

Reedy Fork Baptist Church

Wednesday, October 8, 2026

BIBLE STUDY

Theme: "How To Succeed In Spite of Riches"

SCRIPTURE: James 5:1–6

¹ Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming on you.

² Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes.

³ Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days.

⁴ Look! The wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty.

⁵ You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter.

⁶ You have condemned and murdered the innocent one, who was not opposing you.

Key Words:

- Riches
- Hoarders
- Wealth

I. People, Places, & Times:

- James
- Jerusalem

II. Background:

James 5:1–6 is a strong prophetic warning against the misuse of wealth, selfish hoarding, and the oppression of vulnerable workers. James shifts his tone from planning life without God to addressing the ungodly rich. The passage does not condemn having wealth itself, but rather the corruption, greed, and cruelty used to get and keep it. Money talks, and James exposes how misusing wealth cries out to God.

IV. In Depth:

1. Lesson Emphasis: 1 The Rot of Hoarded Wealth (vv. 1–3)

- A.** The Warning to Weep (v. 1): James tells self-absorbed rich people to weep and howl for the miseries coming upon them.
- B.** The Decay of Possessions (v. 2): Riches rot and fine clothes become moth-eaten. Earthly luxury has an expiration date.
- C.** The Witness of Corrosion (v. 3): Gold and silver corrode, and that decay testifies against the greedy, consuming their souls like fire. Hoarding resources in the "last days" is spiritually fatal.

2. Lesson Emphasis: 2. Cry of Exploited Workers (v. 4)

- A.** The Sin of Fraud (v. 4):
The wages of field laborers were kept back by deceit and fraud.
- B.** The Appeal to Heaven (v. 4):
The unpaid work cries out, and the outcry reaches the ears of the Lord of Hosts (the Lord of Sabaoth).
- C.** The Principle:
God hears the cries of the oppressed and takes mistreatment by employers or the powerful very personally.

3. Lesson Emphasis: 3 The Danger of Self-Indulgence (vv. 5–6)

- A.** Luxury on Earth (v. 5):
The wealthy lived in self-indulgence and pleasure, fattening their hearts.
- B.** The Fattened Calf (v. 5):
They acted like cattle fattened up nicely—unaware they were heading straight for a day of slaughter.

C. Condemning the Innocent (v. 6):

Their selfishness escalated to condemning and murdering righteous people who could not fight back.

D. What's the danger of self indulgence?

V. Make It Happen

A. Money is a Tool, Not a Master: Wealth reveals where our true trust lies. Evaluate whether your resources are managed for God or hoarded for self.

B. A Call to Generosity:

C. Honor God by paying people fairly, avoiding greed, and using what you have to invest in eternal purposes.

D. What warnings does James give us about Riches?

E. If you are an employer how should you treat those you employ?

VI. Follow the Spirit:

What will you do as a result of this lesson?

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