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HOW MONEY AND PLEASURE BECOME CRUEL MASTERS

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF JAMES
NUMBER 39
JAMES 5:4-6

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JAMES 5:4-6 "Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you."

Every person in the world decided in which direction his or her life will go. You either travel the road of super grace or you travel the road of reversionism. No one can stand still. Some years ago I read a sermon with this title--"You Need Not Stay the Way You Are--You Can Be Changed."

The Falacy Of Reversionism

Reversionism has with it a do-it-yourself-kit and in this way, you produce human good as a result of self-righteousness and legalism. We are studying here in James the rich man as an illustration of reversionism. He isn't a reversionist because he is rich, but is a reversionist because he has refused to take in doctrine and apply it to his life. God wanted this man in our illustration to have money, and God was willing to give him the capacity to enjoy it. But this man decided all by himself that he would ignore doctrine and would run his own affairs aside from the plan and provision of God for him.

A man who deceived himself

We are about to study here a man who gets what he always wanted, but he finds that once he gets it, he has no capacity for enjoying it. Instead of getting the happiness he wanted, all he got was misery. In these three verses we have three areas of monetary reversionism. First, the area of business life; second, the area of social life; and third, the area of the function of the laws of establishment. Back in verse 3 we studied about the man with a rotten soul. We discovered that a rotten soul was incapable of coping with the problems money brings. This same believer, with the same amount of money, could have been very happy had he not been in reversionism. But instead of having happiness, he abused the privileges that came to him and money became a monster in his hands and a noose around his neck.

JAMES 5:4 "Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth." Behold is the particle "idou." It is taken from the aorist, middle, imperative of "Horao" which means to see, to look upon. It is very near the english particle "Now see this!" or "Now hear this!" This rich man might have been a very happy man had he lived by doctrine and had he been obedient to God. But instead he ignored doctrine, he walked in the road of reversionism, and thereby, he created a big pile of misery for himself.

Picture of this big reversionist business man.

This big business man is pictured in this verse as being a thief. The word for "hire" here is "misthos" and it means he cheated his laborers and took part of the wages they were supposed to receive, and he used this for his own profit. This man is pictured here as a thief, a

chiseler. He took that which did not belong to him. The word for laborer is "ergaton." These were the people he employed. The words "have reaped down" come from the aorist, passive, participle of "amao." The word "fields" stands for industry and since this is an agricultural economy, the word "fields" is used here. He said that he would pay them their wages at the end of the harvest but he lied to them. They assumed that since he was a believer he would keep his word, but he cheated. It may be that they had had previous experience with a believer and he kept his word to them. They thought all believers were the same. "Which is of you kept back" is the perfect, passive, participle of "aphustero" and this means to defraud. The perfect tense means that this was the way of life with this man. He always did this. He was making money under free enterprise but he had become a cheat. "Apo" and "su" means from the source of himself. Now we have the word "crieth" and it means that the money didn't cry, but these laborers cried because they were cheated. This word "crieth" is a present, active, indicative of "krazo" and it means to scream. This has reference to Deut. 24:14 and 15 where the principle is laid down that the laborer is worthy of his wages. The more money he made under free enterprise, the greater was his responsibility to be fair and treat his workers in a fair way. But this man in our story had become anti-establishment. He had actually turned against the very system that had made him rich. This man was saved by grace, and that's the only way a man can be saved, then why would he turn and deny the very system that gave him salvation? It is equally true that a man who has made his money in free enterprise should recognize the tremendous debt he owes to the system. Why will a man turn from salvation by grace and turn to human works? Why will a business man turn on the very system that has made him what he is and violate the very principles which made him a success? The inevitable results of such action is revolution which destroys free enterprise for everyone.

Two reasons why this reversionist should have known better:

1. This man in our story should have known better because he was a believer. Salvation by grace should have reminded him that he couldn't cheat and get by with it.
2. Then the very principles of free enterprise should have reminded this big business man that he should be faithful with his workmen. He should pay them fairly, for the system had been fair with him. But instead this man was about to self-destruct.

These people keep screaming

The present tense here tells us that these under paid laborers just keep screaming. But these people made a mistake when they went to the government for help. They should go to this successful business man who cheated them and work out their problem. When the government steps in and tries to legislate against reversionism, then the system breaks down. You can't legislate morality. You can't legislate against reversionism. Reversionism can only be changed by discipline from God and never from legislation from the government. Today the United States Government has gone overboard trying to legislate against reversionism, and all they have done is to create larger areas of reversionism. And instead of producing nobility, they have produced more dishonesty and more shoddy production. Legislation can do certain things, but legislation can't change the souls of people. Only Bible Doctrine can do that. Legislation cannot solve the problems of economy. WE ARE IN SLAVERY TODAY TO LEGISLATIVE REVERSIONISM IN THE

UNITED STATES. Government contracts have become so lucrative that big business has bowed to them and has become captive to pressure from legislation. Big business is now in slavery to our government, and when big business goes into slavery, then all the people are enslaved.

Evil Liberal Forces

Both the National and the World Council of Churches have taken their stand against big business and have poisoned the minds of millions against big business and free enterprise. The heart of the whole thing is the evil of religion.

The sad picture of this reversionist businessman.

