



Faith in Real Life - James 5:1-6 Faith and my stuff

FOR DISCUSSION: (Page 1)

TRADITIONAL MODEL:

Why do you think we get more uncomfortable about messages on money than other topics like relationships, God's love etc.?

As a group, list as many things as you can that Jesus taught about money. Using that list, what do you think Jesus would say to the church today about money?

How is money like a brick to you?

What does James say the wealthy should do in 5:1? How would you describe the tone of James' words about this topic? Why do you think he uses that mode of speaking?

In 5:2-3, what does James say about the opulence of the wealthy he addresses? What can we learn today from those words?

What advice does Pro 27:23 give about our resources?

What does it mean to *manage money instead of allowing it to master you*? How could you integrate your faith more into your finances?

Ask the group if anyone has taken the *Financial Peace University* course. If so, have them share with the group how it did or didn't help them.



FOR DISCUSSION: (Page 2)

What does Pro 11:25 say about generosity and it's effect?

How have you *imposed generosity* on yourself and how did it affect you?

What does the Apostle Paul say about New Testament giving in the church in 2Cor 9:6-15?

Does your financial perspective need more contentment, wisdom or generosity?

CONTEMPLATIVE MODEL:

What are you learning about God from this message?

What are you learning about yourself from the message?

What questions does this message bring up for you?

What is God doing in your heart lately?

What things do you feel are getting in the way from what God wants to do in you?

What is the biggest thing causing you concern these days? (something to pray about)



Leader Guide **Faith and my stuff** **James 5:1-6**

Faith In Real Life

Honest, realistic and practical words about faith in a real life world from the Epistle of James.

OUTLINE & SCRIPTURES

James 5:1 Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming upon 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 workmen 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 innocent men, who were not opposing you.

Most of are glad to apply our faith to our marriage, children, and family. But, our finances? Not so much!

- Some Christians are essentially financial atheists.
- A lesser but almost as destructive version is when we're intentionally ignorant.

Money isn't moral. It's like a brick.

1. You can use it to destroy by throwing it through a window.
2. It can be useless when we just pile them up.
3. Or, it can be usefully used by building something.

When faith is separated from finances our perspective can become distorted:

1. **When your finances are separated from faith you will never feel like you have enough.**

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Matt 25:25 you hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'
26 "His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant!



We'll put ourselves in debt to acquire more stuff we don't even use

ASK YOURSELF:

- What is the real cost for the stuff you have?
- What is the loss/gain if you aligned your finances with your faith?
- Lived more simply?
- How much of your life could you buy back if you lived under your means?

2. When finances are separated from faith you will find yourself violating your conscience in order to get more.

James 5:4 Look! The wages you failed to pay the workmen 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 innocent men, who were not opposing you.

The wealthy were exploiting the poor.

Money separated from faith can look like an addiction:

1. Progressive in nature: #1 unresolved leads to #2!
2. You need more and more to get the feeling
3. You will break all your own rules to do it
4. It will ruin lives
 - 57% of people have had relationship end because of not paying back money
 - Arguing about money, regardless of income is the top predictor of divorce. KSU study. Sonya Britt. Over and above children, sex, in laws...

Pursuing a faith-influenced perspective on finances involves 3 things: contentment, wisdom & generosity:

1. Contentment

1Ti 6:6 But godliness with contentment is great gain.

2. Wisdom

Really good Christians can be mastered by money instead of managing it.

Take FPU! The average person who takes *Financial Peace University*, in 90 days:

- Pays off \$5300 in debt
- Saves \$2700



Generosity

Pr 11:25 The generous prosper and are satisfied; those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed.

All 3 need to be consistently part of who we are becoming in Christ

Impose generosity on yourself by becoming a percentage or amount giver.

2Cor 9:7 Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

Real faith affects your finances

What is the Gospel?

The Gospel is the “good news” that Jesus entered into our broken world to rescue us from sin. The good news is that through Christ’s redemptive sacrifice on the cross, sinners are pardoned, the undeserving are given grace, and the broken are restored. There is no sin too heinous for God’s forgiveness. There is no person so good in-and-of-themselves that does not require forgiveness. Salvation is a free gift of God to anyone who genuinely acknowledges their brokenness and confesses saving faith in the Son of God. It doesn’t take strong faith, just genuine faith in order to be saved.

An example of how you could pray:

Heavenly Father, I acknowledge that I’m broken and a sinner. I believe that Christ died on the cross for sin, and through his resurrection overcame sin and death. I believe in you. I thank you for saving me.

The good news does not end with a confession of faith. New faith can grow into deep faith if cultivated. Let someone at Sunridge know about your new-found faith, and inquire about our new believer’s resource: God Time: Your First 31 Days. Follow Christ wholeheartedly by professing your faith publicly through baptism, learning the Bible by attending church regularly and pursuing the unique calling of Jesus in your life!