

5.21.23 / Practicing Patience / James 5:7-12

Scripture – Inspired / Without error / Authoritative

We get to look at James 5:7-11 this morning. If you're keeping track you may ask, why did we skip James 5:1-6? Wes Tillet covered both this passage and James 1:9-11 when he preached on Mistrusting Riches on Feb 5. I encourage you to listen if you haven't.

James 5:7-11

v7: Be patient.

- 1) Letter Context – previous paragraph
- 2) Dreaded words , “Be patient”
 - a) Kids ready to leave & waiting for talking parents
 - b) Traffic
 - c) Sitting in a waiting room
 - d) Waiting in the school pick up line
 - e) Waiting for a test result... “be patient”
- 3) James original audience
 - a) 10-20 years (expected him at any time)
 - b) Difficulty in the meantime
 - i) + Holy Spirit
 - ii) – Jews view of them
 - iii) – Government officials view of them
 - iv) – livelihood impact – persecution against apostles
 - c) Empathy – “10 yrs not that long...”
 - i) Employee waiting months for a significant work issue to be fixed
 - ii) International student waiting months for a passport or visa
 - iii) A couple waiting years to get pregnant.
 - iv) People in Ukraine waiting for over a year for the war to be over.
 - v) Parent waiting years for their adult child to start following Jesus
 - vi) Someone experiencing a life threatening illness waiting months to years for a cure.

Waiting can be so very very difficult!

- 4) See how the farmer – land yield crop - no fast fwd through effort – fully expects the spring and autumn rain.

v8: You too: be patient / stand firm ... b/c Lord's coming is soon

- 1) **Be patient** (*makrothumia*): **Wait**
 - a) delay judgement – child/new employee
 - b) restrain anger – as in lashing back
 - c) avoid temptation to act rashly
 - i) Put the food in before the oven preheats
 - ii) Attic ladder fall
 - d) Consider God's... He's AMAZING! – compare to us

- 2) **Stand firm** (*hupomone*): endurance in the face of trial - grow roots and strength where you are - **grow**
 - a) Job
- 3) The Lord's coming is near – near and imminent

Recap: Abraham / Simeon and Anna

V9: Don't grumble.

- 1) Easy response to stress – when stressed, people are annoying
- 2) Reference to Israelites in desert
- 3) Judge is standing at the door
 - a) Part of coming is Judgement - God's serious assessment of believers at Judgment Day

So... when you're facing trial, be patient, stand firm, and don't grumble – easier said than done.

V10-11 James offers two sets of examples

- 1) Prophets and Martyrs
 - a) Isaiah (eventually sawed in two)
 - b) Jeremiah (mistreated, beaten, throw in cistern & left...)
 - c) Martyrs during Maccabean Revolt (167 BC)
- 2) Job
 - a) Had lot to say but stood firm in faith
 - b) Have seen what Job's perseverance brought ("seen you")

Recap: Be patient, stand firm, don't grumble; here's some examples. *But... I can't do it... or... I don't want to do it!*

I *want* to have the **relationship with the Lord that Job, Jeremiah, Isaiah and the martyrs had** but... I don't want the life they had!

But then again – if we live with broken people in this broken world, we can't avoid suffering. I'm stuck with it (*list examples...*)

- I can spend my life on earth **living for me** and running from pain (with varying degrees of success) only to come to the end of life on earth facing eternity being stuck with myself and separated from God – that's called hell.
- I can spend my life on earth **living for God** (*When I live for Him a new life begins to grow inside me*). Living for God amidst the pain and suffering of this broken world, even at times following Jesus right into deeper pain and suffering. I experience it with Him and he refines me through it. I grow in my understanding of the world's colossal need for redemption and God's graciousness to redeem. **I end this** difficult life on earth **with** Him only to slip into the purity of eternity **with** Him.

Following Jesus is living a life of love. Living that life of love includes, Being patient, standing firm – trusting that He will return and make all things right.

There is no **immediate** fix to get us out of waiting in the face of suffering... but there is a life giving response and that is to fix our eyes on Jesus... the author... (Hebrews 12:1-3)

- Look at His **patience**... waiting for you.
- Look at His **endurance**... on the cross for you

As I see His patience and endurance, we try those things on not to earn something, but because we long to be more like Jesus – who is full of compassion and mercy.

Prayer – Closing song – *More Like Jesus*