

...KING ANYTHING. IF ANY OF YOU LACKS WISDOM, YOU SHOULD ASK GOD, WHO GIVES GENEROUSLY TO ALL WITHOUT FAILING, AND IT WILL BE GIVEN TO YOU. BUT WHEN YOU ASK, YOU MUST BELIEVE AND NOT DOUBT, BECAUSE THE ONE WHO DOUBTS IS LIKE A WAVE OF THE SEA, BLOWN AND TOSSED BY THE WIND. BLESSED IS THE ONE WHO PERSEVERES UNDER TRIAL BECAUSE, HAVING ENDURED, THAT PERSON WILL RECEIVE THE CROWN OF LIFE THAT THE LORD HAS PROMISED TO THOSE WHO LOVE HIM. WHEN TEMPTED, YOU SHOULD SAY, "GOD IS TEMPTING ME," FOR GOD CANNOT BE TEMPTED BY EVIL, NOR DOES HE TEMPT ANYONE; BUT EACH PERSON IS TEMPTED WHEN THEY ARE DRAGGED AWAY BY THEIR OWN EVIL DESIRE AND ENTICED. THEN, AFTER DESIRE HAS CONCEIVED, IT GIVES BIRTH TO SIN, AND SIN, WHEN IT IS FULL-GROWN, GIVES BIRTH TO DEATH. DON'T BE DECEIVED, MY DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS, TO GIVE US BIRTH THROUGH THE WORD OF TRUTH, THAT WE MIGHT BE A KIND OF FIRSTFRUITS OF ALL HE CREATED. MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS, TAKE NOTE OF THIS: EVERYONE SHOULD BE QUICK TO LISTEN, SLOW TO SPEAK AND SLOW TO BECOME ANGRY, BECAUSE HUMAN ANGER DOES NOT PRODUCE THE RIGHTEOUSNESS THAT GOD DESIRES. THEREFORE, GET RID OF ALL MORAL FILTH AND ALL THAT IS SO PREVALENT AND HUMBLY ACCEPT THE WORD PLANTED IN YOU, WHICH CAN SAVE YOU. DO NOT MERELY HEAR THE WORD, AND SO DECEIVE YOURSELVES. DO WHAT IT SAYS. ANYONE WHO LISTENS TO THE WORD BUT DOES NOT DO WHAT IT SAYS IS LIKE A PERSON WHO LOOKS AT HIS FACE IN A MIRROR AND, AFTER LOOKING AT HIMSELF, GOES AWAY AND IMMEDIATELY FORGETS HIS APPEARANCE. BUT WHOEVER LOOKS INTENTLY INTO THE PERFECT LAW THAT GIVES FREEDOM, AND CONTINUES IN IT—NOT FORGIVING ANYTHING HEY HAVE HEARD, BUT DOING IT—THEY WILL BE BLESSED IN WHAT THEY DO. RELIGION THAT GOD OUR FATHER ACCEPTS AS RIGHTEOUS IS THIS: TO LOOK AFTER ORPHANS AND WIDOWS IN THEIR DISTRESS AND TO KEEP ONESELF FROM BEING POLLUTED. MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS, BELIEVERS IN OUR GLORIOUS LORD JESUS CHRIST MUST NOT SHOW FAVORITISM. SOME OF YOU COME INTO YOUR MEETING WEARING A GOLD RING AND FINE CLOTHES, AND A POOR MAN IN FILTHY OLD CLOTHES ALSO COMES. ALL SHOW SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE MAN WEARING FINE CLOTHES AND SAY, "HERE'S A GOOD SEAT FOR YOU," BUT SAY TO THE OTHER, "YOU STAND THERE" OR "SIT ON THE FLOOR," AND YOU SEPARATE YOURSELVES AND BLESS YOURSELVES WITH EVIL THOUGHTS? LISTEN, MY DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS: HAS NOT GOD CHOSEN THOSE WHO ARE POOR IN THE WORLD TO BE RICH IN FAITH AND TO INHERIT THE KINGDOM HE PROMISED THOSE WHO LOVE HIM? BUT YOU HAVE DISHONORED GOD. OR IS IT NOT THE RICH WHO ARE EXPLOITING YOU? ARE THEY NOT THE ONES WHO ARE DRAGGING YOU INTO COURT? ARE THEY NOT THE ONES WHO ARE BLASPHEMING THE NOBLE NAME OF HIM TO WHOM YOU BELONG? IF YOU REALLY KEEP THE ROYAL LAW OF LOVE, "LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF," YOU ARE DOING RIGHT. BUT IF YOU SHOW FAVORITISM, YOU SIN AGAINST THE LAW AS LAWBREAKERS. FOR WHOEVER KEEPS THE WHOLE LAW AND YET STUMBLES AT JUST ONE POINT IS GUILTY OF ALL OF IT. FOR HE WHO SAID, "YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY," ALSO SAID, "YOU SHALL NOT MURDER." IF YOU COMMIT ADULTERY BUT DO COMMIT MURDER, YOU HAVE BECOME A LAWBREAKER. SPEAK AND ACT AS THOSE WHO ARE GOING TO BE JUDGED BY THE LAW THAT GIVES FREEDOM, BECAUSE JUDGMENT WITHOUT MERCY WILL BE SHOWN TO ANYONE WHO HAS NO MERCY. MERCY TRIUMPHS OVER JUDGMENT. WHAT GOOD IS IT, MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS, IF SOMEONE CLAIMS TO HAVE FAITH BUT DOES NOT ACT ON IT? CAN SUCH FAITH SAVE THEM? SUPPOSE A BROTHER OR A SISTER IS WITHOUT CLOTHES AND DAILY FOOD. IF ONE OF YOU HAS CLOTHES AND FOOD, KEEP THEM WARM AND WELL FED? BUT DOES NOTHING ABOUT THEIR PHYSICAL NEEDS? IF YOU DO NOT

