

Intro:

- Sometimes Last Things We Want to Hear When Suffering Is? “Be Patient”, “Consider It All Joy”

Chapter 2 James Addressed Might Middle Class Showing Favoritism/Partiality to the Rich & the Poor

Chapter 5:1-6 James Addressed the Rich Who Were Oppressing the Poor

This Morning We’re Going to Look @ James’ Instructions to the Poor & Oppressed.

Outline

I. Primary Command To Be Patient Vs. 7-11

1. Be Patient like a farmer waiting for crops Vs. 7
2. Be Patient by Strengthening Your Heart As We Wait For Jesus’ Return Vs. 8
3. Be Patient by Not Complaining Vs. 9
4. Be Patient in the Same Way the Prophets Were Also Patient & Long-suffering Vs. 10-11

II. Keep Your Word Vs. 12

I. Vs. 7. Be Patient Overview

4:2 *“You lust and do not have so you commit murder”*

5:6 *“You rich have condemned & put to death the righteous man who does not resist you...”*

Immediate impression of the oppressed in James’ letter is that of pity, sympathy, empathy.

- Can someone who is oppressed ever lash out, retaliate?
- Can their anger, frustration, and indignation can get the better of them?
- Is it unreasonable for us to consider that even the poor may have been tempted to be violent?

Illustration: Current Protests in Greenland, Venezuela, Iran, Minnesota, etc.

When people feel their voice is no longer being heard they will try to seek justice

Believers Are Not Immune to Feeling Mistreated, Frustrated, & Helpless In Our Circumstances

- James knows that oppressed believers will fill with angst
- He knows they might be tempted to take matters into their own hands
- He knows they’re asking when will things be made right in my life?
- When will justice prevail for the wrongs that have been done to me?

Vs. 7 James turns to the poor and says *“Be patient BRETHREN until the coming of the Lord.”*

- **“Therefore”** (in light of the rich oppressing you, respond by being patient)
- **“Brethren”** (term of endearment. He knows they’re struggles)
- Don’t retaliate. Don’t fight back. Don’t do something radical.
- Ephesians 4:26 *“In your anger do not sin.”*
 - Even in your righteous indignation, do not let your actions become sin.
 - Do not let the attitude of your heart become sin.

What Might Happen If We Choose Not to Be Patient In Our Circumstances?

- We discredit our witness in the eyes of others.
- We may sin against our brother or sister. • We sin against God.
- We may create new trials for ourselves that cause oppression.
- We may invoke additional worldly consequences for our actions.
- We may become so hyper-focussed on oppression that we miss God’s answer or deliverance from our circumstances.

I. Vs. 7. “Be Patient”. What Does This Look Like Practically?

James Gives Us 4 Practical Ways In Which We Are to Be Patient

1. Practical Way #1 Vs. 7:

Be Patient Just As the Farmer Waits Patiently for His Crops

Agrarian Illustrations Are Lost in Our Culture Today

- Jesus often used agricultural in His teachings
 - Parable of the Sower
 - The Vineyard, I am the Vine & You are the branches
 - Parable of Wheat & Tares
 - Parable of the Mustard Seed
- I Cor. 15 Paul likens bodily resurrection to a seed that dies in order to germinate fruit above
- *Vs. 7 “The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and the late rains.”*
 - James refers to the anticipated crop as *“precious”*
 - This is the farmer’s lively-hood
 - The seed goes in the ground and it’s make or break for the farmer.
 - *“Early and Late Rains”*
 - These are the rains that come early in the season and give hope
 - These are the rains that come late in the season that keep you on the edge of your seat
 - What practical benefit is there to the farmer getting anxious?
 - What can he practically do by being impatient.

So James says Just Like the Farmer Patiently Waits, You Also Should Wait Patiently For Jesus.

2. Practical Way #2: Vs. 8

Strengthen Your Hearts For You Know That Jesus May Return At Any Moment

1. He Could Come at Any Moment.

- Yes, there are signs that will warn us and things that we can be watching for
- But the truth is that no man will know the day nor the hour
- Additionally, our own personal face to face w/ Jesus may vary based on life circumstances.

2. His Coming Will Be Swift

- When He comes there won’t be time for action on our part
- There won’t be opportunities to “fix” stuff.
- There won’t be opportunities to finish what we’re currently doing.....or saying.

2 Thess. Paul Responded to The Misunderstanding That Sitting Around on Their Hands Was OK

[II Peter 3:8-9](#) *The Lord is not slow about His promise as some count slowness, but patient.....*

James Says Strengthen Your Hearts Because the Coming of the Lord Is At Hand

- Be resolute. Be assured and confident in His return.
- We have to redirect our attention, our efforts, our thoughts.
- Strengthening of our hearts only comes when we shift our focus to Jesus.
- We cannot simply manufacture patience in our hearts.
 - Patience is a gift of the Holy Spirit *“Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness...”*
 - We can’t manufacture patience and strength in our hearts, but we can choose activities and a mindset that promotes patience.

