

Second Hand Preacher

26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

September 27, 2015

James 5:1-6

Is it evil to be wealthy? That sure is one way to take the writing of St. James today. He writes many condemning words about the unjust rich who crush the poor and cheat them. He was writing this because there were divisions in his community. The amount of wealth one had was a way people were discriminated against and how the poor were treated with disrespect. James wanted none of this. He wrote this part of the letter as a warning against the corruption of the rich. Being rich wasn't the problem, but the way the money is used was wrong. Living in excess and not helping the poor were the crimes of the wealthy. Money is power, but God is even more powerful. People need to realize that wealth is accumulated by hard work, circumstance, and the blessing of God. Money can corrupt; but turning to God and realizing his place in our lives, even for the richest of the rich, can make a difference.

This same problem of economic disparity still exists today. One could say it is probably exponentially worse. This is due to technology and greed. No matter where we fall on the economic scale, are we thankful to God for what we have? It is Biblical to do something called tithing. That is giving 10% of your wealth to God. Some of this should be given to the Church, so that the spiritual needs of the community can be helped. Some of it should go to people in need. This would include local, national, and international charities. Giving to all three makes us well-grounded and part of the larger global community. James warned against misused wealth. Let us use our wealth to bring glory to God.