

The book of
JAMES Devotions
you're doing it wrong READ | UNDERSTAND | APPLY

Monday: Rich Man, Poor Man

PRAY: Ask God to speak to you from His Word.

READ: James 5

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

UNDERSTAND: *get a deeper understanding of the key words*

1. Begin by underlining nouns with a single line, double underline verbs, and circle descriptive words.
2. Make a list of the keys words/phrases and think about what they mean.

Snapshot: Do you consider yourself rich? According GlobalRichList.com if you make \$25,000 per year you are among the top 2% of the wealthiest people in the world. If you make \$32,000 per year, you are in the top 1%. Whether you believe it or not there will always be someone who looks at you as richer than they are. We all have, make and use money. We all have the potential to use money and possessions in the wrong. In this passage James is condemning the oppressive actions of the wealthy but he also writes this as a warning to us about the dangers of the love of money. Whether we know it or not, realize it or not, believe it or not, the love of money has the potential to destroy us. Over the next few verses James uses a graphic example to provide us a list of 3 things to watch out for when it comes to how we handle our money.

APPLY: *What is this passage calling me to do?*

Read Matthew 19:23-24. List some reasons why money and possession make it more difficult to do what is right?

PRAY: Ask God to give you an open mind toward your money and possessions. Pray that this week God will begin to reveal to you any areas where you are beginning to misuse your money.

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Tuesday: Hoarders

PRAY: Ask God to speak to you from His Word.

READ: James 5

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.

UNDERSTAND: *get a deeper understanding of the key words*

1. Begin by underlining nouns with a single line, double underline verbs, and circle descriptive words.
2. Make a list of the keys words/phrases and think about what they mean.

Snapshot: The first major warning issued is the danger of hoarding wealth. James is clear: when money and possession are stored they will lose value (rotted, eaten, corroded). What we have is meant to be used. This verse is not referring to a healthy preparation for the future through savings and investments. However, when we begin to hoard money selfishly we are simply showing that we do not trust God to provide for our needs and we lose sight of the needs of others. Jesus put it this way, "Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven where moths and vermin do not destroy and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is there your heart will be also." This is not about money, it's about the condition of our hearts. There is no better way to measure spiritual health than an honest look at our bank account. Our money and possessions are meant to be used to advance God's kingdom.

APPLY: *What is this passage calling me to do?*

What are some dangers of hoarding, or not sharing, your money and possessions with others?

Read Matthew 6:19-21. Judging by how you spend your money where would you say you "store up treasures"?

What if you budgeted some amount of money each month just to give away? Try it. Start small. But make an effort to discuss how you will use this money to be generous to others.

PRAY: Ask God to reveal the places where you are most tempted to hoard and not share what you have. Ask Him to identify some needs of others around you.

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Wednesday:

PRAY: Ask God to speak to you from His Word.

READ: James 5

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.

UNDERSTAND: *get a deeper understanding of the key words*

1. Begin by underlining nouns with a single line, double underline verbs, and circle descriptive words.
2. Make a list of the keys words/phrases and think about what they mean.

Snapshot: Imagine this. An extremely wealthy landowner hires someone to mow their fields. They agree to pay them a certain wage at the end of each day. The worker is dependent on the money each day to feed his family. But the rich boss becomes so wrapped up in enjoying his life he completely forgets to pay his employee. Can you imagine getting so wrapped up in what you have that you cheat people around you? This is the 2nd warning issued to the church about the love of money. We would all like to say that we would not. However, at times the drive to get what we want causes us to completely ignore the needs of others to the point we take advantage of people closest to us. The more discontent you become the more tempted you become to put money ahead of people.

APPLY: *What is this passage calling me to do?*

What are some ways you have cheated others? Is it possible to cheat others without realizing you are doing it?

Read Matthew 7:12. How does this verse help you think more about treating others fairly?

Challenge: Begin to take note of the times you become discontent. When it happens instead of looking to get more stuff what if you asked, "What is something I could do for someone else?"

