



O BROTHER

WISDOM FROM THE BOOK OF JAMES

SESSION 5 - WEALTH

SERIES BIG IDEA

James, the half-brother of Jesus, shares wisdom on how to overcome challenges that can trip us up as Christ-followers and keep us from growing to maturity.

MESSAGE BIG IDEA

When it comes to our maturity, wealth can either be a snare or a tool.

SCRIPTURE

James 5:1-6

ICEBREAKER & OPENING THOUGHT

These questions will get people talking about the broader subject of money, charity, and potentially just uses of wealth. Set the tone early that possessions and money are not necessarily bad in themselves, and can do much good in the world. However, it is easy to fall into the trap that money is the greatest good to chase after in life. How can this destroy relationships, people, and organizations?

BIBLE DISCUSSION

It's always helpful to read a text in multiple translations and see the nuances of the words, which leads to greater understanding and interpretation. Let people ask questions about context and historical background. If anyone has a study Bible in the group, let them share the notes printed there. The self-centered attitudes and practices around money James mentions were devastating to the socio-economic reality of his time. Spend a few moments discussing the way those realities are still with us today both in the way we handle our money and how we handle other areas of our life.

LIFE APPLICATION

Let the group discuss how money impacts their personal life. How have they experienced money as a blessing and how has it been a snare in their relationships with God and others? Some in the group may not feel like they have wealth, so it might be helpful to see how rich they are compared to the rest of the world. Have each person go to globalrichlist.com to see where they rank. In Chicago, a person making 60,000 a year is in the top .19 richest people in the world. The point is not to make people feel guilty but to reflect on their real values around money and how they can use their wealth to do the most good.

CHALLENGE

Spend some time this week reflecting on how you can be more justly related to the world through the way you manage your money. You might consider looking at slaveryfootprint.org and fairtradecertified.org and making one or two small tweaks or decisions about an upcoming purchase. You might also examine how openhanded and generous you are with the resources you possess and look to be generous to someone else this week.