

*“To think in a way that is Christian
or in a way that is biblical,
is not simply to think Christian thoughts
or biblical thoughts,
but is to think all of our thoughts
from a Christian or biblical perspective.”*

*Alistair Begg, Senior Pastor, Cleveland Parkside Church,
“voice” of Truth for Life Christian radio ministry*

*“I believe in Christianity
as I believe in the rising of the sun,
not simply because I can see it,
but because by it,
I can see everything else.”*

C. S. Lewis, author, Mere Christianity, Narnia Chronicles

“One’s overall view should be affected;
it should heighten our affection or love,
perhaps change our view of a moral or ethical issue,
Perhaps completely replace it.

Our view of time, beauty,
prestige, security,
poverty and wealth
should be changed.”

Alistair Begg.

1 Corinthians 4-

Paul reminds us of who we are to be and why we should be content with what we have been given..

Verse 1-

“Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.”

Verse 7,8-

“For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it? You are already full! You are already rich! You have reigned as kings without us- and indeed I could wish you did reign, that we also might reign with you!

*With this in mind
and
as a foundation for how we must approach all things,
we come to the passage for today
which speaks of riches.*

James 5: 1-12

Are you Rich?

- *Money...salary, registered savings, pension plan*
- *Position of Power...own company*
- *Position of influence...run a company, in position to make decisions such as judge, administrator*
- *Material Goods...house, car , boat, atv , cottage*
- *Physically or intellectually imposing...able to bully or argue or persuade others to your way*
- *Physical health...generally healthy with no impairments or debilitating conditions that hold you back from functioning as “normal”*
- *Clothes * Food(Bring and Share) *Shelter *Protection*
- *An education*
- *A vocation that provides a living*
- *A supportive family*
- *A country which does not restrict your actions or activities to the detriment of your wellbeing*

• *HOW ABOUT A RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST?*

*Let's examine what the Scriptures say
about riches...*

*What are the foundational characteristics
God sets before us regarding riches.*

God

does not oppose

the rich

nor *their riches*

Job 1:3-

“Also, his possessions were seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred female donkeys, and a very large household, so that this man was the greatest of all the people of the East.”

Job 42:10-

”And the Lord restored Job’s losses when he prayed for his friends. Indeed the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.”

*God uses Job,
as an example,
in which He charges the rich for wrong-doing,*

however Job was a rich man...

Not once but twice

And with God's blessing.

James 5: 11-

*“Indeed we count them blessed who endure.
You have heard of the perseverance of Job
and seen the end intended by the Lord- that
the Lord is very compassionate and
merciful.”*

God

does warn against

the vices and snares

of riches

1 Timothy 6:9-

*“But those who desire to be rich
fall into temptation and a snare,
and into many foolish and harmful lusts
which drown men
in
destruction and perdition.”*

1 Timothy 6:17-

*“Command those who are rich
in this present age
not to be haughty,
nor to trust in uncertain riches
but in the living God,
who gives us richly all things to enjoy.”*

James 5: 1,2-

*“Come now, you rich,
weep and howl
for your miseries
that are coming upon you!*

*Your riches are corrupted and
your garments are moth-eaten.”*

*Godliness with
contentment
is
great gain*

1 Timothy 6:6-

*“Now godliness with contentment
is great gain.”*

1 Timothy 6:8-

*“And having food and clothing with these
we shall be content.”*

James 5: 9.11-

*“Do not grumble against one another,
brethren, lest you be condemned.”*

Behold, the Judge is standing at the door.

Indeed we count them blessed who endure.

You have heard of the perseverance of Job

and seen the end intended by the Lord-

that the Lord is

very compassionate and merciful.”

Riches

are an expression

of God's

kindness

1 Timothy 6:17- “ Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty , nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.”

Job 42:12,13- “Now the Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning; for he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and one thousand female donkeys. He also had seven sons and three daughters.”

James 5: 7- “Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting for it until it receives the early and latter rain.”

James 5:11- “Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord- that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.”

