

Are You What God Would Consider *Rich*?

How then does Lk 12:22 apply to you? What does He mean by “life”? Do not worry about your *life*. Mt 6:31-32 concerns the non-believer who is in the world and of the world, considered a gentile or of the nations, which is not necessarily condemning since everyone must make a living or else starve to death.

What, then, does He mean by Mt 6:33? Who is He speaking to? Is He speaking to you, or are you then a gentile? Since He said in Mt 6:32, “For after all these things the *gentiles* seek,” and, “for your Heavenly Father knows that you need all these things,” but then He adds verse 33. Are you one of the “you” in verse 33, or are you a gentile? These two verses in Mt 6:32-33 distinguish between one of His disciples and a gentile who is still in and of the world.

Jn 17:14 speaks of disciples. Jn 17:15-16 — Disciples are *in* the world, but not *of* it. Gentiles are in the world and are also *of* it. They may go to church on Sunday, or may even be a successful preacher, but are still those who love the world (1 Jn 2:15-17), and the things of the world, like football, baseball, basketball, TV, movies, etc.

In Chattanooga in 1975, the First Presbyterian Church on McCallie Avenue (the church we were attending) closed its doors with a sign stating, “Closed for the Super Bowl.” This was “Super Bowl Sunday” evening vespers. This was the last time we went to a church. We started having our own meetings, which never close for the love of the world and the things of the world.

It would seem that Rom 5:5 and 1 Jn 2:15 go together and show conclusively whether Rom 5:5 ever happened. The whole church was watching the Super Bowl as it went into overtime, if I remember right. Is watching sports on TV one of the “things of the world” in 1 Jn 2:15? Is the Super Bowl? 1 Jn 2:16 — Could the Super Bowl qualify as one of these three disorders for the disciples of Messiah? Are Christians *disciples*? In Lk 14:26-33, our Master was qualifying who is and who is not a disciple of His.

Jn 12:25 means to hate whatever would stand in the way of having eternal life. Mk 10:29-30 is included in what disciples must be taught in Mt 28:19-20, as well as what it means to be His family (Mk 3:33-35). Whoever was willing to do the Father's will would know the truth from a lie (Jn 7:17), who is and who is not a true sent one (Jn 7:18; 13:20; Jn 3:36; Lk 10:16; Rom 10:14-17). Acts 5:32 — All others will be left behind (2 Ths 1:4-10), since they did not obey the gospel (Mk 10:17-30). If mothers, brothers, sisters, and all one's own possessions are not left behind, the supposed disciple will himself be left behind when our Master comes.

Mt 10:34-38; Lk 12:49-53 — The arrival of the Kingdom forever changes human relationships. It supercedes all other family, friends, possessions, or employment contracts — anything that opposes one's having eternal life and being a disciple of Messiah must be left, forsaken and renounced for the sake of the Kingdom of God. In some cases, this means having nothing more to do with one's parents or family members, if it is the only way one can obey Messiah, rather than to be left behind (2 Ths 1:8). Those in this Kingdom relationship (*family*, as He spoke in Mk 3:34-35) become the disciple's dearest and closest friends (Pr 17:17), nearer and dearer than all others.

1 Jn 3:14,16,23 — What did the rich young ruler in Mk 10:17 ask? Did he obey Messiah? Did Peter (verse 28)? And all who would obey this gospel will have eternal life (verse 30), with persecution from the family forsaken in obedience to the gospel (Lk 14:26; Phil 1:29; Jn 15:18). So Jn 17:14 says that only those who are *not* of this world will have eternal life, and will be persecuted by those who hate them, such as those parents and relatives who show the utmost hatred to their children, or brother, or sister because they were forsaken for the sake of the Kingdom of God. Being saved from this evil world system (Acts 2:38-41), by receiving the apostles' word, meant obedience to what He spoke to them (Acts 5:32; Jn 3:36). Mt 10:24-39 is very revealing, and specifically verses 37-39 — if you want to receive it.

Lk 6:24 — *Rich* is #4145, abounding in material resources; *comfort* is #3874, that which affords comfort or refreshment. The rich here are not necessarily *filthy* rich, but have more than they need, and do not share with others who have less than they need, such as a neighbor whose poverty is apparent. The rich are those who are abundantly at ease (Eze 16:49), abundantly well off, but do not care for the needy whom they see and whose need is obvious.

