7-7-2019 Message – Patience, PLEASE!

 James 5: 7 – 11 *7 Dear brothers and sisters, be patient as you wait for the Lord’s return. 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, strengthen your hearts, 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!*

 Let's look at some definitions for Patience; able to accept or tolerate delays, problems, or suffering without becoming annoyed or anxious.

 Patience is the ability to set back and wait for an expected outcome without anxiety, or tension. Patience is the ability to remain calm in the midst of turmoil because you know God is in control.

 Patience is not always losing control, being upset, dissatisfied, angry at yourself and others.

 And for you car people, “Patience is the ability to idle your motor when you feel like stripping the gears”

 Please raise your hand if you have challenges with patience.

 Patience is a characteristic I struggle with. Last week during Sunday School I was reminded of a conversation I had about the round abouts on highway 260. A source of frustration for many.

 I was using the posted speed of 20 mph as more of a guideline than a legal limit and going around them at 30 to 35 mph. I know it was not a good idea, I could have gotten a speeding ticket, or worse caused an accident.

 But the worst part was I got irritated and impatient with the people who were doing the speed limit because they were impeding my progress.

Patience is a lot more than having the ability to wait.

 Patience can be a struggle for us culturally. We live in the age of instant gratification and think that waiting is always to be avoided at best or at worst something we must endure.

 Just after listing the gifts of the Spirit, love, joy peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control Paul writes in Galatians 5: 25; *Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit’s leading in every part of our lives.*

 When you are living in step with the Spirit these gifts will be evident in your life. When you feel out of step with the Spirit, be patient and wait.

 Abraham waited for the promised son. Moses waited forty years in the wilderness. Jesus waited thirty years before He began His ministry.

 God instills seasons of silence in His plan. Winter is needed for the soil to bear fruit. Time is needed for the development of a crop. And disciples wait for the move of God. Wait for Him to move, nudge, and direct you.

 In todays' Scripture passage, James is talking to Christians about being patient for the return of Christ. He gives us some examples of patience and what is needed to get some.

**1. Patient Confidence**

 The farmer must wait patiently for his crops to grow; he cannot hurry the process. But he does not take the summer off and hope that all goes well in the fields. There is much work to do to ensure a good harvest.

 During James' time, farmers in Jerusalem patiently waited for the autumn rains and the spring rains. The autumn rains germinated the seeds, and the spring rains grew the seeds.

 Just as the farmer had to be patient, do what they knew to do and confidently wait for the Lord to do the rest the Christian actively participates with the Lord doing what we are called to do and confidently waiting for the Lord to do what only He can do.

 James invites us into a life of intentional and active waiting.

 Some people associate asking God for patience with God sending trials and temptations your way so you can learn patience.

 We would like patience, but we really don’t want to go through the trials and suffering required to get it.

 In Romans 12: 12 Paul reminds us, *12 Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble and keep on praying*.

 Paul calls us to a hope that keeps us mindful of our ultimate reward with Jesus. Paul says we serve God rejoicing in hope, not rejoicing in results. This shows how we are commanded to do all these things with an eye towards heaven.

 Difficult times do not excuse us when we abandon confident hope or patience or continuing steadfastly in prayer. Trials do not excuse a lack of love in the body of Christ or a lack of willingness to do God's work.

 DR Leon Morris, 20th century Anglican Priest and New Testament scholar, explains these two important words. Patient “denotes more than a passive putting up with things, but an active, steadfast endurance.” Tribulation “denotes more than a minor pinprick, but deep and serious trouble.”

 The story is told of a missionary family in Africa that was dealing with the poor and hungry. They had to ration out the grain that was eaten so that there was enough food for the year. They ate every day but never were they full.

 The children cried and begged for more food, but the father knew more food today meant no food later. One little boy found a bag of seed in the barn and rushed to the father so they could eat.

 The father again denied the boy and said the seed had to be planted. The father began planting the seed, scattering it into the field. In the eyes of the children, he was throwing away their food, but by faith, he knew God was providing their food for harvest time.

 Patience is hard because it doesn’t happen when we want it to. It does seem sometimes those that have it, have a lot of it. Those that don’t, don’t have any at all.

 Patience is difficult because it is hard thing to nail down. But I hope you’ll agree; it cannot be avoided if you want to live a life with any kind of peace.

