

**WOE TO THE RICH!  
AKA GIVE A BROTHER A HAND!**

**James 5:1 – 6**

# MY FRIEND JOHN

- Born into a wealthy family
- Served in the military, was a POW for a year
- Joined the family business (textiles) afterwards
- Encounter with a homeless man changed his life
- Left family and lived among the homeless
- Heard the call to share the gospel in a sermon on Matt. 10:9
- Traveled around the country, living off the graciousness of others, sharing the gospel
- “To follow the teachings of Jesus and walk in his footsteps”
- Others came alongside of him and followed his example
- One of the largest Christian organizations in the world focused on missions, social work, and education
- Celebrated in both Roman Catholic and Protestant church



# WHAT HAS JAMES BEEN SAYING?

1:2 – 18

Testing and faith

1:19 – 27

Exhortations to model a healthy community

2:1 – 13

Partiality in the community

2:14 – 26

Relationship between faith and action

3:1 – 4:12

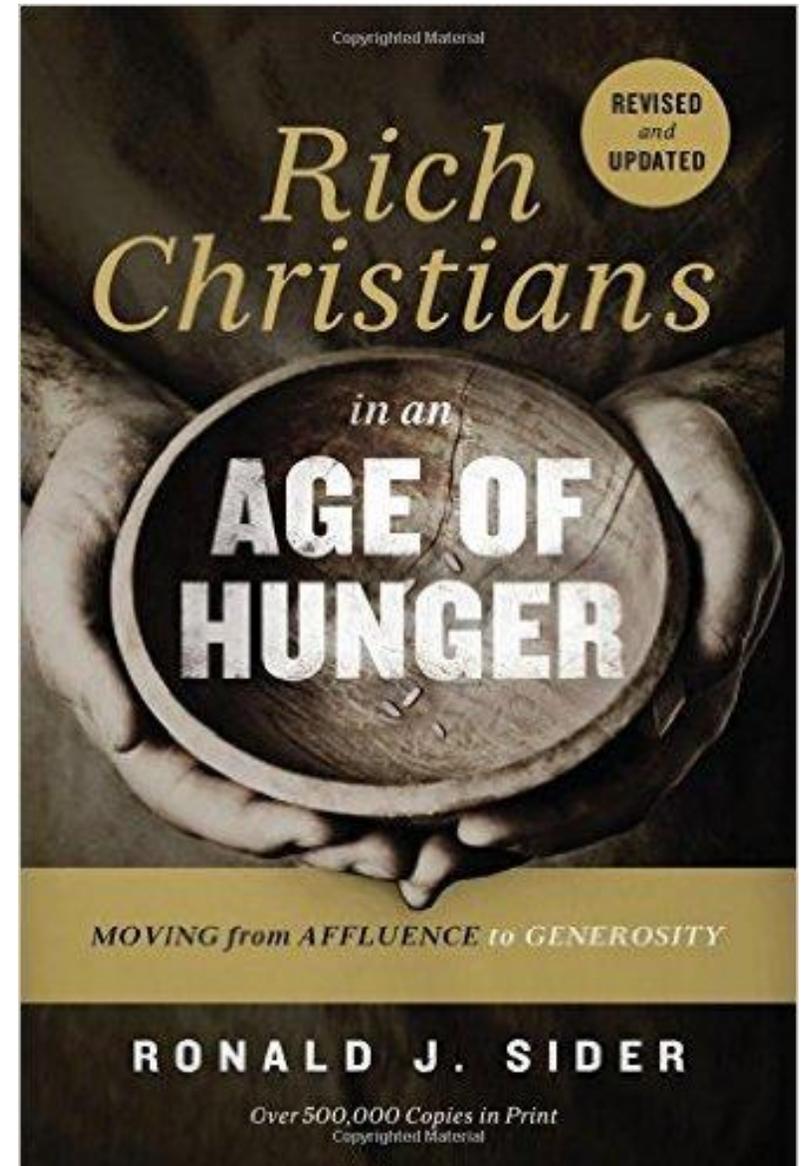
Instructions to Christian teachers

4:13 – 5:6

Economic issues

# TODAY'S STUDY - JAMES 5:1 - 6

1. Who are these “rich people?”
2. What is James trying to accomplish here by calling them out?
3. What does this passage mean for “ethical economic responsibilities” in the church today? Does that even exist?



## JAMES 5:1 - 3

“Come now, rich ones, weep, wailing over the miseries coming upon you. Your wealth has rotted and your garments have become moth-eaten. Your gold and silver are rusted and their rust will be for a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days.”



“Frome Hoard” of 52,000 3<sup>rd</sup> c. CE Roman coins found in Somerset, England

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If 4,000 years from now, space archaeologists dug up your house, what would they find?

How would you describe James' view of wealth?

What will happen to what they have?

## JAMES 5:4 - 6



“Behold the wage, stolen by you, of the workers who harvested your fields cries out, and the shouts of the ones who harvested have entered into the ears of the Lord of the Sabbath. You caroused upon the earth and lived luxuriously, gorging your hearts in the day of slaughter. You condemn and murder the righteous one who does not resist you.”

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What does James criticize them for doing?

How would you hear this if you were rich?

So what is James trying to accomplish here?

# WIIFM?

We are the richest society in the world - \$63.5 Trillion

Americans gave \$114.9 Billion to churches in 2014

Is wealth good or bad in the Bible?

What is our responsibility?

How does wealth shape the priorities of our society?

How do those priorities shape us?

# WHAT CAN WE DO?

SET FREE Alliance



57,000+  
people enslaved

over  
**18 MILLION**  
people enslaved in India