

**Lesson Title:** Book of James - Chapter 5

Key Concept: James is action-oriented “wisdom literature” filled with good advice that reflects the teachings of Proverbs and Jesus. As we wait for the Lord’s return, do right by all in the light of that day and rely only on God.

**Scriptures:**

Your gold and silver are corroded. The very wealth you were counting on will eat away your flesh like fire. This corroded treasure you have hoarded will testify against you on the day of judgment.

(James 5:3 *New Living Translation*)

Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.

(James 5:16 *New Living Translation*)

Context Scriptures: James 1–5, Psalm 119:1–5

**Lesson Thoughts:**

The first four chapters of James deal with true faith, prejudice, the power of the tongue, godly wisdom, ill-motives and carnal desires, judging others, and the pitfall of self-confidence. In this lesson, we turn to the fifth and final chapter that calls the reader to keep their eyes on the prize and their reliance on God.

The chapter begins with a sharp warning to those who are rich by unjust means. Their wealth will be short-lived and will ultimately cost them more than they have gained. We should store up treasure in heaven as opposed to here on earth.

James’ tone softens as he reminds his readers to be patient and endure suffering with the Lord’s soon return in mind. The farmers’ eagerness for the time of

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harvest and the outcome of Job's suffering are presented as encouragement. If we remain focused, faithful, and patient, we will reap what God has for us.

Then James turns to the power of prayer and praise. Happy? Praise. Suffering hardships? Pray. But don't do so alone. "You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord. Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make you well. And if you have committed any sins, you will be forgiven" (James 5:14-15). Not only are we to involve others in praying for our healing but we are also to confess our sins to each other. James clearly ties physical and spiritual healing to prayer and confession of sins. The prayers of the righteous produce wonderful results! This shows that God is the source of all we need, and we can rely on him for our provision.

The letter ends with a clever statement of perspective. As brothers and sisters, we should seek to restore those who wander. This will not only bring about their salvation and forgiveness of sins, but ours as well. This section reminds us of the final prize, which is the salvation of both us and others. James 2 teaches us that faith without works means nothing and to show our faith, we must walk in faith. In the same way, James 5 emphasizes that to live a life pleasing to God, we must keep our eyes focused on the final prize and rely on him to get us there.

**Discussion Questions:**

- 1) In this chapter, what relationships are highlighted? What should be our behavior in these relationships?
- 2) How do James' teachings impact the way you see the power of the body's ministry?
- 3) Given that James dealt with so many topics in his letter, what topic(s) really resonated with you? Why?

Notes and Reflections

- 1) Throughout the entire letter, James highlights just how interconnected we are as the body of Christ. Because of this, we have the power to destroy and restore one another. How will you carry out that responsibility?
- 2) How will you incorporate what you've learned (or been reminded of) from the book of James into your walk as a Christian?

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Notes and Reflections, cont.