

STUDY 4. QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION.

1. Do you know any wealthy people? Does their wealth make them any different to you?
2. **See Luke 1:52-54, 4:18, 6:20, 18:18-25, 21:1-4.**
What is the general impression given by these verses?
3. **Read James 5:1-6.**
 - a. James has some powerful words to say about the wealthy. Do you think they are a little harsh?
 - b. Do you think that these words apply to all wealthy people?
 - c. Do you think the people he is addressing are in the church?
 - d. Do these words remind you of any of the words of Jesus?
4.
 - a. Gold and silver cannot rust. What do you think James means by that reference to gold and silver rusting?
 - b. How do you explain verse 6?

SUPPORTING THE POOR

5. **Read James 1:27.**
James seems to be saying that if we look after the widows and orphans we are doing all that is necessary to be a Christian. Is that how you read that verse? What difference does it make when you put it into its context?
6. In connection with giving to the poor, a Time Magazine article (January 17th. Pp 48-49) once reported that research indicated that the eight steps towards a satisfying life were:
 1. *Count your blessings.*
 2. *Practise acts of kindness.*
 3. *Savour life's joys (take mental photographs of precious moments).*
 4. *Thank your mentors.*
 5. *Learn to forgive.*
 6. *Invest time and energy in family and friends.*
 7. *Take care of your body.*
 8. *Develop strategies for coping with stress and hardships.*
 - a. Which of those have you mastered?
 - b. Which do you need to develop?
 - c. Why do you think that acts of kindness are rated as No. 2?
 - d. Would you change the order?
7. Considering that widows of today normally receive a pension and orphans are hard to find in Australia, is this verse antiquated or are there modern equivalents of widows and orphans? If so, what is our church doing about this?

DON'T DISCRIMINATE

8. **Read James 2:1-7.**
 - a. Why is this warning necessary? Could you imagine this happening in a church? Have you ever seen it happen?
 - b. Should the church actively seek to win and involve influential people?
 - c. What are the dangers facing a church that is predominantly made up of wealthy people?
9. How has this study made you feel?
 - a. Challenged?
 - b. Uncomfortable?
 - c. Confused?

Prayer: O God,

This week help us to use our wealth to help make a Christ like difference to our world.