### NOT JUST SUGGESTIONS - JAMES

## Just look to Jesus and don't idolize riches

James 5:1-8

Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming on you. <sup>2</sup>Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes. <sup>3</sup>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. <sup>4</sup>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. <sup>5</sup>You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter. <sup>6</sup>You have condemned and murdered the innocent one, who was not opposing you.

<sup>7</sup>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. <sup>8</sup>You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near.

## I. The Big Idea

### II. Loving money versus loving God

Luke 12:13-21

<sup>13</sup> Someone in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.”

<sup>14</sup> Jesus replied, “Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?” <sup>15</sup> Then he said to them, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.”

<sup>16</sup> And he told them this parable: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. <sup>17</sup> He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’

<sup>18</sup> “Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. <sup>19</sup> And I’ll say to myself, “You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.”’ <sup>20</sup> “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’ <sup>21</sup> “This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.”

Matthew 6:19-24

<sup>19</sup> “Don’t store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup> Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be...

<sup>24</sup> “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

## 1 Timothy 6

<sup>9</sup> 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.

<sup>10</sup> 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...<sup>17</sup> Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.

<sup>18</sup> Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. <sup>19</sup> In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

### **III. How to let go of the idol of money and choose the pursuit of God**

#### Luke 19:1-10

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. <sup>2</sup> A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. <sup>3</sup> He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. <sup>4</sup> So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

<sup>5</sup> When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." <sup>6</sup> So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

<sup>7</sup> All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a sinner."

<sup>8</sup> But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount."

<sup>9</sup> Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. <sup>10</sup> For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

#### A. God has provided the habit of tithing to keep our focus on Him

Malachi 3:6-12

<sup>6</sup> “I the LORD do not change. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed. <sup>7</sup> Ever since the time of your ancestors you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you,” says the LORD Almighty. “But you ask, ‘How are we to return?’<sup>8</sup> “Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. “But you ask, ‘How are we robbing you?’ “In tithes and offerings. <sup>9</sup> You are under a curse—your whole nation—because you are robbing me. <sup>10</sup> Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it. <sup>11</sup> I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not drop their fruit before it is ripe,” says the LORD Almighty. <sup>12</sup> “Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land,” says the LORD Almighty.

#### B. The attitude of generosity keeps God first in our lives

2 Corinthians 9:6-15

<sup>6</sup> Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. <sup>7</sup> Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. <sup>8</sup> And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

<sup>10</sup> Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. <sup>11</sup> You will be enriched in every way so that you can be

generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.<sup>12</sup> This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.<sup>13</sup> Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.<sup>14</sup> And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you.<sup>15</sup> Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!