

Week 7

8 weeks
TO CHANGE YOUR LIFE >>

*'Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will,
we will live and do this or that."'*

James 4:13-5:6

&

Luke 19:1-10

>> MORNING SERMON OUTLINE**How planning makes a difference - JAMES 4:13-5:6**

How can we honour God with the things that are often very precious to us: our time and our money? How can we honour God in a culture that is often self-absorbed and self-indulgent? James gives us a clear indication of how our lives need to be transformed.

> A GOD HONOURING VIEW OF.....

- Time
- Trade
- Treasure

> BEWARE THE TEMPTATION TO

- Hoard
- Fraud
- Self-indulge

>> A CLOSER LOOK

(James 4:13-5:6)



NOTE: Throughout the rest of the study, there are several questions for discussion. One or two of the questions allow a more creative approach. Feel free to adapt them as you see fit, but they are some ideas to prompt some more creative thinking! **These are marked by an asterisk *.**

>>Recap from last week

Read again James 3:14-18. As you look back on the last week have there been specific times when you know you have needed wisdom from heaven? Which wisdom has characterised your actions over the last few days: wisdom from heaven or earthly wisdom?

> A GOD HONOURING VIEW OF... TIME, TRADE AND TREASURE

Look carefully at the attitude to life that James portrays in v13.

- What words would you use to describe people who live like this?
- Does it describe the people you work with or spend time with?
- The big challenge for us is not to point the finger at others, but rather to see where we ourselves have picked up world values. In what ways can you see any of them in your own life?

James explains that it is madness to think about life without keeping God at the centre. Look carefully at his reasoning and check that you are living wisely.

- As you read v14-16, identify why it is absurd to keep God out of the picture when we make plans.
- What practical ways can you think of that would help you put v15 into practice? In what situations would this be a real challenge for you?

It is not a sin to be rich but clearly those who are rich face particular temptations and have great responsibility to use what God has given them wisely.

- Looking at 5:1-3 why is it crazy to hoard things for ourselves? Why are we sometimes tempted to do this? How can we break the patterns of selfishness that so often capture us?

As James concludes this section he writes in the style of an Old Testament prophet. The prophets were urging people not to forget about God and to know that there was a day coming soon when God would come as judge.

- As you read 5:4-6 can you see why the second coming of Jesus has an impact on the way we live? What will it mean for those who have suffered injustice? What will it mean for those who have caused injustice? What will it mean for those who have been self-indulgent?

>> ALTERNATIVE PASSAGE



What change looks like (pt. 2) - LUKE 19:1-10

> JESUS INCLUDES THE EXCLUDED (1-7)

A large, empty white rounded rectangular box intended for handwritten notes or reflections on the first section of the passage.

> JESUS BRINGS THE EXCLUDED INTO GOD'S FAMILY (8-10)

A large, empty white rounded rectangular box intended for handwritten notes or reflections on the second section of the passage.

>> A CLOSER LOOK pt 2. *(Luke 19:1-10)*



>>Recap from last week

- If you haven't yet done so, you may like to recap on last week and consider whether you have managed to make any changes in your life as a result? How did the study affect your life throughout the week?

Jesus was travelling through Jericho on his way to Jerusalem and this trip will lead to His death and resurrection. On this journey we see Jesus demonstrating what He has come to do; to bring lost sinners to repentance and welcome them into God's family. We see this taking place with Zacchaeus', through his encounter with Jesus he is a changed man from the inside out.

> JESUS INCLUDES THE EXCLUDED (1-7)

- Who takes the initiative of meeting each other and how?
- What is the reaction of the crowd from the relationship between Zacchaeus and Jesus? Why?
- Jesus says his mission is to seek and save the lost. The crowd see Zacchaeus as beyond hope. What condition do you think people need to be in for them to become a Christian? Is this how you see yourself?

> JESUS BRINGS THE EXCLUDED INTO GOD'S FAMILY (8-10)

- What did Zacchaeus repent about and how do we know he meant it? (By the end of the week how had Zacchaeus's life changed?)

- How is Zacchaeus a member of Abraham's family and how can we be today? Look at Luke 3:8 & Galatians 3:6-9

- Zacchaeus had his life changed by Jesus. If you are a Christian what ways has Jesus changed your life? (How has your life changed as a result of trusting in Jesus?)

- What does Jesus' mission tell us about God? Is this to be our mission today, if so how can we practically do this in our lives? Give examples.

- How have you experienced the seeking and saving power of Jesus in your life? *Perhaps you would like to discuss how you became a Christian.*

>> MAKING A CHANGE *(James 4:13-5:6)*



WHAT CHANGES CAN YOU MAKE THIS WEEK?

Beware the temptation to

- **Hoard** – what practical steps can you take to share more openly and to give more generously?
- **Fraud** – imagine yourself as an inspector inspecting your own life! Which areas would you need to spend most time examining? What can you do to be beyond reproach in these? Why not talk this through with a mature Christian to gain wisdom?
- **Self-indulge** – try and identify five practical action points that will counter our tendency to be self-indulgent.

>> MAKING A CHANGE *(Luke 19:1-10)*



Zacchaeus was saved from a life filled with greed and cheating. If you are a Christian, having Jesus' saving power in your life, what could you say to show God at work in your life as Zacchaeus did in verse 8, 'Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I ..."? fill in the blank. (Remember you do this in God's power and strength.)