

Day 21

Compassion and Mercy

Read James 5

Pray Psalm 86:11-13, “Teach me your way, LORD, that I may rely on your faithfulness; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name. I will praise you, Lord my God, with all my heart; I will glorify your name forever. For great is your love toward me; you have delivered me from the depths, from the realm of the dead.”

Day 22

A Word on Wealth

Read James 5:1-6

James begins this passage with a harsh warning for wealthy, oppressive unbelievers. An additional implication for Christ followers (wealthy or not) may include the awareness of the responsibility that comes with all material possessions. In his book *Surprise the World*, Michael Frost speaks of developing habits of giving “as an end in itself because it fosters a spirit of generosity, it mirrors the character of God, and it alerts others to his reign.”

Our lives simply look different because of Jesus Christ. We give God our absolute best. We will not tolerate a self-indulgent lifestyle. We wage war against the temptation for greed. We intentionally embrace the message of Matthew 6:19-21, “Don’t store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

1. How will you practice extravagant generosity this week?
2. How will you combat the temptation towards greed and self-indulgence?

Heavenly Father, thank you for the blessings that are mine in this world. Fill me with an abundant joy so that I will overflow in rich generosity. Amen.

Day 23

Encouragement for This Moment

Read James 5:7-12

A lot can happen in one minute. According to *Business Insider*, in one minute on the internet:

- Facebook users like 4,166,667 posts
- Snapchat users engage with 284,722 snaps
- Instagram users like 1,726,111 photos
- Amazon receives 4,310 unique visitors
- Netflix subscribers stream 77,160 hours of video
- Pinterest users pin 9,722 images
- Twitter users send 347,222 tweets

We are a busy people. Reading James’ words on patience and endurance may have felt like a foreign language. There is hardly a need to wait for much at all when it comes to technology. But what about the other parts of life that are not as neat and



tidy? What about waiting for a diagnosis, a job offer, a place to live, an end to oppressive debt, healing, or reconciliation? James encourages us to be patient, take courage and stand firm. John 16:33 echoes his words, "I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world." And not only is Christ the victor, but he will return.

I praise you, Lord, for your word. I believe that all your words are true and find comfort in knowing the One whose compassion and mercy is available every moment of every day. Give me patience and endurance with what comes my way today. For your glory and in Jesus' name, Amen.

Lord, I come to you today laying all that I have and all that I am at your feet. You are all that I desire. You are worthy of my highest praise and unwavering devotion. Amen.

Day 24

Power in Prayer

"Are any of you suffering hardships? You should pray. Are any of you happy? You should sing praises. Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord. Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make you well. And if you have committed any sins, you will be forgiven. Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results." **James 5:13-18 NLT**

George Whitefield, a contemporary of John Wesley, spoke of the importance of prayer: "Believers keep up and maintain their walk with God by secret prayer. The spirit of grace is always accompanied with the spirit of supplication. It is the very breath of the new creature, the fan of the divine life, whereby the spark of holy fire, kindled in the soul by God, is not only kept in, but raised into a flame."

Fan the flame of your walk with God today by lifting up prayers and praise to the Lord.

Day 25

Emergency Responders

"My dear friends, if you know people who have wandered off from God's truth, don't write them off. Go after them. Get them back and you will have rescued precious lives from destruction and prevented an epidemic of wandering away from God." James 5:19-20 MSG

No emergency dispatch call ever began with, "Go ahead caller, you're on the air" or "Welcome to Moviefone!" This ridiculous situation would never happen. Emergency responders are serious about saving lives, serving, protecting and caring for our country. As Christians, we are the first responders for the people who need Christ around us. James instructs us to go after them! What are we waiting for?

1. Prayerfully consider the men or women in your life who do not know Jesus.
2. List ways you can live a contagious life in word, thought and deed before the people God brings into your life. Be specific.
3. Pray for the names or groups of people who came to mind above, both for their understanding of God's truth and for specific opportunities to authentically and humbly show God's love.

For deeper study: Colossians 4:5-6, 1 Peter 3:15, Matthew 5:13-16, Philipians 2:1-11

