

HIGHLANDS CHURCH

Study Guide

An Eternal Perspective | James 1:9-11 | Bob Wade

Unknown Speaker
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Major Points

- 1 The lowly brother should boast in his exaltation because his true identity and worth are found in Christ, not in worldly status or possessions.**
James 1:9
- 2 Wealth is a subtle but dangerous trial because it creates a false sense of security and self-reliance that can replace trust in God.**
James 1:10
- 3 Wealth is temporary and fleeting like a wildflower scorched by the sun — it can vanish before we even realize it and offers no spiritual advantage.**
James 1:10-11
- 4 God's kingdom reverses the world's values: the lowly are exalted, the proud are humbled, and we are called to live with an eternal perspective rather than a temporary one.**
Mark 8:36

Key Quotes

- "The interesting thing about a trial is, is that a trial usually tells us who and what we put our trust in.*
at 2:18
- "Society may not think a lot of you, but in Christ you have it all.*
at 10:42
- "James tells us that wealth can make us feel like we're secure, but it can be gone before we even realize it, and we'd be foolish to build a foundation upon it.*
at 18:03
- "What's done on earth will pass. Only what's done for Christ will last.*
at 28:56
- "You can only be holy by faith. By the work of his son,*
at 24:23

Discussion Questions

1. Pastor Wade described both poverty and wealth as spiritual tests. If you could honestly choose one test, which would you pick — and what does your answer reveal about where you tend to place your trust?

2. When Pastor Wade listed all the things we are 'in Christ' — accepted, justified, sealed, significant — which of those truths is hardest for you to really believe on a daily basis, and why do you think that is?

3. Pastor Wade said the rich believer's trial is a 'false hope of security' and self-reliance. Can you think of a time when having enough (or more than enough) actually made it harder for you to depend on God?

4. The image of the desert flower that springs up after the rain and then withers almost immediately is really striking. How does that picture challenge the way you think about the things you're currently pursuing or investing your energy in?

5. Pastor Wade ended with that plaque from his grandmother's wall: 'What's done on earth will pass. Only what's done for Christ will last.' What's one concrete area of your life right now where you need to shift from a temporary perspective to an eternal one?

Word Studies

tapeinos

Greek

Low in position or status, humble in circumstance; in the NT it connotes one who is socially insignificant or materially destitute yet positioned for God's exaltation.

kauchaomai

Greek

To boast, glory, or exult — not mere bragging but a deep, confident rejoicing in something one considers supremely valuable.

tapein ×6—0

Greek

Humiliation or lowly state; refers to the stripping away of outward status, forcing recognition of one's true dependence on God rather than on earthly resources.

Cross References

Isaiah 40:6-8

The prophet uses the same imagery of grass and flowers withering under God's breath to contrast the temporary nature of human glory with the eternal endurance of God's word — the Old Testament source behind James's metaphor in 1:10-11.

Psalms 49:16-17

The psalmist warns against being overawed when others grow rich, because they take nothing with them at death — reinforcing James's warning that wealth fades in the midst of one's pursuits.

Luke 1:52-53

Mary's Magnificat celebrates God's kingdom reversal — bringing down the mighty and exalting the humble, filling the hungry and sending the rich away empty — the same inversion James describes between the lowly and rich brother.

Deuteronomy 8:17-18

Moses warns Israel not to say 'my power produced this wealth' but to remember it is God who gives the ability to produce it — directly addressing the self-reliance temptation Pastor Wade highlighted as the rich believer's trial.

Matthew 6:19-21

Jesus commands storing up treasures in heaven rather than on earth where moth and rust destroy, providing the foundational teaching behind James's call to adopt an eternal perspective over a temporary one.

Further Reading

- **The Letter of James (Pillar New Testament Commentary)**
by Douglas J. Moo
- **The Treasure Principle: Unlocking the Secret of Joyful Giving**
by Randy Alcorn
- **Neither Poverty nor Riches: A Biblical Theology of Possessions**
by Craig L. Blomberg

Scripture References

REFERENCE	TYPE	TIME	CONTEXT
James 1:9-11	Read Aloud	4:36	<i>Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation, and...</i>
James 1:2	Read Aloud	6:00	<i>Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trial...</i>
1 Corinthians 1:26-27	Read Aloud	10:58	<i>For consider your calling, brothers: not many of y...</i>
1 Corinthians 1:29	Referenced	11:20	
1 Corinthians 1:31	Read Aloud	11:39	<i>so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts...</i>
Ephesians 1:4	Referenced	8:34	
Romans 5:1	Referenced	9:01	
1 Corinthians 6:20	Referenced	9:12	
Romans 8:1	Referenced	9:30	
Philippians 1:6	Referenced	10:00	
John 15:5	Referenced	10:18	
Philippians 4:13	Referenced	10:23	
Ephesians 2:10	Referenced	10:28	
Proverbs 23:5	Referenced	14:48	
Mark 4:19	Referenced	15:15	
Mark 8:36	Referenced	18:57	
1 Timothy 6:17-19	Referenced	21:27	
James 1:1	Referenced	0:46	
Ephesians 1:5	Referenced	8:50	
1 Corinthians 1:22	Referenced	9:36	
1 John 5:18	Referenced	9:55	
James 1:10-11	Read Aloud	16:10	<i>and the rich in his humiliation, because like a fl...</i>
James 1:11	Read Aloud	18:03	<i>So also will the rich man fade away in the midst o...</i>
James 2:1-9	Referenced	22:14	