

- h. The great historical adversity where Bible doctrine and reciprocal love for God combine with grace under the power of God the Holy Spirit result in the fulfillment of the unique spiritual life. Advance to the high ground of spiritual maturity by the believer is necessary for the preservation of client nation America. Only historical disaster, such as terrorism, provides this opportunity for the believer in Christ. Therefore, we look forward to the challenge that comes from the attack of terrorism. If we advance to spiritual maturity, we can look back and thank God that we found true happiness in the greatest disaster in American history. As a result, we will become a band of brothers, united by our reciprocal love for God, living by Bible doctrine circulating in the soul, and glorifying God in our greatest historical disaster.

B. Related Scripture.

1. Capacity for life is not related to the circumstances of life:

Philippians 4:11 I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content in any circumstance.

v. 12 I have experienced times of need and times of abundance. In any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of contentment,

v. 13 whether I go satisfied or hungry, having plenty or nothing.

v. 14 I am able to do all things through the One who strengthens me. (NET)

2. Capacity is not related to status quo in life or lifestyle:

Hebrews 13:5 “Let your lifestyle be free from the love of money; keep on being content with what you possess, for He Himself has said, ‘I will not abandon you, neither will I ever forsake you,’

v. 6 so that being confident we say, ‘The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What will man do to me?’” (EXT)

3. Capacity is related to the spiritual life of spiritual maturity:

2 Corinthians 9:8 And God is able to make all grace overflow to you so that so that because you have enough of everything in every way at all times, you will overflow in every good work. (EXT)

4. Capacity is related to prosperity and blessing from God:

1 Timothy 6:6 But the spiritual life associated with capacity for life keeps on being a great means of prosperity. (EXT)

C. Principles.

1. God has provided a system for attaining the great objective of sharing the happiness of God.
2. This happiness is the ultimate in life. Nothing is greater than this happiness, and this happiness is secure.
3. This happiness is not only the basis for the blessing of the believer who attains the objectives of the spiritual life but is a source of blessing to all other people associated with such a believer. This is blessing by association.
4. This happiness is unique, in that it is far greater than any system of happiness related to romance, marriage, or any type of sin, or anything else. There is nothing in history to equal what God has provided for the believer who attains this happiness through the execution of the unique spiritual life of the Church Age.
5. This happiness is permanent and effective in all categories of life from prosperity to adversity.
6. “Christian fellowship” has nothing to do with the happiness. So-called “Christian fellowship” becomes a lust pattern related to people and results in divine discipline.
7. Under the ministry of God, the Holy Spirit, we must put doctrine first in our lives and stay with doctrine to understand what must come first in our lives.

This brings us back to James 5:2 where we begin the exegesis of the verse.

James 5:2 Your riches [πλοῦτος (*plóutos*): wealth, cash] have rotted [perfect active indicative of σήπω (*spa*): corrupted] and your clothing has become moth-eaten. (NASB)

1. “Your riches have rotted” refers not to the riches, but these men’s souls. The word, “rotted,” is the intensive perfect active indicative of the verb, σήπω (*sépo*).
2. The perfect tense indicates a present condition that results from a past action. There is nothing inherently wrong with money and wealth, except when it is involved in *cosmos diabolicus*. The verb, *sépo*, is intensive giving force or emphasis to this linguistic element.

(End JAS5-02. See JAS5-03 for continuation of study at p. 21.)



3. The riches have rotted, not because the medium of exchange had done so, but that the souls of the men who possess these riches have rotten souls.
4. The key to this drama is not the riches themselves, but rather what is within the souls of those who possess the riches.
5. These men each have a volition. Each or both can decide to advance in the plan of God or choose to raise hell and let the devil take the hindmost.
6. Therefore, the “riches” occur because of these men’s fortunate experience in the blessings of free enterprise. The “riches” in this passage refer to the system of laissez-faire capitalism which is defined as follows:

Laissez-faire. An economic doctrine that opposes governmental regulation of or interference in commerce beyond the minimum necessary for a free-enterprise system to operate according to its own economic laws.¹

7. The reason that government intrudes on the workings of laissez-faire economics is the failure of some in free enterprise to function strictly within the basic standards of the free-enterprise system. Here is an excerpt on this subject from *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th ed. (2010):

Laissez-faire, policy based on a minimum of government interference in the economic affairs of individuals and society. The policy of laissez-faire received strong support in classical economics as it developed in Great Britain under the influence of Adam Smith.

Belief in laissez-faire was a popular view during the 19th century; its proponents cited the assumption in classical economics of a natural economic order as support for their faith in unregulated individual activity. The British economist John Stuart Mill was responsible for bringing this philosophy into popular economic usage in his *Principles of Political Economy* (1848), in which he set forth the arguments for and against government activity in economic affairs.

Laissez-faire was a political as well as an economic doctrine. The pervading theory of the 19th century was that the individual, pursuing his own desired ends, would thereby achieve the best results for the society in which he was a part.

¹ *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, Fifth Edition (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016), s.v. “laissez faire.”



The function of the state was to maintain order and security and to avoid interference with the initiative of the individual.²

8. The laissez-faire system of economics allows free enterprise and free citizens to engage in commerce unencumbered by government except for laws that prevent one entity from being unfair to the other.
9. In the context of James, Chapter 5, these men's decisions have caused their riches to be ill-gotten.
10. The money is just a medium of exchange in a free-enterprise system of economics. These men have accumulated a lot of wealth. It is worth, in our medium of economics, X-number of dollars, let's say, one million.
11. The word in context is the noun, **πλοῦτος (plouítos)** which the *King James Version*, *The NET Bible*, and the *New American Standard Bible* translate as "riches," and *New International Version* as "wealth."
12. These men have lots of money, but they do not have the capacity for it. What they have in their souls is rotten and thus they have lots of money but without any associated happiness and therefore no capacity for wealth.
13. We are not told by James if these men are believers. If so, they are in reversionism. Yet, there is nothing wrong with them having made a lot of money, but in the process of doing so, they have chosen not to pay those who planted the crops, harvested the crops, and transported the crops to market.
14. Both these men had the capital to buy land, recruit workers to plant, tend, and harvest crops and get the produce to the local grocer. These two entrepreneurs provided the money and necessary equipment. But once the produce was in the hands of the grocer, they received his money and did not pay their laborers.
15. James does not address the subject of whether these owners decided to plant crops the next season. News would surely be out that those who worked for these men did not pay them after the harvest.
16. Their strategy was probably borrowed from the phrase, "Take the money and run."
17. Consequently, the moral to this story is not the money but the unscrupulous souls of the men who literally robbed those who worked for them. They had gotten the money, but their souls functioned in darkness.

² "Laissez-faire" in *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica: Micropaedia*, (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 2010), 7:105.

