

What Can We Learn from the Ruthless Rich?

James 5:1-6

In our passage today, James addresses the rich, specially a group that could be called the ruthless rich. Though it is likely that this group was not part of the believing community that James is addressing, what James says to them can still help draw us closer to God and His will in our lives in terms of money and wealth.

Read James 5:1-6

1. What attitudes and behaviors is James confronting among the ruthless rich?
2. James is asking the ruthless rich to anticipate the day they will be accountable for everything they have done in this life. What does James say that day will look like for them (vv. 1-3)?
3. Read Matthew 6:19-20. How does this passage inform what James is saying?
4. What does James specifically state are some of the ways the ruthless rich had misused their wealth (vv. 3-6)?
5. What does it mean to live in “luxury and in self-indulgence” (v. 5)?
6. What lessons or principles can we glean for our own lives from what James says in this passage to the ruthless rich?

Steve said:

Biblically speaking, whatever wealth you have was given to you by God. Even if you've worked very hard for a very long time to earn what you have, you have received every penny of your wealth from God. Psalm 24:1 says, "The earth is the Lord's and all it contains." Since God is the owner of everything, you and I are temporary stewards of everything we have. If we don't get ownership right, we'll never get stewardship right. Among other things, this means that we should honor God not only by what we give but also by what we spend and save. It's possible to spend and save so much that there's nothing left over to give; the three need to be evaluated together.

7. What do you think Steve means when he says, "If we don't get ownership right, we'll never get stewardship right?"

8. Do you think James is saying it wrong to save and develop a nest egg for the future? Why or why not?

9. As you think about the categories of spending, saving and giving, what changes might you need to make to more consistently please God with how you handle money? What's one next-step that you could take to move in this direction?

Practicing the Rhythms of Rooted



Daily Devotion: Read and meditate upon next week's passage (James 5:7-11).



Generosity: Spend some time this week reflecting on your life with money. Are you growing in a life-style of generosity? What is one way you could be generous with your financial resources this week?