establish in our heart**, that **Jesus is God**, and more than able to take care of EVERYTHING in my life, **then I will continue to be Lord of my own life.**

When Joshua had 2 1/2 million people out in the desert, just about ready to cross over the Jordan river into all that God had planned and promised His people, before that was to happen, Joshua challenged the people...

Joshua 24:14-24

14 “Now therefore, **fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and in truth**, and **put away the gods** which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD!

15 And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, **choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve**, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. **But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”**

Joshua told the people 3 things they needed to do, then He challenged them to choose..

1. **Fear the Lord**, is to or Hold in high respect, to honor God.
2. **Serve Him** in sincerity and Truth.
3. **Put away** the other gods

Honor God

Serve Him

Put away everything else..

Then Joshua told the people to “*Choose this day who you are going to serve...As for me, I am Going to Serve Jesus with all of my heart...*”

The people listened to Joshua, then responded...

Joshua 24

16 So the people answered and said: “**Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods;**

17 for the LORD our God is **He who brought us and our fathers up out of the land** of Egypt, from the house of bondage, who **did those great signs** in our sight, and **preserved us** in all the way that we went and among all the people through whom we passed.

18 And **the LORD drove out from before us all the people**, including the Amorites who dwelt in the land. We also will serve the LORD, for He is our God.”

- ☞ **Has the Lord in the past**, always been faithful to you?
- ☞ **Hasn't He** in the past done amazing things in your life?
- ☞ **Has he not always** provided for you?
- ☞ **Hasn't He preserved** you so far?
- ☞ **Hasn't He driven the enemy** from you and protected you?

Then isn't it reasonable that He will continue today in the struggles you are going through right now...To also do all of these same things?

Isn't it reasonable that He will provide for you, Preserve You, and Protect you right now?

Choose...this day, right here, right now...who are you going to serve?

24 And the people said to Joshua, **“The LORD our God we will serve, and His voice we will obey!”**

It is our time to also choose who we are going to serve, either the world, our own selfish desires, other people....or are we going to serve THE KING OF KINGS AND THE LORD OF LORDS...

“If Jesus is not Lord of All of the things in my life, then He is not Lord at All...”

We are going to play a song about surrender, while we are playing this song, write down in your bulletin on the place we made for you on the back of your bulletin *“The things that I need to surrender to the Lord this morning...”*

Needs
Hurts
Difficulties
Anger
Struggles
Worry
Doubts
Fears
Sins
Pride
Stubbornness

Write down on the back of your bulletin, the things you need to surrender to the Lord, then when you are ready, come, lay it here on the altar, if you want, kneel before the Lord, and commit it to Him, then surrender it, and then walk away...go back to your seat...