Financial Planning for the Last Days August 20, 2023

*James 5:1-6 Series: Show Me It’s Real*

Once the longing for money comes, the longing also comes for what money can give … Our needs will increase, for one thing brings another, and the result will be endless dissatisfaction. – Mother Teresa

Intro: North Korean prisoner reflects on happiness

1. Pity the worldly rich
2. A funeral march for the ones with all the toys

v. 1 *Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you.*

1. Selfish riches burn your pockets

vv. 2-3 *Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver have corroded… and will eat your flesh like fire.*

Matthew 6:19–20 *Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.*

Luke 12:21 *So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.*

1. Selfish riches deliver a guilty verdict

v. 3 *their corrosion will be evidence against you*

* What’s wrong with envying the worldly rich? What would you need to remember in order to pity the worldly rich?
* How does the “corrosion” of worldly riches testify against those who hoard wealth?
1. Save and give don’t hoard
2. This is not a time for hoarding.

v. 3 *You have laid up treasure in the last days.*

v. 5 *You have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.*

Romans 2:5 *But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed.*

1. More for you is never just for you

v. 5 *You have lived on the earth in luxury and in self-indulgence.*

1 Timothy 5:6 *she who is self-indulgent is dead even while she lives.*

1 Timothy 6:9 *But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction.*

* Why is laying up treasure even more wrong “in the last days”?
* Why is the “desire to be rich” so dangerous? i.e., How does it ensnare people into harmful desires that lead to ruin?
* How can you tell the difference between self-indulgence and meeting your needs in an affluent society?
1. Use what you have to lift others up
2. Hear the cries for justice

v. 4 *the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, are crying out against you*

Deuteronomy 24:15 *You shall give him his wages on the same day, before the sun sets (for he is poor and counts on it), lest he cry against you to the LORD, and you be guilty of sin.*

Jeremiah 22:13 *Woe to him who builds his house by unrighteousness, and his upper rooms by injustice, who makes his neighbor serve him for nothing and does not give him his wages …*

v. 6 *You have condemned and murdered the righteous person. He does not resist you.*

Ezekiel 34:3 *You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat ones, but you do not feed the sheep.*

1. Know that God hears the cries for justice

v. 4 *the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts*

* Where do you see economic injustice in your workplace?
* Where are you tempted to give people less than they deserve or contribute to economic injustice in the world?
* This passage was intended to comfort and encourage the Christians to whom James wrote. How does it comfort you?

Study ahead: Next week, we’ll study James 5:7-12

Notes