To have one's comfort in full (Lk 6:24) speaks of the comfort they enjoyed in this present life, which was gotten at the expense of others who were not as well off as they. Likely candidates are unjust businessmen, doctors, lawyers, dentists, Christian pastors, psychologists, or politicians. They could think of little else but themselves in their pursuit of riches — comfort and pleasure in their selfish ambition, from college to their degrees, assuring them more success and opportunity to make it in this world, regardless of how they hurt others in the process. They are included in Rev 22:15 by how they made their living and success. They prospered at the expense of others, to whom they lied to gain the income that they wanted, but did not need, except to fulfill their evil desire to gain more riches in this life. Then sooner or later, they are headed for what is promised by the Word of God, either 1 Tim 6:9 or verses 17-19.

Comfort is a condition of pleasurable ease or well-being, which was their goal in life (Eze 16:49). The *rich* in Lk 6:24 is contrasted with the *poor* in Lk 6:20 — one who needs lifting, who has fallen into poverty from having his needs taken by the predator — the rich who want their comfort instead of a good conscience. The *poor* in Lk 6:20 is one with a good conscience who would not gain wealth at the expense of another, so as to drive him into poverty. The poor earns his bread by his own hard labor. The *poor* in Mt 5:3 are not on welfare (Gen 3:19; Isa 24:5).

So the one in Lk 6:24 who is enjoying comfort now will be denied any sort of comfort throughout eternity in the second death sentence (Rom 2:6-16; Rev 20:12-15). This, as applied explicitly to “believers” in 1 Jn 3:17, condemns the rich Christian who

preferred to have his physical comfort in this life, to the detriment of others who are supposed to be his brothers (1 Jn 2:4; 3:14,16; Jn 9:41).

See the contrast in Lk 6:20-26 between verses 20-23 and verses 24-26. The “woes” correspond to the blessing of the previous verses. Those who don’t realize their spiritual poverty, but rely on their own achievement, will reap disaster for eternity (Gal 6:7-8). Lk 6:24-25 — Those who are *full* now, in need of nothing, will suffer hunger eternally; those who laugh now — parties, jokes, comedies, good times — will mourn and weep eternally. Verse 26 — These had egotistical pride, desiring recognition, praise, to be great; the desire for all to speak well of them required them to compromise their conscience.

1 Cor 1:26-29; Jms 2:5 — The disciples were mostly poor men who had come to trust in God; Lk 6:20 says, “For *yours* is the Kingdom of God.” They were promised God’s rule — the Kingdom. But concerning the rich in Lk 6:24, the Messiah, “the Son of the Living God,” lifted up His eyes and spoke to them the woes in verses 24-26, and today, 2000 years later, He still speaks through His Body.

A woe is a cry of pain, for misfortune or, in this case, for deliberate sin against humanity — the way they gain their stardom, prestige, fortune, or popularity. Their woe is an eternal woe.

2 Cor 5:21; Acts 2:24 — Our Master suffered woe for three days and nights, in pain — the pangs of death — so all who would trust Him would be blessed as a result of identifying with Him (Lk 6:20-23), that is, those who were saved from their sins (Mt 1:21) of selfishness, greed, and unjust business practices that hurt others. As YHWH presented blessing for obedience and woes or curses for disobedience in Dt 28, our Master presented blessings and woes to His disciples who were living in anticipation of being worthy of His Kingdom (Rev 3:4).

But most were cursed with the woes of death. 2 Cor 5:10 tells of the time when their works are evaluated — the works that were prepared for them before the

foundation of the world (Eph 2:10; 1 Cor 3:12-15; 1 Jn 2:28; 4:17; Rev 22:12). “Woe to you who are rich...” One does not become rich by doing the works prepared for him. The comfort that the rich seek first for is not associated with the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (Mt 6:33). In Lk 1:51-53, all the rich receive is what they sought first for — comfort, security, physical well-being (Mt 6:19-21; Lk 6:24; Mt 6:25,28,31-33). This separates or distinguishes the Holy from the gentiles (1 Jn 2:4).

Gentiles refers to all who are not saved from self-life by the Blood of the Lamb (Mk 8:34-35; 2 Cor 5:15). The term *gentiles* today includes both Jew and Gentile, since no one can technically call himself a Jew today (Rom 2:28-29) except those who are true Jews (Rev 2:9; 3:9). The Jews today have gained much of the worldly assets and are in control of much — more than any other kind of gentiles.

