

1. Open with Prayer
2. Welcome any newcomers
3. Read James 5:1-6 and give a five-minute review of the sermon using Peppy's sermon notes.

Facilitator: Please don't feel you have to cover every question. Try to keep your discussion to an hour and a half at the most.

CONNECT Group study questions, James 5:1-6

June 22, 2014

Title: The Misery of Money

*Dear God, you made many, many poor people.
I realize, of course, that it's no shame to be poor,
But it's no great honor, either.
So what would have been so terrible if I had a small fortune?
If I were a rich man,... If I were a wealthy man.*

—sung by Tevye in Fiddler On the Roof

We might not go about the house singing that song—or maybe we do—but who has not wished for more than we have?

When asked once, “How much money is enough money?” John D. Rockefeller replied, “Just a little bit more.” None of us are a Tevye or a Rockefeller. But are we any different when we think about money? Do we wish for a small fortune, or maybe just a little bit more? Do you realize that you can live below the poverty level in the United States and still be considered wealthy by most of the rest of the world? In the first six verses of James 5, we find that Tevye's wish and Rockefeller's assessment of enough can bring us a world of misery.

Question: Time to brainstorm. Name all the miseries you can think of that come from having, keeping and creating great wealth. **Facilitator:** I'm thinking of a loss of privacy, the expense of having a private life, and the problem of security. See if your group can think of others.

Question: Every once in awhile we read about someone who suddenly inherits a fortune—usually it's winning millions in the lottery jackpot. If it happened to you, what would you do to avoid the misery that comes with it?

Question: What would you consider poor? What miseries come from poverty? If you can be miserable as a poor person and as a wealthy person, how can you be happy?

Question: Philippians 4:10-14 provides an interesting perspective on need and abundance. What gave Paul joy? What did Paul learn? How do you suppose he learned it?

Question: Read 1 Chronicles 29:11-13 and discuss how this prayer of David differs from Tevye's prayer in Fiddler On the Roof. How would you pray about something you want or need?