

Sermon 9/30/18 **Living a patient life James 5:7-11**

Dear Patient People of God:

- How are we doing with our patience in long traffic lines or crowded parking lots?
- How are we doing with our patience in long shopping lines?
- How did we deal with the crowds at a the festivals this past summer?
- How well are we doing with patience among people in our daily lives?

Three times in James 5 we are reminded that the Lord is coming back and we are to be patient until the Lord's coming.

Do you ever wish that Jesus would come back right now?

There may be times when we would like Jesus to usher in His heavenly kingdom.

- We may grow impatient with the "ups and downs" of life
- We may welcome the 2nd Coming of our Lord to take us to out of this vale of tears

James who wrote this book was the half brother of Jesus and a leader in the church at Jerusalem. He wrote these words to us to help us

"Wait and be patient"

We are told by James not to grumble. He says: "Don't grumble against each other or you will be judged."

Grumble means "to sigh, to groan in the heart"

It means to...

- Blame others for our miseries when things go bad
- Blame others when things go wrong in our lives
- Judging others for their shortcomings especially when we don't know the whole story or when we judge a person's motive when we don't know what's in their heart.
- James is saying: Remember that Christ is the Judge...He will come someday to evaluate and doing any judging that needs to be done.

Jesus said in Matthew 7: "Do not judge, or you will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, Let me take the speck out of your eye when all the time there is a plank in your own eye?"

There is a right judging and a wrong judging!

- Right judging is judging sin and what is known to be wrong
- Wrong judging is when we jump to conclusions without knowing the whole story
- Wrong judging is when we judge things that do not fall under the realm of sin

Blame-Game

Jesus doesn't want us to fall into the trap of self-pity, fault-finding. He doesn't want us to play the "blame-game."

James reminds us that the Lord will judge. The Lord will settle things. The Lord doesn't want us to live a life of criticism and faultfinding. Why?

- Because morale can breakdown between fellow believers when we focus on small irritations
- Criticizing one another will lead to hard feelings and hurt the Body of Christ
- Critical feelings can lead to judging one another unfairly
- Grumbling and Judging usurps Jesus' role as Judge
- Jesus will come soon enough and will judge what needs to be judged

Yes, at time we will judge. We do judge sin. We do point out what is contrary to God's will and desire that people repent of their sins. We will speak the truth in love. However, we need to be careful that we don't judge that which is not sin, or judge someone when we don't know the whole story.

Rather than "grumbling" James says: "Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord's Coming." V7

James gives us an example of patience...the patience of a farmer. V7 The farmer can't hurry things along...he has to wait for the weather and the land to produce a crop. The farmer is patient and he doesn't have time or energy to fight with his neighbors. There is an old saying:

“If we start using the sickles on each other, we will miss the harvest”
We are “spiritual farmers.” We, too, look forward to the harvest...a spiritual harvest of souls. Rather than finding fault we have a lot of work to do for the Lord.

Again, James says in v8 “You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord’s coming is near.”

What type of patience is James speaking about?

- This is not a character trait but a way of life for the believer
- The Lord wants us to be patient with people and things because...
 - God is patient with us Romans 2:4
 - Our patience is a testimony of our faith to others Ps 86:15; I Pt 5:10

The word for “patience” used by James in v8 means...

“prolonged restraint”

- “to stay put and stand fast when you would like to run away”
- “long holding out of the mind before giving way to passion or action”
- “with steadiness endure all the wrongs that men may inflict upon you”

Jesus said forgive someone 70 times 7 = 490. He meant don’t count the times you forgive someone. Remember how often we are forgiven by God. Remember how often the Lord has been patient with us.

The Lord will bless our perseverance. Look at v11 “As you know, we consider blessed those who have persevered.”

Besides the patience of a farmer the Lord wants us to have the patience of the prophets and the patience of Job. V10-11

Hebrews 11:35-38 and you will see the patience of past believers. We all remember the patience of Job.

Like the prophets, like Job, as we wait and persevere in the Lord he will produce a harvest of the fruits of faith in our hearts.

Life isn't always going to be easy. God tells us: “We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God.” Acts 14:22 Why does the Lord allow trials to enter our lives? Because through the trials we grow in our faith and learn to depend upon Him.

Romans 5:3ff **“...suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.”**

Still, Lord, can't my life be a bit easier than it is?

Don Meredith was the quarterback of the Dallas Cowboys when they played the Green Bay Packers in the Ice Bowl of 1967. Don Meredith once said: “I would rather see a sermon than hear a sermon.” He meant that he would rather see a life lived in God's will than just hear about God's will.

Trials that come into our lives serve a purpose as we live in the will of God we pray...

- That our lives might back up our message of God's patience

- That the impact of a believer's patience may be seen by others
- That our patience in times of suffering will be a testimony to others

Clothe yourselves...

God says: "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful."

Colossians 3:12ff

Remember we are God's chosen people who have...

- The blood of Jesus washing away our sins I John 1:7
- The righteousness of Christ as a garment of salvation Isaiah 61:10