Mt 6:24 — *Mammon* refers to wealth. No one can serve two masters. Money is the master of the Jews today, as well as all other kinds of gentiles who are worthy of the Second Death that is the Lake of Fire (Rev 20:15; 21:8; 22:15). Who are the dogs now?

Mt 6:24 — God or mammon — the time will come when these two masters will make opposing demands. The gospel calls for all mankind to invest in their future with Him by giving all they have and all they are to Him now, while He is far off, and not wait for His return (Lk 14:31-33; Rev 19:14; 2 Ths 1:8-9). Mammon is the collection of material comforts for present enjoyment, but woes await him who indulges in mammon.

To seek first for His Kingdom is not just to recite the so-called Lord’s Prayer (Mt 6:9-10), but to actualize it in daily living in the Body (1 Cor 12:13; Jn 13:34-35; 17:20-23), as was done in the first church (Acts 2:36-47; 4:32-37).

So does it make any difference to you, as rich as you are, that the very Word of God incarnate spoke these words in Lk 6:24 as a woe, to “scare the hell out of you” (if I may be so brazen)? Then what will it take to wake you up to what is about to overtake you forever and ever? “Woe to you who are rich!”

Why is there a woe? Because you have received your comfort, for which you strove all your life, or perhaps you inherited it, having never once worked for it, for it fell right into your hands by one way or another. Nevertheless, you are rich and you are receiving your comfort in full, just as Lk 16:25 — the contrast between comforted and tormented. And in verse 27 the rich man becomes an evangelist for his own family members, but all the more to be tormented, for he knew also the fate or destiny of his five brothers (verses 28-31).

So today, you have the choice. The opportunity is yours, for not only do you have Moses and the prophets, as verse 31 says, but the very words of the Son of God are written down for you by His very own people, with His urgent plea. Now is the time to repent, as in Lk 14:31-32, as our Master Yahshua says again. Lay all you have at His feet. Surrender unconditionally to this coming King while He is far off, even as the first disciples did on the day of Pentecost, as recorded in Acts 2:36-47.

In verse 37 they ask, “What shall we do?” Now these were Jews, mind you, who called out with all their hearts, “What shall we do?” They were the Jews who had their part in the crucifixion of the Son of God (Acts 2:23,36,38,39). The disciples said, “To you and your children,” just as the Jews had said in Mt 27:25, “Let His blood be on us and on our children.” So in Acts 2:39 is the opportunity for forgiveness, not only to the Jews, but to the gentiles as well, “as many as the Lord our God will call.” He is calling you now!

Verse 40 — These “many other words” (Mt 28:19-20) were the last words of this Man, Yahshua, the incarnate Word of God, who, by His Spirit, brought back to the apostles’ remembrance on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2:40 all that He had taught them. Mt 3:7 — The brood or generation of vipers that Peter called these Jews out of was the generation that crucified the “Prince of Life” (Acts 3:15), whom God raised from the dead. Peter and the rest of the apostles called them all out of that generation (Mt 27:25).

“This same Yahshua, whom you crucified” (Acts 2:36; 4:10; 5:28), as even today, they say the same thing in their Talmud, even as if what is recorded in Mt 27:25 had

never been said, nor the report of the apostles and evangelists in Acts 2:23,36; 3:15; 4:10; 5:30; 7:51-53. No one who has a brain in his head can justify this murder that the Jews committed (Num 35:33-34), as today and for hundreds or even thousands of years, the land testifies against them as a people. Acts 7:53; Jer 11:3; Dt 27 & 28, as well as Eze 36:17-23, confirm the final curse, just as Paul the Jew said about them (Rom 2:17-24; Dt 27:26). Gal 3:10 — Paul quotes this verse concerning the Jews in his day, which applies as well to this day. In Dt 28, God promises curses for disobedience to His instructions, which is counted as rebellion, but blessing for obedience, proving the love the redeemed people have for their Redeemer, as those delivered from Egypt (Dt 28:68).

The gospel we preach is “to the Jew first” (Rom 1:16), but to be able to hear it, they must see what has been passed on to them from their fathers (Mt 27:25), even down to this day in the Talmud, the foremost authority for the Jewish religion. The Jew will not hear the gospel of a charlatan-imposter, as they have been made to believe our Master is by their own cursed religion and parents. Rev 2:9 and 3:9 are the words of the One they murdered.

