

BELIEVE IT.

James: A Bible Study

■ DAY ONE

READ James 2:1-4 using the **PICTURE IT** Bible study method. Imagine you're the one given special attention because of your wealth.

What might you begin to believe about yourself and your position?

What could that lead you to believe about others?

Now imagine being someone desiring to participate in Christian community, but perhaps your filthy clothes cause others to look down upon you or *shuffle* you to the back.

What might that lead you to believe about yourself?

Others? What would you believe about how God sees you?

■ DAY TWO

READ James 2:1-4 again.

PICTURE everything you can about the situation.

Today, put yourself in the place of the believer with the opportunity to show partiality or favoritism.

What would it be like to receive someone who is poor, dressed in filthy clothes, and maybe hasn't bathed? Would you be tempted to

shuffle him/her to the back, or place him/her at your feet?

Would you be able to see him/her through Jesus' eyes of love and acceptance? What about the person coming in who is pleasing

to look at and smells nice? Are you tempted to see him/her as someone more worthy than the other? Why or why not?

Are you tempted to pay more attention to or give special treatment to someone who may benefit you or your purposes?

Have you witnessed someone showing favoritism in order to receive something in return? What was that like?

"Character is how you treat those who can do nothing for you."

Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?

■ DAY THREE

READ James 1:9-11.

Wealthy people face the temptation of becoming prideful in thinking their wealth/position is something they've attained on their own.

Perhaps they may be tempted to think they stand a little higher than others at the foot of the cross.

The poor may be tempted to think they're *less than* others. They may see themselves standing on a lower level because they don't have wealth.

HOWEVER, "...the ground is level at the foot of the cross."

Having money (*much or little*) is **NOT** the issue.

If you have wealth,

BE CAREFUL not to let it make you believe you're **SOMETHING**.

If you don't have wealth,

BE CAREFUL not to let it make you believe you're **NOTHING**.

■ DAY FOUR

READ James 2:5-7 and Matthew 6:19-21.

What does James mean when he says "poor in the eyes of the world?"

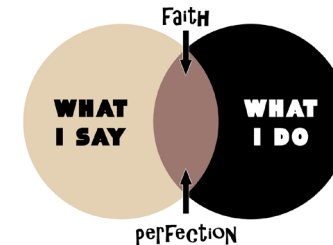
READ through the weekend's message outline.

"I'm poor because I'm confused about what it means to be rich."

What does it mean to be rich?

What do you consider to be your treasure?

Take time to **WRITE** your thoughts. **REFER** to the diagram below.



COPY the diagram onto a piece of paper (*or onto a page in your journal*).

LOOK back on Day Four at what you identified as your *treasure*.

WRITE it in the circle labeled **WHAT I SAY**.

WRITE what you said it means to be rich in that same circle.

What do your actions say? What does your attitude say?

Can these be written in the converging space?

Should they be written in the outer right circle?

According to your actions, what would others say you treasure?

What does God say?

PRAY for honest awareness, courage, and wisdom to do the difficult

-- *but necessary* -- **HEART WORK** to become a more perfect person.

■ DAY FIVE

READ Matthew 6:25, 31-34.

Take pride in your position (*sometimes I need to remember who I'm not, and sometimes I need to remember who I am.*)

In an effort to grow in knowing and becoming more like Jesus, becoming a person "in-sync" (*with what you say and do*),

prayerfully consider: *How would you complete the sentences listed?*

Do not store... Do not worry... Don't oppress... Don't judge...

Love your neighbor as yourself...

June 23/24, 2012