



## Cheering When They Should Be Weeping

“There is nothing wrong with men possessing riches. The wrong comes when riches possess men.”  
Billy Graham

### A JUDGMENT AND A WARNING

A worldly view of wealth causes people to cheer when they should be weeping, and weep when they should be cheering.

Wealth turns against you when it is abused instead of used properly.

The problem is not with wealth; it is with the improper use of wealth and power.

### THREE SIGNS OF ABUSE:

Hoarding:

Defrauding:

Opulence and self-indulgence:

Is my standard of living advancing as quickly as my income?

We often wonder if we are living above our means, when we should be asking if we ought to live below our means.

A principle for all of us: Ownership or stewardship?

The owner says:

I do not belong to God.

Nothing I have belongs to God.

I deserve everything I have – I earned it!

I answer only to myself.

The steward says:

I belong to God (Romans 1:6)

Everything I have belongs to God – I am a steward.

Everything I have is a gift from God.

I am responsible to God for my actions.

When we consider that James’s message was to the godless rich, it is easy to lose sight of the application for us.

**Small Group Homework**  
**For the week of June 7, 2015**

**Plans and dreams ...**

If you are currently in a financially difficult situation, or can remember back to a time when finances were really hard, list a couple of things that are (were) most frustrating and a couple that you look on with fondness.

**Getting into the Word**

Read Matthew 19:16-26

- Jim spoke of four economic states rather than the two we normally think of (rich and poor); the godly poor, the godly rich, the godless poor, and the godless rich. To which category did this man belong? Give a reason for your answer.
  
- Look at Billy Graham's quote at the beginning of the study. Does the quote apply to this man? Why?
  
- Have you ever lost something of great value? Describe what it was and how it made you feel?

Get a little creative here. Jim spoke of this passage being written to non-Christian people who would never read it so it must have had something important to say to the church people who *did* read it. See if you can come up with a couple of reasons why he wrote it. *[Hint: think of the workers; read ahead a few verses in James 5; think about our own tendencies even if we don't have lots of money!]*

Finally, look back over the principles of ownership versus stewardship that we observed at the end of the study. On a scale of one to ten, how much is God your owner? How much are you his steward?

This is our final small group session of the quarter. Take some time to discuss the blessings of your small group and to pray for one another. Please be sure to fill out your evaluation forms and get them back in. We hope to see you the week of September 20<sup>th</sup>!