

3rd Sunday in Advent

December 11, 2022

“Patience through the mercy of the Lord in these last days”

(James 5:7-11)

By Rev. Ed Weber

Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, our text for this 3rd Sunday in Advent is from our epistle reading, James 5:7-11.

**“7 Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. 8 You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. 9 Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door! 10 My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. 11 Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.”**

Here ends our text.

## I. Be patient until the Lord’s Coming

“Be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord,” says James in his epistle to the twelve tribes scattered abroad. James didn’t write to any particular church like Paul did but wrote what is called a circular epistle, an epistle that all believers should read and pass along. That includes you and me who are scattered here in the deep south of the Rio Grande Valley.

God’s word comes to us to bring us comfort and strength until the coming of the Lord as we wait with patience.

How is your level of patience doing? It is a gift from God to have patience. Patience is listed in Galatians 5 as a fruit of the Spirit.

### **Galatians 5:22**

**But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,**

It's the same word in the Greek – longsuffering – patience.

It's a gift which God produces through the testing of your faith as James says in the very first chapter as he opens his epistle.

**“2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. 4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.” (James 1:2-4)**

Paul boasted of the patience of the Thessalonians.

**2 Thessalonians 1:4**

**so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure,**

And Timothy exhorts Christians to pursue patience.

**1 Timothy 6:11**

**But you, O man of God, ...pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.**

Titus especially encourages older men to be patient. With old age do we all not get a little cantankerous at times?

**Titus 2:2**

**that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience;**

How does one become more patient then? Well, it's the Lord's doing of course. And the Lord uses His Word to produce greater patience. As we heard last week in our epistle reading from Romans 15:

**“3 For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.” 4 For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.”**

Do you want greater patience? Read and hear God's Word often! For in that Word you hear of Jesus Christ who patiently endured the reproaches of sinful man, patiently suffered as a sheep to the slaughter to forgive all our impatience and self-centeredness.

That is who God is as we heard last week – the God of patience!

**5 Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, 6 that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”**  
**(Romans 15:3-6)**

And again we hear in **2 Thessalonians 3:5:**  
**“Now may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Christ.”**

Yes, we are told by God through His servant James to be patient until the Lord’s coming! We live in a world of impatience, of a “need it yesterday” mentality, of a “don’t you know the left lane is for passing? Get out of the left lane if you’re going to be a turtle” mentality. Oh, the examples are endless, aren’t they of our impatient moments?

Our text begins with the word “Therefore” doesn’t it? “Therefore be patient.” In the 6 verses right before our text, James describes reasons why the Christian might get frustrated and lose patience...why he or she might take vengeance into his own hands at the injustices in this sinful world.

**“Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you! 2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. 3 Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days. 4 Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. 5 You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter.”**

Fraud, injustice, corruption... God sees it all. And according to His good time He brings punishment upon those who do evil so that they weep and howl in misery.

Therefore, be patient until the Lord’s coming. The miseries of this world will not go on forever. There is an “until”. The Lord will come and there will be no need for patience.

In the meantime, trust in the Lord for all your daily needs. He provides rain for the farmer according to His good mercy. Through all the trials that we endure we

know that God is increasing your faith, giving you more patience so that you can be ready for the Lord's final coming.

## II. Be patient because the Lord's Coming is at hand

And Jesus' final coming is at hand James says. It's so close that He at the door. So for all the more reason, we are to be patient – establish our hearts for Jesus could come at any moment.

**8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:8-9)**

That's who are God is. He is patient and loving and kind. He wants all people to be saved. He doesn't forget His promises to come. That's for sure. But He wants us to redeem the time, make the best use of the time with patience in praying, teaching, and proclaiming the message of Christmas and Easter. The cradle and the cross! He wants all people to know that He has provided a rescue from this sinful world through giving us His Son for all men.

As Paul says in Colossians 1:

**“10 that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; 11 strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; 12 giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. 13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, 14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.” (Colossians 1:9-14)**

God has graciously given you redemption through Jesus' blood. And it's just a matter of time until we are conveyed into His kingdom of glory when Jesus comes again.

**“20 He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming quickly.” Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus! 21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. (Revelation 22:20-21)**

So we wait, with a “therefore” always in our hearts, that God has a blessed end for us even as we endure patiently in this vale of tears.

Through God’s mercy in Christ we are strengthened!

**“Indeed we count them blessed who endure.”** James reminds us. **“You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.”**

So you too are blessed as you patiently wait for the Lord’s coming and your blessed end, entrance into His kingdom of glory! Amen

**The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your heart and minds through Christ Jesus.” Amen. (Philippians 4:7)**