PRAY: Ask God to reveal to you areas where a focus on yourself has caused you to miss the needs of others or even caused you to cheat others for your own gain.

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Thursday: The Interests of Others

PRAY: Ask God to speak to you from His Word.

READ: James 5

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

UNDERSTAND: *get a deeper understanding of the key words*

1. Begin by underlining nouns with a single line, double underline verbs, and circle descriptive words.
2. Make a list of the keys words/phrases and think about what they mean.

Snapshot: The third danger of the love of money is self-indulgence. Self-indulgent is defined as: "characterized by doing or tending to do exactly what one wants, especially when this involves pleasure or idleness." How often do we get so wrapped up in our pleasure that we completely neglect those around us? We often feel we deserve to get whatever it is we want. We are willing to go into debt, damage relationships or ignore responsibilities so we can get what we want. The problem with self-indulgence is that it's for us to see in ourselves. We hide behind excuses like i work hard, I deserve this or everyone else has one --until we are so self-absorbed the needs of others are completely off our radar. Needs are everywhere around us. When we become self-absorbed we fail to see it. If we do not see it we will not be bothered by it. And, if we are not bothered by we will never do anything about it. The bible calls each of us to look not only at our own interests but to the interests of others. How much time do we really spend considering the needs of others?

APPLY: *What is this passage calling me to do?*

Make a list of some ways I selfishly use my money and possessions?

Read Philippians 2:3-11. Write down what it would be like to value others over yourself.

Challenge: Make a list of some of things you have that could be used to help others. What would you have to change to start using these things to help others?

PRAY: Ask God to make you aware of the place where you are self-indulgent. Pray for God to help you see how to be increasingly concerned with the needs of those around you.

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Friday: Great Gain

PRAY: Ask God to speak to you from His Word.

READ: James 5

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

UNDERSTAND: *get a deeper understanding of the key words*

1. Begin by underlining nouns with a single line, double underline verbs, and circle descriptive words.
2. Make a list of the keys words/phrases and think about what they mean.

Snapshot: The gospel message is rooted in generosity. The bible says that God was gracious to us, he gave to us, even when we were his enemies (See Romans 5:8). When the love of money overtakes us we act the opposite toward others --we end up condemning and hurting even those we love. God was not a hoarder --he freely gave his love and mercy and forgiveness and kindness. God was not a cheater --when we most need salvation, He does not withhold it. God was not self-indulgent --all that he made he shared with us. Ultimately he gave us what we did not deserve. For God so loved us he gave us Jesus to satisfy and fulfill us in this life and the life to come. Maybe this life is not about rich or poor. Maybe if we are content with what we can focus on being more Godly which will be the one thing that satisfies our soul.

APPLY: *What is this passage calling me to do?*

1 Timothy 6:6 But godliness with contentment is great gain. 7 For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. 8 But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. 9 Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

**Identify some places where a desire to have or get more might be a trap for you?
Ask yourself, how am I using what I have to further the kingdom of God?**

PRAY: If you have not before recognized that God gave Jesus to satisfy you in this life and the life to come, pray for Jesus to become the head of your life.

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Saturday: Prepare for Sunday

REVIEW: Take a few minutes to make a list of what you've learned this week.

PRAY: Ask God to use this time to help you get familiar with Sunday's scripture passage.

READ: James 5:7-12

⁷ Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. ⁸ You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. ⁹ Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door! ¹⁰ Brothers and sisters, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹ As you know, we count as blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy. ¹² Above all, my brothers and sisters, do not swear—not by heaven or by earth or by anything else. All you need to say is a simple "Yes" or "No." Otherwise you will be condemned.

THINK: *Go ahead and underline key words and phrases.*

Start thinking about what this passage is saying.

- What stands out to you in this passage?
- What do you think is the main idea?
- What parts are confusing or hard to understand?
- How might this passage help you to follow Jesus better?

PRAY: Ask God to prepare you for tomorrow's worship service.