



# James

How to Live the Christian Life!

## Living with Patience

**James 5:7-12**

Message #11 of 12 – S673

**Sermon given on January 24, 2016**



**Sunday Morning Service**

Pastor Rick Lancaster

# Living with Patience

*James 5:7-12*

## Opening Comments

- Turn to **James 5**
- Today, we continue our series through the letter from James **How to Live the Christian Life**
- There are times in life when things don't go the way we want them to
- Your boss tells you on Friday that he wants to meet with you on Monday – he never does that – what is it about?
- Or, You feel a lump on your body that doesn't belong there
- And your doctor says the earliest he can see you is five weeks away
- Or your spouse tells you they don't want to be married anymore
- Or the IRS wants to do an audit of your taxes
- Or the owner of the house you are renting is selling your home, and the new owners want to live in it
- All of those things have a couple of things in common
- First, they are all bad, or at least have the potential to be bad
- And the second thing is, they are all in the future
- The future can be such a drag – a nuisance
- Of course, the future has the potential to bring great good into our lives
- That's where our hope lives – in the future that is good, and pleasant, and filled rainbows, butterflies, and unicorns
- Though I discovered yesterday at the Group Shoot that there are people in this church who would rather have a future surrounded by an arsenal of weapons, mountains of ammunition, and no gun laws
- That would be the perfect future for them
- And, oh by the way, there are several women in this church that can handle themselves with high-caliber weapons – just saying
- Unfortunately, sometimes the clouds on the horizon of the future threaten to bring dark things into our lives
- And we might already be feeling the effects of those things
- How should we live when the future does not look bright?

- How should we as Christians act when life is hard, complicated, or confusing?
- James is going to give us some practical suggestions in our text for today
- If you are able and willing to do so, please stand as we read today's text as a sign of reverence for God's Word
- Read **James 5:7-12**
- **Pray**

### Teaching

- **Living with Patience**
- James is writing to a group of Christians who understand what a dark future looks like
- **James 5:7a**
- One of the things we say as we are studying the Bible – every time you see the word, 'therefore' you need to figure out what it is there for
- It is often followed by an application that is connected to the previous text
- In our case it is verses 1 to six of James 5
- Where James spoke very harsh words to the rich people who were taking advantage of and persecuting the people of the church
- So today's text is addressed to those who were being persecuted and oppressed
- They have been having a hard time, and it is likely that they didn't have an excited outlook for the future
- What they needed was hope
- But what hope needs is patience – hope and patience are sisters
- Without the one, you are unlikely to have the other
- James says 'Be patient'
- James started this letter talking about patience **James 1:2-4**  
**My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.**
- The idea of patience is to stand up under pressure

- It includes exhibiting internal and external personal control in difficult circumstances
  - A patient person is even-tempered, even when things go wrong
  - James even tells them how long they should be patient ‘until the Coming of the Lord’
  - That is the first of three references to the Second Coming of Jesus in verses 7 to 9
  - While Jesus was with the disciples, told them I am coming back
  - The disciples lived with an expectation of the imminent return of Christ
  - That was 2,000 years ago, and He has not come back yet
  - Does that mean they were wrong
  - No, Jesus is still coming back soon, we are closer to it today than they were, so we should live with an even greater urgency
  - James uses a practical example of this waiting patiently
  - **James 5:7b**
  - The farmer plants seeds at just the right time
  - He doesn’t go out in the morning and look for fruit
  - Why? Because it is going to take time
  - God is looking to produce ‘precious fruit’ in and through our lives
  - But it may not happen overnight **Galatians 6:9**
- And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.**
- The farmer is patient because He knows that God is going to bring the rains that produce the ‘precious fruit’
  - For us to have ‘precious fruit’ to come to our lives, we need to trust that God will bring into our lives things that will produce that fruit
  - And sometimes those things are not pleasant
  - And so we wait, trusting God is growing ‘precious fruit’ in us
  - James repeats himself
  - **James 5:8**
  - Be patient and wait for the Lord to do something
  - The farmer doesn’t just sit around all summer waiting the for harvest
  - He stays busy, and we need to be busy while we wait

- James says ‘establish your heart’ – make your heart more firm
- That means that while you wait, you center your heart on the things of God **Isaiah 26:3-4**

You will keep *him* in perfect peace, whose mind *is* stayed on You, because he trusts in You. Trust in the LORD forever, for in YAH, the LORD, *is* everlasting strength.