The Jews forsook the treasure that was worth more than all the riches and fame that the world could offer. That treasure was to know the Messiah they killed, claiming YHWH as their Father (Jn 8:39-44). There was only one way to get this treasure; Messiah was the only One who had it. The treasure was hidden right there in Him, as He said, “I am the way; I am the truth; I am the life.” To circumvent Him was to circumvent forgiveness and eternal life and the Father of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Jn 14:6).

But the treasure had great cost to one’s flesh. It was a free gift, but who could receive it? Who does He give it to? To know the Father is to know the Son; to be loved by the Father requires one to love His Son (Jn 16:23-27). He gave eternal life to only those who trust in Him, which is to obey the gospel of Messiah, requiring one to abandon all — everything, including all one’s possessions and family — in order to follow Him.

Not many of the multitude that day, in Acts 2, chose to follow Him — only 3000 out of a million. The cost was too high after the multitude heard those many other words in Acts 2:40-41. But those who chose to follow Him, to be His disciples, gave up all, as Acts 2:44-45 gives clear evidence (Lk 14:33; Mk 10:29-30), and as a result received eternal life. But persecution came from the ones who hung on to their rotten, stinking lives (Mt 16:24-26).

Mt 10:38 — The gospel includes the command to deny oneself. The call to discipleship demands that one completely abandon the natural desire to seek for one's own comfort, home, fortune, power, etc., etc., etc. The good news of the gospel entails Mt 10:38 as well as Jn 3:36, and 2 Ths 1:8-9, and Mt 10:21-22,34-39. This is essential to the obedience to the gospel. Just as Lk 14:26-33 and Mk 10:17,28-30 are required, so also Mt 10:34 and Lk 12:49-53 are essential for eternal life and are to be obeyed. For God knows the heart in baptism, whether one will or will not obey His gospel (Jn 2:23-25). The first disciples obeyed as in Acts 2:44-45, without hesitation, because the gospel was preached to them (Acts 2:39-41), and they sat at the apostles' feet if they needed additional clarification.

Mt 10:34-36 — So we see where much of the persecution comes from — from one's own household which he had to forsake to be saved, to receive the Holy Spirit in baptism. That is, Mt 10:36 is true because the gospel includes verses 37-39. So who can argue against the truth of the gospel?

This is how the first community was formed, without an orientation session. They received a brand new life and formed a brand new culture (2 Cor 5:17), composed of the 100 houses, farms, and new family members who would dwell in those houses, work on those farms — yes, with persecution as Mk 10:30 says, but eternal life is worth it all. Persecutions mostly come from the family they left behind to follow Messiah (Mt 24:9-12), but those who endure to the end as verse 13 bear the witness of verse 14. The *Edah* (witness) prophesied in Mal 1:11 bears the fruit of Mt 21:43, which is the testimony

before all (1 Tim 2:6) at the proper (due) time. That love and oneness could only come from this new kind of people in Jn 13:34-35 and 17:20-23, in a new family life and new culture, being the royal priesthood of 1 Pet 2:9-10, which is all God ever wanted from natural Israel as a twelve-tribed nation (Ex 19:5-6). But Mt 21:43 had to be the ones who gave it to Him (Acts 26:6-8; Isa 49:6,8; Gen 15:17-18; 18:19; Mt 19:28).

Who then is worthy of Messiah, to have eternal life, to be His very own disciple, to possess the sonship of His Father? No one can come to Messiah except the Father draw him to Messiah, to where He is (Jn 6:44; 12:26). The Father uses His sons to work through, to be the mediators between the world and His Son, being co-workers with Messiah and the Father (1 Tim 2:5). There is one mediator, Messiah, between man and the Father. He is the way to the Father, but He has given us, His newborn sons, the royal priesthood, the “mediator-ship” between the world and His Son, Messiah. No one can come to Messiah except through us, who are called “the Way” — the way to the Son, and the Son is the way to the Father. There is no other way (Jn 13:20; Lk 10:16; Rom 10:14-17; Mt 10:41; Jn 7:17-18).

