

THE NITTY GRITTY

Text: James 5:1-6

THE PLAIN TRUTH

God _____ His people to be a _____ to others.

1. Where does your money _____?
2. You can't bless others when you are _____.
3. How do you _____ money?

August 31, 2014

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Personal Study • August 31

Have you ever thought about heaven's view on "capitalism" in its ideal, purest form? From the beginning God has been working and creating. And we, as the crowning glory of His creation, are expected to bear His image—to work and create. Read Genesis 1 and see that like a good Boss, God knows what needs to be done and things happen at His expressed command. By chapter 2 *before* the Fall—God has already created a job for man, "to tend and watch over" the garden He has made and "to choose a name" for all the wild animals and birds (see Genesis 2:15, 19-20).

It is no question that God cares deeply for His creation and certainly the welfare of humanity is very much a part of that. Think of it—the wellbeing of children, the job-satisfaction of men and women, compassionate care for the poor and aged is always on the heart of God. Are employers treating their employees fairly? Is there honor in the workplace? Or have we forgotten that God is a God of justice, that He "looks throughout the whole earth and sees everything under the heavens" (Job 28:24), and that one day, God will right every wrong?

Read James 5:1-6

It is not a sin to have and produce wealth. Yet in this passage, James warns that hoarding money, ignoring the poor, and cheating workers will bring about God's judgment. God blesses people in order for those *same people* to be a blessing to others. We see this from the moment God first called Abram to follow Him.

1. Read Genesis 12:1-9. How many times in this passage does Abram build an altar and worship the LORD?

"Abram was very rich in livestock, silver, and gold" and later in his travels worships the LORD again on one of the altars he had built (Genesis 13:2,4). What moves you to worship the LORD and frequently seek God's face?

Everything we have is from God including the very breath of life in our lungs. God is near to those who seek Him, who fear and honor Him. Throughout Scripture God tests His people to see if they will be good stewards to the wealth entrusted to them.

2. Take some time and carefully read the following passages. Write down one thing you sense the Lord is showing you from each reference:

Deuteronomy 6:10-13 Deuteronomy 26:1-15 Isaiah 30:18-26 Jeremiah 29:4-14
Matthew 6:19-34 1 Corinthians 16:1-4 2 Corinthians 8:1-9

Capitalism is not a bad thing. We are made in God's image and are called to bear His likeness in all walks of life—in the Nitty-Gritty. He is worthy of our highest praise, and this means our first and best offerings no matter how much money we have in our bank accounts. Whatever your struggle—greed, worry, indifference—look to God and ask Him to help you. He is Lord. And He is a good Boss you can trust.

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