This big businessman we are studying here has allowed himself to become a cheat, a thief. Money has become his God and dictates every move he makes. He will do anything to get money, including cheating those who are his faithful workmen. The words "the cries" are from "boai" and means the screams of those harvesting the crops. "Them that have reaped" is the aorist, active, participle of "therizo." This rich man has broken his contract with them in order to make money. "Have entered" is a perfect, active, indicative of "eiserchomai." It is an action word and it means God is going to do something about it. "Entered the ear of God" is an anthropomorphism, because God doesn't have ears, yet he hears everything we say, even if it is a whisper or even a thought. Then we have the words "kurios sabaoth" and this comes from the Hebrew "Jehovah tseaboth" and it means "The Lord of the armies." In other words, these big businessmen who have cheated their laborers will suffer from the slaughter of the armies of God. This is exactly what happened when the revolution came in Russia in 1917. This kind of national catastrophe hit Russia and big business lost not only their business, but people lost their freedom also.

JAMES 5:5 "Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter." Now the scene changes. We move from the business world into social life. This could be the same man as in the previous verse, or it could be any other reversionist. "Ye have lived in pleasure" and just on the face of that, we would say there is nothing wrong with that. God wants all of his people to be happy. But these words "lived in pleasure" come from the aorist, active, indicative of "thuphao" and it means to live a life of self-indulgence. It means to make pleasure your chief objective in every area of your life. This is excess in the search for pleasure, regardless of what God says.

The sin of self-indulgence

Thus we have before us a picture of the reversionist believer who places pleasure before God, before anything. If this person were living in super grace, he would have the capacity to handle his wealth, but in reversionism he moves into self-indulgence. This man has invested his money in cars he can't use, in houses he can't live in, and in pleasure that turns bitter in his mouth. This is the social butterfly who goes from pleasure to pleasure and it soon fails to meet his need. He is the picture of excess in dissipation. Reversionism has given him no capacity for this kind of luxury living. The words "and been wanton" come from the aorist, active, indicative

of "spatalao" and this means sensual dissipation. He has given doctrine the shaft, and has gone all out for personal pleasure. "Have nourished" is the aorist, active, indicative of "trepho" and it means to fatten an animal for the slaughter house. This reversionist is fattening himself for his day of slaughter.

A Pleasure-mad Day

People today in America are pleasure mad. Americans are mad for sports (CBS can't even clear one hour for a Christmas service on December 25th which is the day we celebrate as Christ's birthday, but they have to cut us to thirty minutes and will start a basketball game at 11:30 on Christmas morning.)

This is the thing which caught up with France in the French Revolution. The King and Queen were mad for pleasure when the people were starving, and when the hungry crowds were beating at the palace gates, Marie Antoinette said, "So you are begging for bread? Why don't you eat cake?" And they climbed the walls and stormed the palace and took her to Paris and cut off her head. Those leaders of France fattened themselves for the slaughter. We are on the verge of this same kind of thing in America.

What is it you will need when the revolution comes? You will need doctrine in your minds. Only super grace can give you the chapacity for happiness, but it also gives you capacity to meet revolution and catastrophe. When that day comes, God will provide for you just like he provided for Elijah when the brook went dry. Elijah was a super grace hero and doctrine in his soul made him adequate for the crisis.

So this was his life--Prosperity reversionism slavery. That's the path reversionist people always travel. The people in America are now being fattened for the slaughter. The word for this is "sphage" and it means the slaughter of fattened animals. So the social life of this pleasure mad reversionist has fattened him for the slaughter.

JAMES 5:6 "Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you." Now the scene changes again and here we see the breakdown of law and order. Law surpresses the sins of the old sin nature. Law protects the freedoms of the individual citizen, it protects the privacy of the individual citizens, and it protects the property of the individual citizens. Freedom, privacy, and property must be protected if the government is to survive. Murder, violence and slaughter violate the freedom of the individual, extortion violates the privacy of the individual, and theft and cheating violates the property of the individual.

The Police And The Military

This verse reminds us why we need to have a strong system of law and order if our society is to survive. There is no large city in America where a woman is safe on the streets at night. But in countries like Spain and Portugal they are safe or in South Africa or in Rhodesia they are safe. What has happened to our free society in this country? In this verse we see the picture of the reversionist who is bent on destroying the law of the land, just as he destroyed big business and just as he destroyed social life. Law must be based on evidence and when wealth bribes the judge and the jury, then the freedom of the individual is gone.

This verse says, "You have condemned" and this is an aorist, active, indicative of "katadikao" and it means this reversionist has used his wealth to run the innocent man into a trap. He has bribed the system. He has distorted the law. Then we have "and he doesn't oppose you" and this is from "anti tasso" and it means law and order and justice are gone. Revolution has moved in and freedom, privacy and property are gone.

A Picture of The United States

In a very accurate way these three verses we have studied picture our America of 1977. We are a stumbling nation. Will we learn in time? In verses 4 and 5 the reversionist was destroyed. In verse 6 the reversionist is pictured as destroying himself. The Communist world believes that this is what is happening to us. They say they won't have to destroy us, that we will destroy ourselves.

In our next study we will see the solution to monetary reversionism.