

Faith That Works
“Patient Till He Comes”
James 5:7-11

Introduction- James opens this section of his letter with an exhortation in verse 7, “Be patient therefore brethren.” Ask why, therefore so taking us back to vv. 1-6, the wicked wealthy. So be patient (four times in five verses). What does he mean? It’s not just sitting idly by doing nothing. We don’t like to wait. It comes from two greek words *makros*, meaning long and *thumos*, meaning temper. So long-suffering, it’s the quality of self restraint in the face of provocation; it’s bearing insult and injury without retaliation.

Jerry Bridges explains how this concept works in everyday life:

“This aspect of patience is the ability to suffer a long time under the mistreatment of others without growing resentful or bitter. The occasions for exercising this quality are numerous; they vary from malicious wrongs all the way to seemingly innocent practical jokes. They include ridicule, scorn, insults, and undeserved rebukes, as well as outright persecution. The Christian who is the victim of office politics or organizational power plays must react with long-suffering. The believing husband or wife who is rejected or mistreated by an unbelieving spouse needs this kind of patience.”

How long must I be patient? “Unto the coming of the Lord,” vs. So the comfort of His coming! Which coming? **Illus.:** John 14, “*If you are suffering at the hands of the oppressor, be patient, the Lord will come; and just will be done.*”

To help us, James gives us three examples of patience:

I. The Farmer, vv. 7-9.

If you are impatient you had better not be a farmer.

Why is the farmer willing to wait?

1. Because the fruit is precious, vs. 7.
2. Because the harvest is a process, vs. 7.

In our lives God wants to produce fruit in our lives (Gal. 5). We must be patient for God’s process of producing precious fruit in our lives. The process may be painful, yet it will bring a harvest!

God wants our hearts to be established!

Illus.: Samuel Rutherford, “*Why should I tremble...*”

“*The soul would have no rainbow if the eye had no tears.*”

Note again, vs. 8, “*The coming of the Lord draweth nigh.*” So as you are waiting, quit your complaining (vs. 9).

“Grudge,” literally to sigh; groan; or murmur.

We often blame others for our problems. The New English Bible, “*My brothers, don't blame your troubles on one another.*”

So what should you do when you suffer an injustice? **Illus.:** Ps. 73

II. The Prophets, vs. 10.

James doesn't tell us which prophets. Isaiah, Ezekial, Daniel? To me, Jeremiah: stocks; prison, a muddy cistern!

Jesus said, Matt. 5, “*Blessed are you when...*”

What encouragement can we receive from the example of the prophets?

1. They were doing the will of God, yet they suffered.

They suffered because they were doing the will and work of God. (vs. 10, “who have spoken in the name of the Lord.”)

2. God cares for us when we go through suffering.

Illus.: Elijah. “*The will of God will never lead you where the grace of God cannot keep you.*”

3. So keep working like the farmer and witnessing like the prophets!

II. Job, vs. 11.

In verse 11, we have a different word for patience in verse 7. It's *long-suffering* with people. But now in verse 11, it's *perseverance* or *endurance* in circumstances. It means you stay put and stand fast when you'd like to run away.

Job's life:

Job was a wealthy righteous man.

The scene in Heaven: God allowed Satan to take everything but his life.

1. His oxen; donkeys; sheep; and servants.
2. His children.
3. His health.
4. His wife.

Job said, "Naked came I from my mother's...."

5. His friends.

It seemed like God was against him.

Job was not perfect, but he was patient. He did not run away, he stood fast.

Job said, *"For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth; and after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!"* (Job 19:25-27)

"The very greatness of Job lies in the fact that in spite of everything which tore at his heart, he never lost his grip on faith and his grip on God. Job's faith is no groveling, passive, unquestioning submission; Job struggled and questioned and sometimes even defied, but the flame of faith was never extinguished in his heart." William Barclay

Illus.: Ps. 73

Lessons from Job:

- 1. We may suffer yet God is still on the throne!**
- 2. Though Job didn't know why he was suffering, God had a purpose.**
- 3. God blessed Job in the end!** (see. vs. 11 "the end of the Lord.")

A. Material Blessings

Job 42:12-17, *"So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she*

asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters. And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren. After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations. So Job died, being old and full of days."

B. Spiritual Blessings

1. He saw God like never before!
2. God was glorified.

Like the farmer, wait for the spiritual harvest. Keep working.

Like the prophets, look for opportunities. Keep witnessing.

Like Job, keep waiting patiently for the Lord to come and set all things right.

*Christ is coming! let creation
From her groans and travail cease;
Let the glorious proclamation
Hope restore and faith increase.
Christ is coming! Christ is coming!
Come Thou blessed Prince of Peace.
Long Thine exiles have been pining,
Far from rest, and home, and Thee:
But in heav'nly vestures shining,
They their loving Lord shall see:
Christ is coming! Christ is coming!
Haste the joyous jubilee.*

(Joachim Neander, 1680)