- Hope and patience have another sister – her name is faith
- Jesus is coming soon – so get your heart ready, make it more firm in what you believe, and patiently wait trusting God to do something, holding on to the hand of hope
- I don’t know about you, I don’t enjoy waiting, especially if my circumstances are not good
- It can be very stressful waiting when life is not being nice to us
- That seems to be what motivated James to write what he did next
- **James 5:9**
- James, speaking to the Christians, says don’t grumble or complain about other Christians
- This is so serious that James warns them that by doing it they are setting themselves up for condemnation
- Because here is the reality of grumbling and complaining about other Christians
- The reason why you are doing it is because you have a beef with God
- And because you can’t pick a fight with God, you fight with someone else
- Turn to **2 Peter 3**
- ‘The Judge is at the door’ – Jesus is the Judge
- This is the third reference to the Second Coming – will come as a judge
- It would not be wise to be fighting with God or His people when Jesus shows us
- In verse 8 James said, ‘establish your heart’
- Another way of saying it is, get your heart ready, don’t know when Jesus is coming
- **2 Peter 3:10-12**

- If we have Jesus in our heart, then we are saved, but if our heart is filled with grumbling and complaining, our works in this life will find no reward in heaven
- Turn back to **James 5**
- Our first example was the farmer, we now look at our second example
- **James 5:10**
- Saying, look at the prophets – they were patient in suffering
- That is radical – the prophets were speaking ‘in the name of the Lord’ – they were serving God – and yet they suffered
- They suffered for doing what God told them to do
- The Bible is filled with examples – Moses was disrespected, Elijah was harassed, Jeremiah was thrown into a pit, Daniel into a lion’s den, Daniel’s friends into a fiery furnace
- We talked about that at the beginning of this series, suffering is not always because we are in sin
- Some is, some comes because we are serving God, and Satan hates that, and sometimes there is no obvious reason – like Job’s suffering
- Paul told Timothy something like that **2 Timothy 3:12**  
**All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.**
- What James is telling us is that we are to be patient in our suffering – because that will be a witness to others so that they can have patience, faith, and hope
- James gives us a third example
- **James 5:11**
- You may have heard the saying, ‘The patience of Job’
- This is what it is referring to
- Job is a good study of what life looks like when a believer faces very difficult circumstances
- Even after losing everything, going from ultra-rich, successful, happy – in one day he loses everything and ends up with oozing sores all over his body
- But in all of it Job never stopped believing God **Job 13:15-16**  
**Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him. Even so, I will defend my own ways before Him. He also shall be my salvation, for a hypocrite could not come before Him.**
- Job: Even though it feels like God is against me, I will trust Him

- Not everything Job did or said was perfect while he waited for God, but that just shows he was human
- ‘We count them blessed who endure’
- The blessing always comes after the enduring
- That is hard, because that means we sometimes need to go through suffering to get to the blessings – those blessings are doubly good
- ‘Very compassionate’ He cares about us
- ‘very compassionate and merciful’ – cares for us and forgives our sins
- That is why we can wait patiently for Him
- James ends this section with what looks like an odd verse
- **James 5:12**
- Not talking about profanity
- At the time that James was writing it was a common practice to play fast and loose with the truth
- And to convince people that they were telling the truth, they would swear on something
- James is repeating something his older brother Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5
- Christians ought to be known for radical truth – in all areas of our lives
- If we have to swear an oath so that someone will believe us, we have a problem – a character problem
- Paul tells us in Ephesians 4 to ‘speak the truth in love’
- No matter people think or what they believe
- People would sometimes ask me to do something, and I would say I was going to pray about it, or think about it
- But I was convicted by the Lord, because that wasn’t what I was planning to do
- I was just trying to avoid saying no
- Now I try to just say what I am going to do, and sometimes I tell people no, because I believe that is the right thing for me to do
- James gave us three practical things today
- First – Jesus is coming soon – wait patiently until He gets here
- Second – don’t grumble and complain about other Christians

- Third – Be people of good character
- Storm clouds come into every person's life
- It is my prayer for you that your storm lasts only as long as it needs to so that you can learn to endure to the blessing
- If you are in the storm now, wait patiently – God is very compassionate and He is merciful
- He is not going to leave you there – when the time is just right He will deliver you
- And until then, trust Him, wait patiently for Him, and establish your heart in Him
- Amen

- **Pray**

**May the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* glory forever and ever.**

**Amen.** Hebrews 13:20-21