



James 5

Read – James Ch 5 v 1 – 6

In these first few verses James is highlighting to the people of God how selfish use of our material goods undermines the work of God in our lives. Clearly portrayed here is the sense that the seeking after wealth and material gain leads to a corruption of the Christian moral character.

Discuss – When two thirds of the world does not even have enough to eat – How do you think God sees our desires for wealth and material pleasures?

How do you think we can control our desire to spend, spend, spend and always buying the latest and best of everything?

James portrays those who make money an important part of their lives as a Christmas turkey – in other words we live in comfort, using our money to gratify our selfish desires, but long term all this is doing is fattening us up for the day of slaughter – the day of judgement.

Discuss – How do you think we can develop a responsible approach to using the wealth we have got in this country?

What ways do you think God would want us to use our money for the good of others and our churches?

Read – James Ch 5 v 7 – 12

These verses are written to encourage us in the face of suffering and hardship. James sees the times of suffering and hardship as opportunities God gives us to develop our Christian character and refine our faith. He clearly teaches us not to turn on each other when hardship comes but to remember we have a Father in heaven who is faithful to his children. When times of hardship and suffering comes he encourages us to remember the Lord is near and will use our suffering to produce a harvest of righteousness and opportunity for His Kingdom

Discuss – How do you respond when you go through times of suffering and hardship?

How do you think we as a church can support each other more effectively when individuals go through suffering and hurt?

In what ways do you think we can develop a focus on God when we go through suffering?

Read – James Ch 5 v 13 – 20

The focus on these last few verses of James are on the prayer of faith and how a righteous person who lives for God has a mighty power to change situations for God. The first part is an challenge to sick people not just to accept their illness and infirmities but it is the duty of the sick person to call the elders of the church to pray for them. Here the focus of the care is put purely on the willingness of the sick person to call the elders, with the promise that the prayer of faith will restore and heal. The whole focus of these verse is to say the power of Almighty God is manifested through the prayer of faith from a righteous person

Discuss – Do you think we have this type of faith praying in your own life in the life of the church?

How do you think we can develop this type of praying?

How do you think we can encourage people and ourselves to seek help in prayer and be honest about their needs?

Some Practical Outworking of the Passage:-

1) We need to be honest and not be drawn into seeking after wealth and possessions. – God does cause His people to prosper but it is only to give them more opportunity to honour Him, do good to others and abound in acts of generosity. (How generous are you to people outside your family?)

2) If we are to make the most of times of suffering for personal growth and see them as opportunities for God, we must spend time learning how God refines our character. Learn to be honest with other Christians about what God is doing in your life, reading the word of God and learning how God has refined people in the past all enables us to develop a clear focus on a God who uses all things for the good of those who love him. Remember God is not concerned with the your superficial, fleshy happiness, he is concerned with your eternal glory.

3) This passage encourages to seek out the people of genuine faith within our congregations and allow their passion and strength to shape and lift our own levels of faith and expectation. Alongside of this we are encouraged to cultivate Christian relationships of honesty if we are truly to see the power of faith prayer manifest. Answered faith prayer is linked to a righteous life – are you seeking to cultivate a holy life before God , because answered prayer is dependent upon it!!