

## **Lesson Ten — James Chapter Five, Part I: The Lord's Return**

*Day One — Observations of James Chapter Five*

*Day Two — Continued Observations*

*Day Three — Remember Who Blesses You*

*Day Four — Be Patient*

*Day Five — Don't Complain*

In the last two weeks we have studied James chapter four. In this chapter James writes a real “hands-on, how-to-do-it” section. He calls attention to:

- the source of their fighting and quarrels
- their friendship with the world
- how they are to resist Satan
- their use of the tongue (again!)
- the fact that they are not to judge one another
- the fact that they are to include the Lord in their future plans.

In chapter five, he continues telling them how they should live with a view to the future.

### **Day One — Observations of James Chapter Five**

Today we will be reading through chapter five. As you read, do not forget what you have learned in the preceding chapters. It is always important to keep the chapters within the context of the whole book.

Read James chapter five two times through now, and write out your impressions.

Go back through and begin marking the repeated words (and synonyms) or phrases, as you have already done in previous chapters. If you see any key word, which has been used in previous chapters, you will want to mark these as well, adding them to your previous list(s). Also mark any new key words.

Remember, the definition of a *key word (or phrase)* is any word (or phrase) that is repeated and that, if deleted from the text, would change the meaning of the text.

After you have marked the key words, begin making your simple lists in the right hand margin.

That's it for today. Remember to meditate upon what you have read, asking the Holy Spirit to be teaching you.

## Day Two — Continued Observations

Yesterday you marked all the key words and phrases, and made lists. Today, we will continue observing the text in chapter five, looking for and marking all the different *forms of expression*. Remember, *forms of expression* are **comparisons, contrasts, cause and effect statements, and summary statements**. Using your *Forms of Expressions* sheet from the appendix, mark the forms of expressions as you have previously. Before you end your study time today, why don't you take time to reread chapter five?

Now as you go about your day, ask Him to cause you to meditate upon what you have observed. If you would like you may write any notes, questions or observations you have noticed from your study today:

## Day Three — Remember Who Blesses You

Today we will begin looking at the various parts of this final chapter of the Book of James. The opening section of chapter five is actually a continuation of the last part of chapter four. We will therefore pick up this section in chapter four.

### James 4

**13 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow, we shall go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." 14 Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. 15 Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and also do this or that." 16 But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil. 17 Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do, and does not do it, to him it is sin.**

### James 5

**1 Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries which are coming upon you. 2 Your riches have rotted and your garments have become moth-eaten. 3 Your gold and your silver have rusted; and their rust will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire. It is in the last days that you have stored up your treasure!**

From your Appendix sheets, go back and read what James said in 1:10-11. With this in mind, what does the rich have to weep for?

This section in James echoes the thoughts of a parable spoken by Jesus in Luke chapter twelve. This parable falls in the middle of a discourse in which Jesus was encouraging His disciples to “*seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness*” and all their physical needs would be met without their worrying over them (Lk. 12:31). Let's look at it.

**Luke 12**

**16 And He told them a parable, saying, “The land of a certain rich man was very productive. 17 And he began reasoning to himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?’**

**18 “And he said, ‘This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.”’**

**20 “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?’**

**21 “So is the man who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”**

Upon what was this man's focus?

How do you see this parable relating to the opening section in James chapter five?

What is the warning here to us?

The Children of Israel (second generation) had the same kind of warning given to them by Moses exactly prior to their entrance into the promised land. Read it below.

**Deuteronomy 8**

**7 “For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing forth in valleys and hills; 8 a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; 9 a land where you shall eat food without scarcity, in which you shall not lack anything; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper.**

**10 “When you have eaten and are satisfied, you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you. 11 Beware lest you forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments and His ordinances and His statutes which I am commanding you today; 12 lest, when you have eaten and are satisfied, and have built good houses and lived in them, 13 and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and gold multiply, and all that you have multiplies, 14 then your heart becomes proud, and you forget the LORD your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery...”**

What did Moses say might cause them to forget God?

How can this apply to you personally?

Look what Jesus will tell the Church of Laodicea at the judgment seat. Pay particular attention to vv. 17 and 18.

**Revelation 3**

**14 “And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this:**

**15 ‘I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I would that you were cold or hot. 16 So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. 17 Because you say, “I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,” and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, 18 I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire, that you may become rich, and white garments, that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see. 19 Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; be zealous therefore, and repent. 20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me. 21 He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. 22 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’”**

What do those in the Laodician Church think of their circumstances?

How does Jesus see their condition?

What does Jesus advise them to do?

Write in your own words the promise Jesus gives to those who will have overcome.

This whole issue of being focused on the earthly as opposed to being focused on the heavenly is a kingdom issue! In Revelation 3:21, look at the promise given by Jesus to those who overcome. This overcomer's promise (as each of the overcomer's promises) has to do with the kingdom. We must listen to and heed what the Spirit speaks to us in these passages.

