

James 5,1-6
Disruptive Business Practices
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11/1

Our call to worship this morning:

Psalm 109:30-31

- 30 With my mouth I will greatly extol the LORD;
in the great throng I will praise him.
- 31 For he stands at the right hand of the needy one,
to save his life from those who condemn him.

Title

Disruptive Business Practices

James 5:1-6 NRSV

5 Come now, you rich people, weep and wail for the miseries that are coming to you. 2 Your riches have rotted, and your clothes are moth-eaten. 3 Your gold and silver have rusted, and their rust will be evidence against you, and it will eat your flesh like fire. You have laid up treasure for the last days. 4 Listen! The wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts. 5 You have lived on the earth in luxury and in pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. 6 You have condemned and murdered the righteous one, who does not resist you.

Intro:

2020 As we approach the upcoming election: **We are feeling “outrage fatigue.”** So hearing James’ outrage hear can be difficult, but it is still necessary.

I. **God hears the cries of Essential Workers**

- a. Covid has made us aware that the people most harmed are also the people most essential.

- b. My visit to The Mission to Seafarers – the migrant farm workers of the sea. 600K workers (mostly from the Philippines and India) trapped on ships around the world, plus hundreds of thousands more unable to work.

- c. Thinking about the essential workers out in the fields of the Central Valley dealing with the smoke and the risk of Covid

d. From God's voice in the burning bush saying, "I have heard the cries of my enslaved people" to the voices of the prophets who call out Israel's greed and corruption, to the words of Mary's Magnificat – "God has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty" to Jesus' Sermon on the Plain... the OT and NT agree that God hears the cries of the Essential Worker and promises to lift them up.

II. **James is offering an Encouragement and a Warning.** He has come to the height of his moral outrage, so he is:

a. Encouraging the Christians read this, they would be encouraged in the knowledge that God would judge the rich who were persecuting and exploiting them.

b. Warning the Christians not to become like the rich people who aren't reading this.

III. God's call to us, on the eve of the election: **Commit to Disruptive Business Practices** that advocate for the rights and the needs of essential workers.

a. **Pray for small business owners and essential workers**

b. **Accept our responsibility as voters and as consumers** – we are not powerless

1. Would you contact your representatives on behalf of seafarers to get them off their ships and able to return to their home countries?

2. If you could vote for a livable wage, access to childcare and healthcare, would you do it? Regardless of what your preferred political party or pundit said?

IV. **The Lord of the Harvest is also the Lord of Hosts**

a. It's too easy to forget that all good things come from God, and belong to God.

b. This God who blesses is also the God of power of avenges. Verse 4: **The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts.**

c. This year, when the gap between the richest and the poorest is greater than ever, let us be both hopeful and humble, grateful and responsible, encouraged and warned: God hears the cries of the essential worker, so we should too.