But who are those in 2 Cor 11:4,13-15, and on whose behalf do they mediate? Who forms a body of people who call themselves Christians? They are in no way following the Judean pattern (1 Ths 2:14). If the same Messiah and the same Spirit empowers the same gospel, you come up with the same Yahshua. But, on the other hand, if someone comes and is not sent from where Messiah is (Jn 12:26; 1 Jn 4:2-3), you end up with another form of church. You end up with an organized religion and someone called Jesus Christ, and the church no longer resembles the one in Acts 2 and 4, which Jn 13:35 and 17:20-23 is the witness of — the *Edah*.

Mt 21:43; 24:14 and Acts 4:32, for example, are the testimony of Jn 17:21, as inspired by the apostles (Jn 17:20), of whom it is true that to receive them is to receive Yahshua Himself. He has a Body on earth, who represent Him to the world as a living testimony of the coming Kingdom (Mt 24:14; Dan 2:44) *in those days* (Dan 2:28; 7:24;

12:1-2; Rev 17:12). “Those days” are the latter days of this age — the end times (Dan 2:34-35,44,45).

Dan 2:35 is the purpose of our lives, to bring about what God promised Abraham in Gen 15:17-18 (Jer 34:18). It was He who made the oath, which has never been fulfilled, and Mt 19:28 is the promise of that hope, which Paul said our twelve tribes hope to see fulfilled for them, that is, Rom 11:12-15, in the next age. Heb 10:13 brings in His return (Mt 21:43; 24:14; Rev 11:15; 17:14).

Rev 17:12 goes back to Dan 7:24 and 2:44. The faithful are those with Him in Rev 19:14, who are still following Him (1 Ths 4:15-17). We come up to be with Him as those who are still with Him (Mt 12:30), not ashamed of Him (Mk 8:34-38), accompanying Him on white horses (Rev 19:11-21), and then the 1000-year reign begins (Rev 20:1-6). Those who were faithful in Rev 17:14 will rule with Him on earth for 1000 years (Rev 5:9-10). Those who were faithful overcame His enemies (Heb 10:13; Rev 3:5), showing that they were worthy of Him (Rev 3:4; Mt 10:37). What does *worthy* mean in Rev 3:4 and Mt 10:37? *Worthy* is #514, meaning comparable, suitable, deserving of our Master, and suitable to be His reward in Rev 3:5.

Suitable means appropriate to reign with Him over the earth. The one who was not worthy of Him — who did not live for Him, overcome for Him, did not love Him or obey Him — would be very inappropriate to reign with Him. It would be inappropriate for him to hear the words from our Master, “Well done, My good and faithful servant.”

Comparable means admitting of comparison; equivalent to Him in purpose and faithfulness to His cause and purpose. *Worthy* means having the worth, merit, or value to reign with Him. It means honorable to the extent of being found worthy to rule over five or ten cities (Lk 19:13). It means being admirable, deserving, worthy of such acclaim as, “Well done, My good and faithful servant!” (Rev 17:14).

To not be found *worthy* in 2 Cor 5:10 means that we are not worthy to reign with Him, not able to be entrusted with the responsibilities and honor of being a ruler. The

unworthy were not worthy, because they did not take advantage of every opportunity they had to be faithful to Him.

Lk 6:24 — “But woe to you...” — the *you* addresses those who do not listen to the good news in order to be among those who are blessed (Lk 6:20-26). All who are rich, full, laugh, and those whom all men speak well of — this is applied to them. It is clear that He was speaking to the Jews, as verse 26 speaks of the prophets who were spoken well of by all, which had to be false prophets, such as Jer 23:16-20. No true prophet was spoken well of by all, as Acts 7:52. Prophets inspired by Satan are false prophets who are spoken well of by the world and its leaders (2 Cor 11:14-15, speaking of Satan and his ministers). Those who do not deceive multitudes are not Satan’s ministers, such as certain doomsday prophets who only deceived the few who followed them. They did not deceive the world at large, but instead the world did not receive them as true prophets. But our Master in Lk 6:24 and Paul in 2 Cor 11:15 are speaking about such ministers as have deceived two billion people today, and millions more down through history.

Of whom does the world speak well today? For sure, Billy Graham, Abraham Lincoln, Billy Sunday, all the great evangelists of Christianity, the world’s most popular and elevated religion. No other man who has ever lived is more elevated or lifted to a higher position of popularity and goodness than Billy Graham, especially as a man of God. Even Hollywood elevated him to the highest position among Christian counterparts by his star on Hollywood Boulevard, to be remembered by the gospel he preached.

