

## A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED UPON THE LETTER OF JAMES

### BEING RICH IS NOT WHAT MATTERS

James 5:1-3 “Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming on you. Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes. 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.”

If only I had more money! Are you sure? How much money do you believe you need to have before you would no longer say such words?

Many years ago, I had lunch with a man and his father. His father was almost 90 years old. His father was a successful farmer and businessman. During the conversation the father said, “I thought my first million would be enough. But, when my net worth reached a million dollars, I found I was not satisfied, so I kept pushing myself to try to continue to increase my net worth.”

How much is enough? God’s word has a lot to say in regard to this question. James 5:2-3 says, “Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes. Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire.” Isn’t this simply a version of a saying you have probably heard, “You cannot take it with you?”

Jesus told a parable about a rich farmer. He had planted his crops, realized his barns and granaries were too small for the upcoming harvest so he tore down his barns and built larger ones. On the last day of harvest, when his new storage facilities were bursting at the seams with the new harvest, the farmer said to himself quite proudly that he thought he could finally retire. In the parable God decided that on that night the farmer would die. Jesus ended the parable with these words, “Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be? So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.” (Luke 12:20-21)

The Psalmist wrote in Psalm 62, “. . .if riches increase, set not your heart on them. . .” (verse 10) The key to true riches is your relationship with Jesus Christ. He says to you, “Remain in Me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself;

it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in Me.”  
(John 15:4) Jesus further says, “No one can come to me unless the Father who  
sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.” (John 6:44)

Prayer: Lord Jesus, remove from my eyes the dollar signs of the world and always  
hold before my eyes Your cross. Amen.

Consider how the birds above  
Feed day by day with carefree ease—  
Does God not keep them in His love?  
Are we not worth much more than these?

The lilies grow, they do not toil;  
How fair is their fragility—  
If God clothes these, which quickly spoil,  
Will He not clothe both you and me?

Set not your heart on food or drink,  
Nor be weighed down by worldly care;  
About such things the godless think,  
Yet never thank the Lord in prayer.

Be on your guard against all greed,  
For life is more than what we own,  
Our Father knows our ev’ry need  
Before our needs to us are known.

Be not afraid to suffer loss  
Of all the things for which you pray,  
For He who faced for you the cross  
Will give you strength to live each day.

Seek first God’s reign, His boundless grace,  
His holy name in all you do:  
Christ first and last in ev’ry place;  
All else will then be given you.  
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