



SERIES: FEBRUARY – MARCH FAITH IN REAL LIFE

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Wednesday, 03/23/2022

Scripture: James 5:4-6

TITLE: Everybody Has a Price

What would you do? This was a game we used to play in middle school. We would give each other a scenario, and we had to decide what we would do. For example, what would you do to go on a date with “so and so.” Or “how far would you go to receive a million dollars?”

As the WWF wrestler, the million-dollar man would say, “everybody’s got a price.” We all face opportunities for personal gain, but they can come at a high price. James had something to say about this in James 5:4-6 (CSB).

Look! The pay that you withheld from the workers who mowed your fields cries out, and the outcry of the harvesters has reached the ears of the Lord of Armies. You have lived luxuriously on the earth and have indulged yourselves. You have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. You have condemned, you have murdered the righteous, who does not resist you.

For the past few verses, James has been talking about doing the right thing and living within God’s will. We can easily fall into a self-indulgent lifestyle with money, food, clothing, and just about anything else. When we do this, we are rejecting God’s best.

And here, James is speaking again about the accumulation of wealth. There is no sin in being rich. It is not inherently virtuous to be poor. It all goes back to the heart. What drives a person's consumption or distribution? That is what matters.

James calls out some very troubling behavior: He says these people have withheld at least some of the pay rightfully owed. It wasn’t a late payment. It was no payment. This injustice has reached the ears of God, who is the commander of the heavenly armies. In other words, this matters to God.

These people have robbed their workers to consume their resources on themselves. In fact, it appears that they have even murdered or at least coordinated the murder of some Christians so their wealth might increase.

You see, everyone has a price. And we are all capable of paying that price. The question is, will we be under the authority of God? We may experience temporary pleasure when we live for ourselves, but it is temporary at best.

So here’s my challenge for you today: count the cost. What has been the cost of your own selfish living? What’s been the reward of living inside of God’s will? For me, I’ve played God far too

often. It's never ended well. Though in the short term, it seemed enjoyable. Thankfully, whom God loves, He disciplines.

So today, count the cost of your self-indulgence to remind yourself of the damage it does. And then recommit to God your faithfulness because He has been faithful to you.

When we live for God, we will win the day.