

FAITH IN ACTION

Patient Endurance

James 5:7-12

Wait Patiently for the Lord's Return

James 5:7 (NLT) ⁷ Dear brothers and sisters, be patient as you wait for the Lord's return.

- Jesus is coming back
- Throughout scripture, there's a constant reminder that Jesus is returning
- Jesus is coming back to:
 - **Reward us for our work *Matthew 16:27 (KJV) 27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.***
 - **Separate the sheep from the goats *Matthew 25:31-32 (KJV) 31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:***
 - **Judge both the living and the dead *2 Timothy 4:1 (KJV) 1 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;***
- We don't know when, but we know for sure Jesus is coming back
- Until Jesus returns we are to:
 - **Stay busy working for Jesus *Luke 19:13 (KJV) 13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.***
 - **Live holy lives *1 Timothy 6:14 (KJV) 14 That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:***
 - **Live so we are not ashamed when Jesus returns *1 John 2:28 (KJV) 28 And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.***
- As believers we are to patiently wait for Jesus' return
- The word *patience* means longsuffering, bearing and suffering a long time, persevering, being constant, steadfast, and enduring.
- This is a very special kind of patience—a *spiritual patience* that never gives in; it perseveres and suffers on and on no matter what attacks it.
- Two things we need to know about spiritual patience:
 1. *Spiritual patience* is not "passive acceptance" and just accepts trials and temptations as a part of life and nothing can be done about it
 2. *Holy Spirit* helps us persevere in the face of trials and temptations
- And while we're in spiritual warfare against trials and temptations, our eyes are focused on our goal, *patiently waiting* for and being *spiritually ready* for the return of Jesus

Be Patient Like the Farmer

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Vs. 7b “...Consider the farmers who patiently wait for the rains in the fall and in the spring. They eagerly look for the valuable harvest to ripen. ⁸ You, too, must be patient. Take courage, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹ Don’t grumble about each other, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. For look—the Judge is standing at the door!”

- James gives us a series of examples of what it means to demonstrate spiritual patience until Jesus returns
- We are to look at farmers as an example of the kind of patience we as believers are to have as we wait for the Lord’s return
- Farmers will plant their seed and then wait patiently for the early rain to germinate the seed and the latter rain to ripen the crop
- The farmer looks forward to the day of the harvest and does whatever needs to be done to protect the crops to until the time of the harvest
- The farmer will fight trials of dry weather and wet weather, the trials of insects and disease, the trials of weeds, etc.
- The farmer does whatever is necessary to fight and conquer the trials
- Why does the farmer try so hard to protect the crops?
- The farmer’s focus is one thing, harvest time
- Like the farmer, we too, must be patiently endure the trials and temptations of life
- We must do two things:
 1. *Take courage because the coming of the Lord is near*
 - Focus and fix your heart on the Lord’s return
 - The day of Jesus return is getting closer every day
 - The day of the Lord’s return could happen at any moment
 2. *We must not complain, murmur, or judge other believers*
 - We must not complain about the situations we face, our trials and temptations, and we must blame each other for what happens to us
Philippians 2:14 (KJV) 14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings:
- We are to practice patient endurance among our fellow believers
- We are not to be grumblers and complainers, so that we are not judged for it
- Jesus the Judge is at the door, meaning His Judgment is at hand, near, and ready to be executed
- Jesus comes as a Judge, not only to judge the world, but also to judge the faithfulness of believers ***2 Corinthians 5:10 (NLT) 10 For we must all stand before Christ to be judged. We will each receive whatever we deserve for the good or evil we have done in this earthly body.***
- Therefore, we can’t allow the trials and temptations of life make us unloving to one another

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Be Patient Like the Prophets of Old

¹⁰ For examples of patience in suffering, dear brothers and sisters, look at the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

- James gives us another example of patient endurance, the Old Testament prophets
- God wants us to be like the prophets who while suffering affliction, continued to believe and speak in the name of the Lord
- These great men and women of God that went before us believed and bore witness to God
- The writer of Hebrews says ***Hebrews 11:36-38 (NLT) 36 Some were jeered at, and their backs were cut open with whips. Others were chained in prisons. 37 Some died by stoning, some were sawed in half, and others were killed with the sword. Some went about wearing skins of sheep and goats, destitute and oppressed and mistreated. 38 They were too good for this world, wandering over deserts and mountains, hiding in caves and holes in the ground.***
- Despite all they went through, they stood strong in their faith in God and defeated trials and temptations along the way
- They continued to proclaim the word of God despite all the terrible trials, temptations and treatment they endured
- We may never go through what the Old Testament prophets went through, but we have their resolve, their commitment, their perseverance and patiently endure trials and temptations

Be Patient Like Job

¹¹ We give great honor to those who endure under suffering. For instance, you know about Job, a man of great endurance. You can see how the Lord was kind to him at the end, for the Lord is full of tenderness and mercy.

- James gives us one more example of patient endurance; the life of Job
- It is truly an honor to stay focused on the Lord's return despite the trials and temptations of life
- Job is known as a man of great endurance or perseverance
- Job went from the pinnacle of success and wealth to abject poverty and loss
- The amazing thing about Job is that he never gave in to the trials and temptations he faced
- He refused to turn against God
- Despite all Job went through, he remained focused on the Lord
- The Lord carried Job through it all with His compassion and mercy
- The compassion and mercy of God is seen in:
 - The devil was restricted in what he could do against Job
 - How God sustained Job through all His suffering

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- That God *used* the devil to make Job a better man; Job's troubles made him better in character, more humble and more blessed than before
- In the end, the trials and temptations of Job made him better and more blessed than ever
- God tested Job on one hand and supported him with the other
- We must be like Job, and remain focused on God in the face of our trials and temptations all the way to the end; the return of Jesus Christ
- As we do, we'll experience God's compassion and mercy on our lives
- God will deliver us by giving a victory we never could have imagined

Do Not Make Oaths

¹² But most of all, my brothers and sisters, never take an oath, by heaven or earth or anything else. Just say a simple yes or no, so that you will not sin and be condemned.

- James concludes by saying when we are under the pressure of trials and temptations; do not swear or curse
- But James says don't do it because it takes the Lord's name in vain
- It also devalues who we are as people because our word is a reflection on who we are
- If our words are untrue, we have lost our trustfulness and worth
- Our words should not require to be reinforced by an "oath" to be believed
- Our words should be able to stand on their own, they should be true, honest and factual
- Don't think that by making an oath to God will cause Him to speed things up in your life or get you out of trying and tempting situations
- Don't swear by heaven because it's God's throne
- To swear by heaven or to curse heaven is swear by God or to curse God
- Do not swear by earth, the earth is God's footstool
- To swear by earth or to curse earth is to swear by God and to curse God
- We are not to swear by any other oath because all power belongs to God
- The need to swear or make oaths beyond a simple yes or no reveals the weakness of our own words
- Swearing and cursing do not make us more believable; it really make us more suspicious
- The real danger is our lack of character will be exposed or revealed in the day of judgment
- Our "yes" should be a truthful yes and our "no" should be a truthful no, so that our words can't be used against us
- Therefore, let us live our lives with Jesus' return *and* eternity in view