Paul spoke of such men in 2 Cor 11:5,13-15 and Phil 3:18-19. Amidst praise and adoration (Jn 7:18; Gal 1:7-8) they pervert the gospel of Messiah, so as to be accursed — *anathema* as 1 Cor 16:22 says. They are those who claim to love our Master Yahshua, and call Him their Master or Lord, but actually love the praise of men and are motivated to preach for this cause.

As for the Christian seminaries, according to their essential nature, no one today gains acceptance if not trained in a school comparable to Rev 2:9 and 3:9. One must

earn a Master's degree or Ph.D. in one of these dens of demons. When fully trained, they will be like their teacher. To be fully successful, one must excel in his training school or seminary to be a Doctor of Divinity, so as to be addressed as the Reverend Dr. Billy Graham — Dr. Graham, Reverend Graham, etc.

The word *Reverend*,¹ as when one addresses a man of God, or “the collar,” means one deserving of reverence. It is a title of dignity and respect for the Christian cleric. A *Reverend* of the Christian religion is one who deserves profound awe and respect — a cleric whom one is to regard with deference and devotion.

Deference means that since he has earned this title, one must give him the due respect of submission or courteousness, yielding to his awesome learning, as being schooled to represent God Himself, being a *Reverend* or a *Doctor of Divine-ity* (the doctor's degree of being divine).

Courteous means graciously considerate to his awesome knowledge and understanding, wisdom, and kindness (2 Cor 11:14-15).

Divinity means the state or quality of being divine or God.

Doctor is one licensed to practice his learned specialty; one holding the highest, most elevated position of respect and honor among men, holding an academic degree awarded by a recognized university of higher learning. A doctor is qualified to practice medical treatment, or, if a doctor in religion, qualified to practice bamboozlement — to bamboozle the masses of people into believing that they have eternal life and that they are going to Heaven when they die. The greater their degree, the better they can hoodwink (2 Cor 11:15). Their end will be according to how many they brought into bondage of Rev 18:2 and 2 Cor 11:20 by the falsehood and deception in them (Jn 7:18

¹ The ending “-nd” on a Latin verb root indicates “to be” [past participle]. For example, in arithmetic, there is a sum of addends. An *addend* is something to be added. In multiplication, there is a *multiplicand* and a *multiplier*; in division, a *dividend* and a *divisor*, meaning something to be multiplied/divided by something that multiplies/divides. Subtraction has a *minuend* (to be diminished) and a *subtrahend* (to be subtracted). In the same way, *reverend* means to be revered.

NIV). The more unrighteous they are, the more they can deceive the masses into believing in Jesus — a false gospel and a false Messiah.

There can be a true sent one and a false sent one (Jn 7:18). The sent one, in order to be received (Jn 13:20), must be one who is seeking the glory of the One who sent him. The one who sent him must be the true God and Father of our Master Yahshua. The one who hears, as Rom 10:17, must be willing to do God's will. The one who is sent must be righteous (Mt 10:20). There can be no falsehood or deceit in him, as Paul says in Rom 10:14-17 and 2 Cor 4:2-5. To reject this sent one is to reject Messiah (1 Tim 2:5). A true sent one (as the *righteous man* in Mt 10:41) is the only mediator between man and Messiah, and Messiah is the only mediator between man and God. We are co-workers (1 Cor 3:9).

1 Tim 3:1 — Desiring the position of *Bishop* — a *position*, being put in position, a place of high honor (1 Tim 5:17). Is it by decree or by one's own personal strife for recognition and prestige? (Jn 7:18; 3 Jn 1:9)

1 Tim 3:1 — From this word, this *position*, in later years, when organized religion took over, the monarchical episcopate developed, as the overseers. The Nicolaitan system (Rev 2:6,15) came out of this spirit in 3 Jn 1:9, which the Christian church is steeped in today. *Nicolaitan* means having dominion over the people by decree, not by right of the will of the people. It is the opposite of one who would have a humble opinion of himself, as in 1 Tim 3:2, who is not covetous, and who rules his own family well (verse 4, which disqualifies many who strive to be first), and who takes care of the Edah of Yahweh (verse 5). To *take care of* (as *visit* in Jms 1:27) is to look after, to oversee by the gift and grace of the Spirit. No grace can be added to his gift if he is not humble, for God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble (Jms 4:6). Can you imagine a leader or elder ruling without grace from God? (1 Pet 4:10-11). A tyrant he must be to rule the saints.