*“God supplies us with riches
in order that we may enjoy,
He may as easily take them away,
So as to teach us to enjoy Him
and not to enjoy them.*

*He gives us them, in order that we might love Him and if
we start to love them and not Him, he may take them away
to show us that ultimately our only joy is in Him.”*

Alistair Begg

*There is
a specific responsibility
that befalls the rich*

1 Corinthians 4: 5-

*“Therefore judge nothing before the time,
until the Lord comes,
who will both bring to light
the hidden things of darkness
and reveal the counsels of the hearts.
Then each one’s praise will come from
God.”*

1 Timothy 6:18,19-

*“Let them do good,
that they be rich in good works,
ready to give,
willing to share,*

storing up for themselves a good foundation

for the time to come,

that they may lay hold on eternal life.”

James 5: 8-

*“You also establish your hearts,
for the coming of the Lord is at hand.”*

*What Paul is saying here,
is that when we take from our earthly treasures,*

all God given,

to those who have needs,

*we are being good stewarts for Him
and actually building
our treasures in heaven.*

*It is difficult,
but not impossible
for a rich man
to enter
the kingdom of heaven*

Job 42:10-

”And the Lord restored Job’s losses when he prayed for his friends. Indeed the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.”

Why is this?

When one realizes that everything they have held dear here on earth, all that wealth and pleasure and luxury, is not a credit but rather a debit to entering into heaven,

I realize that the credit approval to get into heaven

is in

Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ

And only Him.

Philippians 3:8-

“Yet indeed

*I also count all things loss
for the excellence of the knowledge
of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom
I have suffered the loss of all things,
and count them as rubbish,
that I may gain Christ.”*

God has a specific place

in His world

for the poor;

Therefore we, as Christians,

Have a specific responsibility

for the poor.

Psalms 68:5

“A father of the fatherless, a defender of widows.”

Deuteronomy 10: 18,19

*“He administers justice for the fatherless and the widow,
and loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing.*

*Therefore love the stranger
for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.”*

Leviticus 19:9,10

*“When you reap the harvest, of your land,
You shall not wholly reap the corners of your field
nor shall you gather the gleanings
Of your harvest.*

*And you shall not glean your vineyard,
Nor shall you gather every grape
Of your vineyard;
You shall leave them for the poor and stranger:
I am the Lord your God.”*

James 1:27

“Pure and undefiled religion

Before God and the Father is this:

*To visit widows and orphans in their trouble
and*

To keep ones self unspotted from the world.”

*God will judge
the actions of the rich
towards the poor*

Amos 2:6

“Thus says the Lord;

For three transgressions of Israel,

And for four,

I will not turn away from its punishment,

Because they sell the righteous for silver,

And the poor for a pair of sandals.”

James 5:1, 12-

“Come now, you rich. Weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you!”

“But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath, But let your “yes” be “yes” and your “no” be “no”, lest you fall into judgement.”

*So how should I react
to this passage in James?*

*How can I make it personal,
How can I do what God wants
of me?*

Matthew 6:24-

*“No one can serve two masters;
for either one will hate the one and love the other,
or else he will be loyal to the one
And despise the other.*

You cannot serve God and Mammon.

(mammon refers to riches or possessions)

Realizing what God says about riches...

- *God does not oppose the rich nor their riches*
- *God does warn about the vices and snares of riches*
- *Godliness with contentment is great gain*
- *Riches are an expression of God's kindness*
- *There is a specific responsibility that befalls the rich*
- *It is difficult but not impossible for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven*
- *God has a specific place in His world for the poor; therefore, we as Christians, have a specific responsibility for the poor*
- *God will judge the actions of the rich towards the poor*

*“James has a high regard to the faithful,
that they hearing about the miserable end of the rich
might not envy their fortunes*

*And also knowing God would be the avenger
of the wages they suffered
they might
with a calm and resigned mind
bear them.”*

John Calvin, French Reformer, theologian

These are words of James 5: 1-12

**rich *riches *gold *silver*

**treasure *wages *fraud *luxury*

**fattened *fruit *hearts*

**blessed *Lord*

**compassionate *merciful*

Isn't it obvious what He wants you to do?