



## IF I WERE A RICH MAN...

July 5, 2026  
David Hinkle

### JAMES 1:9-11

<sup>9</sup> Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation, <sup>10</sup> and the rich in his humiliation, because like a flower of the grass<sup>[a]</sup> he will pass away. <sup>11</sup> For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits.

### SUMMARY

We live in a world that ascribes value and status based upon wealth, creating an enduring divide between "The Have's" and "The Have Not's". However, for those "in Christ," status is defined not by wealth but by our secure position as children of God. This identity will be constantly tested by worldly pressures, requiring us to remain steadfast by fixing our eyes on Him, refusing to let the world's appraisal dictate our worth, and instead viewing ourselves and others through the lens of how God sees His Son.

## OUR DANGER ISN'T WEALTH OR POVERTY; IT'S ALLOWING EITHER ONE TO TELL US WHO WE ARE.

### **Luke 1:46-55**

<sup>46</sup> And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, <sup>47</sup> and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, <sup>48</sup> for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; <sup>49</sup> for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. <sup>50</sup> And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. <sup>51</sup> He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; <sup>52</sup> he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; <sup>53</sup> he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. <sup>54</sup> He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, <sup>55</sup> as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever.”

### **Psalms 49:16-17**

<sup>16</sup> Be not afraid when a man becomes rich, when the glory of his house increases. <sup>17</sup> For when he dies he will carry nothing away; his glory will not go down after him.

### **Jeremiah 9:23-24**

<sup>23</sup> Thus says the Lord: “Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, <sup>24</sup> but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the Lord.”

## THE TRUTH WE NEED: OUR POSITION FAR OUTWEIGHS OUR POSSESSIONS.

### **Moo, D. J. (2015). James: An Introduction and Commentary, p. 95.**

“Believers must not define themselves by their worldly status but by their spiritual status: at once exalted because we sit with Christ in the heavenlies, and humiliated, because we serve the one whom this world rejects.”

### **Ephesians 2:4-9**

<sup>4</sup> But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— <sup>6</sup> and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup> so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

## HOW WE PAST THE TEST: LET YOUR POSTURE REFLECT YOUR POSITION.

**Moo, D. J. (2000). The Letter of James, pp. 68-69.**

“The point of the passage is, then, that Christians must always evaluate themselves by spiritual and not material standards. Maintaining such a perspective in a world that so insistently confronts us with a very different standard of measurement is not easy. But if the church is to be the kind of countercultural society that Jesus intended it to be, establishing and propagating such a perspective is essential.”

## LET YOUR POSTURE REFLECT YOUR POSITION.

- Where am I feeling the pressure most right now?
- Has my attitude been gratitude?

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Would you prefer a getaway to the mountains or to a beach?
2. Read James 1:9-11. What does James say the rich and the poor should boast in?
3. Read Jeremiah 9:23-24. How does this passage deepen your understanding of James's command to boast?
4. Read Matthew 6:24. What are some signs that money is becoming a master rather than a tool?
5. What does James' comparison of the rich to a flower that withers in the heat teach us about the temporary nature of wealth and success?
6. How does remembering your identity in Christ help guard your heart whether you experience financial abundance or financial need?
7. In what area of your life are you most tempted to measure your worth by your possessions, achievements, or status rather than by your relationship with Christ?
8. What is one practical change you can make this week to demonstrate that your confidence and joy are rooted in Christ instead of earthly wealth or status?
9. What was God impressing on you most from the message and passage from this week?

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