The parable Jesus gives in Luke chapter twelve is one we should heed. What are you sowing in your life now? What is your focus? I know that we all have jobs, which take up our time and energy. I know we are called to do a good job wherever the Lord has placed us. But what is your focus in your job? Is it to honor God and glorify Him, or is it to promote you and make more mammon? Please be focused on the long-term scope of things. Time is so short!

So, what are you going to do about this?

Consider how Paul looked at his life —

**Philippians 3**

**13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.**

Why don't you stop right now and write out a prayer to Him about this.

## Day Four — Be Patient

Yesterday we looked again at the dangers of being focused on earthly riches. You must be getting the point. Focusing on earthly riches is not the desirable thing upon which to spend our energy. We face very serious consequences in placing our focus there.

James continues his reprimand to his readers by again pointing to the fact that their actions will be judged.

**James 5**

**4 Behold, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields, and which has been withheld by you, cries out against you; and the outcry of those who did the harvesting has reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. 5 You have lived luxuriously on the earth and led a life of wanton pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. 6 You have condemned and put to death the righteous man; he does not resist you.**

Do you think this passage could be interpreted in both a literal sense and a figurative sense? If so, what would it mean in a literal sense?

What would it mean in figurative sense?

Will this type of action go unnoticed by God? How do you know?

Below are a couple of passages that were written to Israel and served as warnings to them pertaining to this same issue:

**Deuteronomy 24**

**15 "You shall give him his wages on his day before the sun sets, for he is poor and sets his heart on it; so that he may not cry against you to the LORD and it becomes sin in you.**

**Malachi 3**

**5 "Then I will draw near to you for judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers and against the adulterers and against those who swear falsely, and against those who oppress the wage earner in his wages, the widow and the orphan, and those who turn aside the alien, and do not fear Me," says the LORD of hosts.**

What are the actions listed here which God will be a swift witness against?

Then James seems to switch from reprimanding the rich to encouraging *all the brethren* to be patient. Notice he tells them to be patient until a certain point in time. Reread vv. 7-9.

**James 5**

**7 Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. 8 You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.**

Until when are they to be patient?

Why are they to be patient until then?

From all that you have learned in Scriptures about the coming of the Lord, what will be the payoff for those who have patiently waited His return?

We have already seen that God's judgment will be in perfect accord to what a man does. His judgment will be without impartiality. Read what Paul says to the Church at Rome:

**Romans 2** (Remember in the NASB, when caps are present, it means that a portion of the OT is being quoted.)

**2 And we know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things. 3 And do you suppose this, O man, when you pass judgment upon those who practice such things and do the same yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God? 4 Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?**

**5 But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, 6 who WILL RENDER TO EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS: 7 to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal <166> life; 8 but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. 9 There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, 10 but glory and honor and peace to every man who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 11 For there is no partiality with God.**

God is certainly willing to grant us repentance, and He is patient toward us as He endeavors to lead us into repentance. But He doesn't force us. We choose to be repentant or stubborn. According to the above passage and believing that God **WILL RENDER TO EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS**, what will be the outcome at the judgment seat for those who seek for honor and glory and immortality?

How will they have gained honor, glory and immortality? In other words, what will they have had to do in order to have gained this?

On the other hand, what are the actions of the other group of people?

Write a description of a person who is *selfishly ambitious*.

What will be their outcome at the judgment seat?

Romans 2: 7 mentions the phrase *eternal life*. Is this passage dealing with the free gift of eternal life, or life in the coming age? How do you know? (Remember what the definition of Greek word for “eternal” <166> is).

So, re-read this passage with the understanding of your answer to the last question.

One last question before we close for the day. Will God use the same standard of judgment for all believers?

See you tomorrow.

## Day Five — Don't Complain

James continues to deal with the idea of lifestyle and the resulting judgment. He brings to bear the idea of fruit-bearing with judgment in view. He goes back to the use of the tongue, warning his readers against complaining.

### James 5

**9 Do not complain, brethren, against one another, that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.**

Do you realize how much God hates complaining? The Children of Israel grumbled against God almost continuously. Do you remember their outcome?

### Exodus 15

**24 So the people grumbled at Moses, saying, “What shall we drink?”**

### Exodus 16

**2 And the whole congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. 3 And the sons of Israel said to them, “Would that we had died by the LORD’S hand in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat, when we ate bread to**

the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

**Exodus 17**

**3** But the people thirsted there for water; and they grumbled against Moses and said, “Why, now, have you brought us up from Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?”

**Numbers 14**

**27** “How long shall I bear with this evil congregation who are grumbling against Me? I have heard the complaints of the sons of Israel, which they are making against Me. **28** “Say to them, ‘As I live,’ says the LORD, ‘just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will surely do to you; **29** your corpses shall fall in this wilderness, even all your numbered men, according to your complete number from twenty years old and upward, who have grumbled against Me. **30** ‘Surely you shall not come into the land in which I swore to settle you, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun.