 The trouble is...That we are often in a hurry, but God isn’t. God sees the whole picture from start to finish, He is God and we are not, so be patient and trust in His plan. He knows best.

**2. Patient Trust**

 James says be patient until the coming of the Lord. Telling us that all the trials we go through are temporary. Be patient until the Lord returns, He will right the wrongs.

 Patience is a necessary character in your life if you want any kind of peace and fulfillment in your life.

 Proverbs 15:18 “ a hot-tempered man stirs up dissension, but a patient man calms a quarrel.” When we look in the Bible, God compares patience with good control of your emotions and relates it back to trusting God.

 In today's Scripture, James is saying, whatever you're going through is temporary compared to eternity. Christ Jesus is coming back. Whatever happens between now and then, you must be able to persevere and keep your eyes focused on the Lord.

 Society is running at a fast pace. Everything is quick and easy. If it takes long, people are not use to it and lose patience.

 Microwaves, instant pictures, fast food, fast computers, cell phones in your pocket, so we cannot even get a break from the rat race.

 Patience is about perseverance. In the Bible, they are often together. Mostly, you will not get microwave fast answers from God. If He’s got a lesson to teach, you're not done till He’s done showing you.

 Remember when, Sunday was a day for church, rest, and visiting with family and friends. We have been deceived into thinking we must always do more, be more, and have more.

 There is a church in Florida , it has 22-minute services, start to finish, with 8-minute sermons.

 Instead of slowing down, being more focused on Christlike living than constantly doing, society just keeps going faster and the people react by having meltdowns spiritually and physically.

Learn to wait, to be silent, to listen for His voice. Cherish stillness; sensitize yourself to His touch.

 From the Message Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 1:7–8 *“Just think—you don’t need a thing you’ve got it all! All God’s gifts are right in front of you as you wait expectantly for our Master Jesus to arrive on the scene”.* In other words, you don't need to hurry or scurry about. The Spirit-led life does not panic; it trusts.

 Choose patience and seek to develop it with God’s help, He loves us.

**3. Patient Love**

 I think it is safe to say we are all familiar with

1 Corinthians 13: 4 – 7, the love passage.

 1 Corinthians 13 4 – 7; *4 Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud 5 or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. 6 It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. 7 Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.*

 This is a list of the characteristics of love and as such the characteristics of God because as scripture tells us God is Love.

 Have you ever noticed the first characteristic of love is **Patience!**

 John Wesley wrote, "There is no Love of God without patience, and no patience without lowliness and sweetness of spirit".

 A few weeks ago, we sang a song about God's Love for us: How deep the Father's love for us, how vast beyond all measure that He should give His only Son to make a wretch His treasure.

 You and I are those wretches He sacrificed Himself for to make His treasure.

 Think about the patience God has shown in your life. How He keeps His promises, never leaves or forsakes you, and always has His best for you.

 I know without His constant love and care I would not be standing here today. All of our stories would be much different if not for the patient love of our Savior and Lord Christ Jesus.

 How do you develop patience? Just some things to think about.

Patience is the ability to trust God for things out of your control which is just about everything.

Have an attitude of taking things in stride.

Every situation does not have to be a crisis, and if every situation is a crisis, you need to humbly ask God make changes in your life.

 God puts things, situations, and people in our lives to grow and stretch us, to help us be mindful of the needs of others and draw us closer to Him for guidance and direction.

 Our hearts are made strong through the gift of community and life lived in relationships with others. Healthy relationships develop spiritual strength and endurance.

 How patient are you when you are in the grocery store and the cartwheel decides to go wild, making a lot of noise, and everyone is watching you?

 How about in the restaurant when the waitress forgot you and seems to be helping everyone but you?

 What would be your reaction if you were stuck in this situation?

 We know how to be short tempered, but without God’s help, patience is out of reach.

 Have you ever traveled with a child? That can be an experience. How about a 4-year-old that is constantly asking when we will get there. Over and over again. Finally, the mother has had enough. We have 90 miles to go, do not ask again When will we get there. Do you understand me? The boy was silent for a long time. Timidly he asks, “Mom, will I still be 4 when we get there?

 Instant gratification might be the way the world teaches us and demands of us, but that is not how the timetable of God usually works.

 This morning, how are you doing with being patient and waiting on the Lord? How you doing listening to the Lord when He does say something to you?

 Patience comes when we surrender our will and do God’s will, where we say that we cannot do it in our own strength. Let’s allow God to work on that in our lives.