[II Cor. 4:17](#)

3. Practical Way #3: Vs. 9

Do Not Complain Against One Another

- James gives the very obvious reason for not complaining - because we'll be judged for it.
- Notice James says *"that you yourselves may not be judged..."*
 - When we complain, we're casting judgment about others.
 - We have chosen to assume the role of judge in their lives over their actions.
 - But what James cautions as a result is that WE WILL THEN BE JUDGED.
 - This is not the same as rightfully judging sin in a brother's life.
 - This is not about objective evaluation of others as may be needed.
 - This is a caution against outright complaining that we all know is wrong in our hearts.

James Gives A Word Picture of Jesus Right on the Other Side of the Door

- **Notice James Uses Title "JUDGE". Similar to his use of "Lord of Sabbath"**
 - When he refers to judging of others He says *"THE Judge"* is at the door.
 - 5:4 He says to the rich regarding the lack of pay and lack of rest they offered to the poor *"The Lord of the Sabbath"*

Have You Ever Considered How Complaining Affects Us?

- Complaining makes us bitter inside
- Complaining gradually erodes at us and creates a negative picture in our minds and our hearts of the person we're grumbling against.

- Remember that James said with the same tongue we praise God and then turn around and cut-down our fellow men & women who have been made in the image of God Himself.

[Numbers 13,14](#) Spies grumbled and complained and stirred up all of Israel

4. Practical Way #4 Vs. 10-11:

Behave Like the Prophets of Old Who Were Patient in their Suffering

- Being a prophet was not any easy assignment from the Lord.
- To be God's mouthpiece often meant delivering a message of repentance.
- To speak a Word From the Lord often included a rebuke of God's people
- There was usually a call to turn from wicked ways.
- To resist the present course and redirect in ways that honor God.
- These were not always well received messages.

[Hebrews 11:32-40.](#) [1 Peter 1:10-12](#)

- The prophets who foretold of God's salvation did not get to see this in their own lives
- They did not have in mind service to themselves, but those who would come.
- They did not get to experience the Messiah in their lives as we do.
- They were patient and long-suffering for God's assignments of their lives.

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| Isaiah- | Prophet to Judah saw Israel taken captive. Plead w/ Judah to repent and trust God |
| Jeremiah - | Prophet to Judah 40 years. Falsely accused, thrown in a pit, threatened, tried for his life. |
| Ezekiel - | Prophet in Babylon. His message reminded God's people that they would not be going home to Jerusalem for a long time. |
| Hosea - | Instructed to marry a harlot and live a life that depicted how God's people live unfaithfully toward God, yet He never divorces us. |
| Amos- | Rebuke Israel for worshipping God in action but not in heart. |
| Jonah - | Chapter 4 |
| Micah- | Chastises Israel for constantly pursuing evil. |

Habakkuk- Lived a life wrestling with God because God promised to use Chaldeans as His arm of judgement against Israel who was rejecting God.
John the Baptist- Was imprisoned and lost his head for rebuking Herod.

Matthew 17:12-23 *“But I tell you, Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but have done to him everything they wished. In the same way the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands.”* ¹³ *Then the disciples understood that he was talking to them about John the Baptist.”*

Matthew 23:37 *“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing.”*

James Says “You’ve Heard of the Endurance of Job Right???”

Vs. 11 James says *“You’ve heard of the endurance of Job....”*

- Job was blameless and upright before God.
- Satan challenged God.
- Job’s life is reduced to nothing. Questions God to know why suffering occurs to those who walk upright and justly.
 - God replies: *“I’m God, you’re not, and I have a purpose.”*
 - God honors Job’s struggle, his wrestling, and desire to engage with the Lord over his frustrations.
 - God restores Job, his family, and his resources.
 - This was not without long-suffering, difficult trials, patience, and wrestling with God.

James Calls His Us to a Similar Type of Obedience.

- Notice that James refers to Job’s endurance
- Isn’t endurance what ultimately leads to perfection?
- 1:2 *“Consider it all joy when you encounter trials because the testing of your faith produces endurance and endurance leads to perfection, lacking in nothing.”*

II. Vs 12. Keep Your Word

It Isn’t Super Clear Why James Gives This Command Right Here.

- James is clearly concerned about His readers bringing judgment upon themselves for complaining.
- He Appears to Have a Similar Concern Regarding Promises They Made
 - There was a behavior in their promises that would cause them to fall under judgment.
- It’s likely that James may have had two judgments in mind (Similar to Teachers in Chapter 3)
 1. The World Will Judge Us Practically for What we Say
 2. God Will Judge Us for What We Say

This Was A Custom and Practice To Manufacture Greater Trustworthiness

- *“As God is my witness.....”*
- *“I swear to God I’m telling the truth....”*
- *“I promise or else God strike me down....”*

When The Chips Aren't Going Our Way- We Can Be Tempted to Manufacture Results

- Maybe piling on oaths was perceived as greater favor in the eyes of the rich?
- Maybe failing to keep these extra oaths before the rich is what lead to some of the oppression?

James says Just Let Your Yes Be Yes, and Your No Be No.

If your character is right, and you've shown yourself trustworthy, that will be enough for the other person

Summary:

Be Patient Until the Coming of the Lord:

- Be patient like the farmer who waits patiently for his crops
- Be patient by strengthening your hearts until the Lord returns
- Be patient by not complaining against others
- Be patient like the prophets who were long-suffering.

Keep Your Word:

- Be Trustworthy
- Don't Pile on a Bunch of Extra Terms
- Let Your Yes Be Yes, And Your No Be No