**Numbers 16**

**41** But on the next day all the congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron, saying, “You are the ones who have caused the death of the LORD’S people.”

**Deuteronomy 1**

**27** and you grumbled in your tents and said, ‘Because the LORD hates us, He has brought us out of the land of Egypt to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites to destroy us.

**Psalms 106**

**24** Then they despised the pleasant land; They did not believe in His word...

What was the problem?

From what you remember in the Biblical Survey study, what was the outcome fro this first generation?

We are warned in I Corinthians not to act in the same way they acted, lest we fall short of our intended goal as they did. The passage is summarized in the following way:

**I Corinthians 10**

**10** Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. **11** Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. **12** Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

Paul has given us this example *of what not to do*. But James gives us examples of what we *are to do* and an example of *whom we are to follow*.



**James 5**

**10 As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. 11 Behold, we count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.**

If you have heard or read anything about Job, you know that he was tested severely by the Lord. He suffered much. Yet his response was, *"Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him"* (Job 13:15). After Job had been tested, suffering faithfully, and had been taught by the Lord, his outcome is interesting to note. Read it below.

**Job 42**

**10 And the LORD restored the fortunes of Job when he prayed for his friends, and the LORD increased all that Job had twofold.**

In the end, how much did the Lord bless Job?

Job received double of what he had lost. Does that fact jog anything in your mind? First born sons are to receive a double-portion of the inheritance. *"Behold, we count those blessed who endured"* (James 5:11a).

If you endure, how do you think you will be blessed?

If you could have all that the world has to offer AND a full inheritance with Christ in His coming kingdom, that would seem great, wouldn't it? *But you can't*. The reason is that you cannot serve two masters!

In Matthew 16:24-27, Jesus makes the distinction:

**Matthew 16**

**24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 25 For whoever wishes to save his life (soul) shall lose it; but whoever loses his life (soul) for My sake shall find it. 26 For what will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul (life)? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul (life)? 27 For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and WILL THEN RECOMPENSE EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS. 28 Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."**

The Greek word for soul/life is the same word used all four places in the passage, and therefore can be translated either way in all four places. It refers to our life in either age — here and now, or then and there.

According to what Jesus said, what will it take for an individual to *find his life* in the coming age, when Jesus will come in His Father's glory?

What would cause that individual to *lose his life* in the coming age?

Jesus taught that in order to receive your life in the coming age (which begins when Jesus comes in His Father's glory) you must lay your life down in the present age and pick up your cross and follow Him. The cross is an instrument of suffering and death — death to this present world. You *must* suffer loss in this world — the loss of your life/soul. You must lay down your life, just as Christ laid His life down. Then and only then, will you gain your life/soul in the coming age. After all, what profit is there for you if you lose your life/soul (in the coming 1,000-year period) but gain the whole world? NO PROFIT AT ALL! You will **not** realize the salvation of your soul (which is the salvation that the Book of James is dealing with). But if you lay your life down now, you *will*, in that future day, *realize the salvation of your soul/life!*

“How do you lay down your life?” you may ask. James is telling you throughout this entire book. This is why we have been studying James — to discover *how* one can find himself/herself approved at the Judgment Seat of Christ, having properly handled the Word of God.

We have one last passage in James chapter five to consider today.

**James 5**

**12 But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but let your yes be yes, and your no, no; so that you may not fall under judgment.**

Very simply, what is James saying here?

You see, everything we *think, say* and *do* counts — our words, our thoughts, and our actions. All words, thoughts, and actions will be brought to light on that coming day — the Day of Judgment. We have seen in Scripture that there is a positive side and negative side to this judgment. God will always remember the work you have done for Him and His glory. *But He will also remember the sin* that has purposefully not been repented of and confessed. He forgives and takes away any and all sin that is repented of and confessed!

God has provided the means by which sin can be washed away. I John 1:9 states it succinctly: *“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sin, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”* But, Christian, beware of being stiff-necked with regards to your sin. Don't walk in rebellion against God. The outcome is not worth it!

So, let's get personal! *Is there anything you need to confess?* Spend some time thinking about this question. Ask the Holy Spirit, and listen to Him!

The wonderful thing about this whole picture of sin and forgiveness and cleansing is the fact that Jesus is acting as your High Priest right at his very moment. He is, at this very moment, making intercession for you at the right hand of the Father. And if there is anything that you need to repent of (change direction in that area), and confess (agree with God that you have sinned in an area), Jesus is ready to forgive you and to cleanse you from that unrighteousness. Then the sin is washed away. And you are free to lay down your life, and take up your cross, looking forward to the joy that is set before you, as it was set before Christ as He took up His cross. **That joy is worth far more than any small test of endurance you will undergo here. It is an eternal (age-lasting) weight of glory.**

***Oh my friend, do what it takes!***

Understanding James —  
To the Saving of the Soul

Lesson Ten  
James Five, Part I:  
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**Week's End Summary:**

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