



MAIN POINT	MAIN BIBLE VERSE
Don't live for what you can lose	James 5:1-6
<p>Students will see that James gives a serious warning to people who build their lives around money, comfort, and getting more for themselves. This lesson will help students understand that real faith changes what we value, how we treat people, and what we live for.</p>	
<p>Teaching Script / Guide</p>	

## HOOK

- Use this time to build a connection.
  - You could start with a story about something you really wanted when you were younger that felt like a huge deal at the time, but now you barely care about it.
  - Or you can use an introduction like this:
- Have you ever wanted something really badly?
  - Maybe it was a new pair of shoes.
  - Maybe it was a video game.
  - Maybe it was a phone.
  - Maybe it was a Stanley cup, a hoodie, a LEGO set, a sports jersey, or some random thing everyone at school suddenly cared about.
  - And when you wanted it, it felt like a really big deal! You thought “When I get that, I’ll be happy.” But then something happens...
    - You finally get it, and it’s awesome for a little while... but eventually it gets old. It breaks. You lose interest. Something newer comes out. Or you realize it didn’t make you as happy as you thought it would.
  - That happens all the time. We chase stuff because we think it will satisfy us, but a lot of the things we chase just don’t last.
- Today, James gives us this warning: Don’t live for what you can lose or things that won’t last.

## TENSION:

- Most of us probably don’t think of ourselves as greedy. But greed can be sneaky...
  - Greed is not..
    - Having money
    - Owning or wanting nice things

- Greed is when our hearts begin to believe, “I need more to be okay/healthy/ or happy.
- But the problem is, more is never enough for long.
- And slowly, before we realize it, we start living for and craving things that don’t last.

## BIBLE:

- **Either read or invite a student to come up and read James 5:1-6**
  - *Before reading, say: As we read, listen for what James says about riches, selfishness, and how people were being treated.*
- **James teaches us 3 warnings about living or what we can lose.**
  - **Stuff doesn’t last (James 5:1)**
    - James is not saying that every person with money is evil.
      - The Bible includes examples of people who had wealth and still honored God. The issue is not simply having money or owning possessions.
      - The issue is what we do with what we have.
    - James is warning people whose hearts had become wrapped up in their riches. They were living like money could protect them, satisfy them, and make them secure.
      - But then he says their riches are rotting, their clothes are moth-eaten, and their gold and silver are corroded. (In other words, all they owned was falling apart).
    - Even though people found security in these things, James says, “They won’t last”. And that’s true for us too.
      - The things we own break
      - The trends we follow fade
      - The things we think we “have to have” eventually get old.
    - James is not trying to make us feel bad for having things, but he is warning us not to live for them.
      - Because if your life is built on what you can lose, eventually you will lose what your life is built on.
  - **Greed can make us selfish (James 5:3)**
    - The problem here isn’t having things... it’s hoarding things...
    - They had more than enough, but were only living for themselves. That’s what greed does.
      - Greed turns our hearts inward.
        - Instead of asking, “How can I love God with what I have?” Greed asks, “How can I keep more for me?”
        - Instead of, “How can I help someone else?” Greed asks, “How can I make sure I get what I want?”
    - Now, you may hear this and think, “I’m in middle school. I don’t have a lot of money. I don’t even have a job... how does this apply to me?”
      - That’s a fair question... but greed isn’t just about money.
        - Greed can show up in how we use our time, attention, relationships, and influence.
          - It can show us when we refuse to share

- It can show up when we only think about what we want.
    - It can show up when we care more about getting attention instead of loving others.
  - Real faith changes the way we handle **EVERYTHING** we have, because everything is a gift from God. And God doesn't give good gifts so we can keep them for ourselves. He gives us good things so we can honor Him and love others.
- **People matter more than possessions (James 5:4)**
  - James gets even more serious in verse 4:
    - These rich people weren't just greedy, they were mistreating others. And that's a BIG deal to God.
  - James says the cries of those mistreated people reached the Lord.
    - God saw the unfairness
    - He saw the selfishness
    - He saw people being hurt
  - This teaches us something really important:
    - God cares about how we treat people.
  - We can all be tempted to value things over people
    - We can care more about popularity than kindness...
    - Being included over including others...
    - Getting our way over loving others well...
  - But followers of Jesus are built different.
    - We don't use people to get what we want. We love people because they matter to God.

#### APPLICATION/SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION SET UP:

- So what does this look like in our everyday lives, and how can we make sure we're living for what we can't lose?:
    - **Pay attention to what you think will make you happy and why**
      - Ask yourself, "What do I keep thinking I need in order to be okay?"
      - There is nothing wrong with enjoying good gifts, but when a good gift becomes the thing we think we can't live without, it has too much control over us.
      - Only Jesus can truly satisfy your heart.
    - **Use what you have to love others**
      - You may not have a lot of money... but you have something.
        - Time
        - Words
        - Attention
        - Kindness
      - Look for one way to use what God has given you to bless someone else.
        - Real faith changes how we use what we have.
    - **Live for what lasts**
      - Loving God, people...
      - Living for and obey Jesus...
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- Those things lasts!
- Don't build your life around what you can lose. Build your life on Jesus.

#### **GOSPEL MOMENT/CLOSE:**

Here is the good news: Jesus did not come to take from us. Jesus came to give Himself for us. The people James warns were storing up treasure for themselves. But Jesus did the opposite. Jesus had all the riches of heaven, but He humbled Himself for us. He came down, lived among us, served people, loved people, and gave His life on the cross. At the cross, Jesus died for our greed. He died for the times we love stuff more than God. He died for the times we use people instead of loving people. He died for the times we chase temporary things and forget what matters most. And then Jesus rose again so we could be forgiven and made new.

That means we don't have to live controlled by greed. We don't have to chase more and more, hoping it will finally satisfy us. We can trust Jesus. Jesus is the treasure that cannot be taken away. So as we get ready to go to small groups, here is the question I want you to think about: **What are you living for that you could lose?**

Maybe it is stuff. Maybe it is popularity. Maybe it is comfort. Maybe it is attention. Jesus offers something better. He gives us Himself. And when Jesus is your greatest treasure, you are free to enjoy good things without living for them. You are free to use what you have to love others. You are free to live for what lasts. Because real faith doesn't live for what it can lose. Real faith lives for Jesus.

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