A Prayer Reflection

James 5:1-6

Rick pointed out on the James reading plan this week that James 5:1-6 can seem very harsh as he speaks directly to our hearts. However, bearing in mind that James is speaking to the early church, the scattered Christians because of intense persecution imposed on them by the imperial cult of Rome. Principally, he is speaking to the ‘enemy’ the non-Christian wealthy land owners lording it over the poor of the time. As the Christian reading this now, how should we act or react, not just to his very direct language, but to the prompting of the Holy Spirit as we read this with spiritual eyes and ears?

Commentators suggest a couple of main reasons:

1. that as people are made aware of the end and what’s in store for the rich, they will not be envious of their wealth.
2. knowing that God hears the cries of the oppressed and that He will vindicate them in due course, brings much needed hope to persevere in the midst of those circumstances, trusting God is at work.
3. being good stewards of resources entrusted to us to build the kingdom of God here on earth.
4. holding onto earthly treasures very loosely, in fact choosing to live more simply so that resources can be available for God to use as kingdom building requires it.

Create some space in your life for God to move resources around, but more so, to nurture a spirit of trust that is attached to God alone.

One or two of these ideas may ring with your spirit

• You may want to take some time out and name and confess those attachments that take priority over God. - detach from stuff and attach to God.
• Ask the Holy Spirit to help you let go of the ‘image management’ that goes with over spending, hording more than is needed; buying clothes that feeds your fashion senses, chasing beauty potions and therapies,
letting go of future outcomes but allow a trust in God’s outcomes to grow.

- Let go of the notion that ‘my money belongs to me and it’s my private affair.’ Draw up a budget, re-evaluate your budget making more room for less and more available for God to use at His disposal.

- Very honestly, ask God who, what how we are manipulating, controlling people or situations to get what we want. V 4-5

- Reflect on how you handle failure, weakness, suffering or loss?

- When has loss made God more real to you?

- A sobering exercise: a very practical prayer Go into your jewellery box, drawer, wardrobe, bookshelf, study, man cave, garage or shed and find something dear to you, pull it out, hold it and reflect on the sentiment, the feeling you had when it was new and how you feel about it now, why is it there, is it on the shelf, useful, ready to be used by someone else, passed on as a legacy,

- Ask God to give you an opportunity to become more detached from secondary stuff, share your car, your home, your second home, your time, your expertise with someone this week, or just give it away.