

JAMES

A Faith That Works

Study 16

Patience in Suffering

James 5:7-12

A) What is patience?

James 5:7-9

Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!

1) a) Discussion question. Do people complain and grumble when they lose patience? What are some examples that you see today?

At the traffic light, slow-moving cars, government offices, or any type of service in general.

b) Discussion question. What does it look like to lose patience with God? (Refer to Numbers 11:4-6 to help you)

Quick Verse Reference

Numbers 11:4-6

The rabble with them began to crave other food, and again the Israelites started wailing and said, "If only we had meat to eat! We remember the fish we ate in Egypt at no cost—also the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions and garlic. But now we have lost our appetite; we never see anything but this manna!"

c) Discussion question. What was wrong with the situation in Numbers 11:4-6? (Refer to Numbers 11:10, 18-20, Ps 78:18-22 to help you)

They have rejected God and God's plan. They distrust God and His plan. They wanted the goods immediately and suggested it was better when they were literal slaves in Egypt (perhaps suggesting the Egypt ruler treated them better than God treats them). They did not believe that it was a good thing that God brought them out of Egypt. They did not trust the Lord for guidance and provision. They trust their own judgement that they need meat, and not God's greater judgement to know what they actually need.

Quick Verse Reference

Psalm 78:18-22

They willfully put God to the test
by demanding the food they craved.

They spoke against God;
they said, "Can God really
spread a table in the wilderness?"

True, he struck the rock,
and water gushed out,
streams flowed abundantly,
but can he also give us bread?
Can he supply meat for his people?"

When the Lord heard them, he was furious;
his fire broke out against Jacob,
and his wrath rose against Israel,
for they did not believe in God
or trust in his deliverance.

d) Reflection question. Are there times in your life when you think you know better than God about what you need and got impatient at God for not giving it to you?

B) How should we be patient?

2) a) Comprehension question. Fill in the blanks on how we are to be patient. You may refer to the lecture slides to help you.

Verse	Clue (ESV)	Action/How to be patient
James 5:4	Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, are <u>crying out against you</u> , and the cries of the harvesters have <u>reached the ears of the Lord of hosts</u> .	Praying to God for relief
James 5:6	You have condemned and murdered the righteous person. <u>He does not resist you</u> .	Non-retaliation, trusting God to take action
James 5:7	Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer <u>waits</u> for the precious fruit of the earth, being	Wait with anticipation, even though nothing may happen for a long time

	patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains	
James 5:8	You also, be patient. <u>Establish your hearts</u> , for the coming of the Lord is at hand.	Strengthen, make firm, establish; fix, make a firm resolve
James 5:8	You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, <u>for the coming of the Lord is at hand.</u>	Focus on the hope of the Lord's coming
James 5:9	<u>Do not grumble against one another</u> , brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door.	Not grumbling

b) Discussion question. Are we allowed to express our agony/struggles of waiting and wrestling this with God? (Refer to Psalm 10:1, Gen 32 to help you)

Quick Verse Reference

Psalm 10:1

Why, O Lord, do you stand far away?

Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?

Psalm 44:24

Why do you hide your face?

Why do you forget our affliction and oppression?

Psalm 142:2

I pour out my complaint before him;

I tell my trouble before him.

c) Why should we be patient?

James 5:10-11

As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

3) Comprehension question. Fill in the blanks on why we are to be patient, you may refer to the lecture slides to help you.

Verse	Clue (ESV)	Why be patient
James 5:7-8	Be patient, therefore, brothers, <u>until the coming of the Lord</u> . See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, <u>for the coming of the Lord is at hand</u> .	Patience is anchored in the reality that will come for sure
James 5:10-11	As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, <u>take the prophets</u> who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the <u>steadfastness of Job</u> , and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.	Patience has proven Historical Value
James 5:10-11	As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we consider those blessed who <u>remained steadfast</u> . You have heard of the <u>steadfastness of Job</u> , and <u>you have seen the purpose of the Lord</u> , how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.	Patience has its reward (spiritual and physical)

James 5:12
 But above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your “yes” be yes and your “no” be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation.

4) Reflection question. How has your speech been and how will your resolve be in the future?

Quick Verse Reference
 Matthew 5:34-37
 But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all: either by heaven, for it is God’s throne; or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. All you need to say is simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

Takeaway

A) What is patience?

The ability to wait, or to continue doing something despite difficulties, or to suffer without complaining or becoming annoyed (CAMBRIDGE DICTIONARY)

Macro-thymos: the act of holding back one's anger

B) How should we be patient?

Pray to God for relief, trust God to take action, wait with anticipation, strengthen our resolve, do not grumble.

C) Why should we be patient?

Patience is anchored in reality, Patience has proven historical value

Case Study

Case 1 – Patience during Suffering

Yim Pei Shein learns about James 5:7-12 in Gamma and decided to be patient. When he faces pressure at work, he repeats to himself “I must be patient.”

On Friday, when he gets home after a stressful day at work, he was ready to sit down on the sofa and watch his favorite football team, when his wife nags him to fix the toilet that has been broken for weeks. He starts to get a little annoyed but he repeats to himself. “I must be patient.”

On Saturday, Pei Shein participated in a Soup Kitchen Ministry out in the streets, where he faced a somewhat demanding group receiving the food, complaining about different meat and cooking styles to be included in the free food next round. He reminded himself: “I must be patient.” He was too tired after the volunteer that day that he didn't manage to relax or watch his favorite show.

During Sunday service, Pei Shein keeps thinking about the football show that he can watch after he gets home after the Sunday service. He rushes out of the service after it was over while his wife and son throttle behind to catch up. He was then stopped by a familiar face calling out his name and they decided to grab lunch. The lunch went on very long, and it was 4 pm by the time they were done. He then thought he can watch football at home while the wife cooks dinner.

When the family gets home and the wife prepares the dinner, Pei Shein gets on the sofa and turn on the TV. As soon as he turns it on, his son requested to play with him. At this point Pei Shein blew up and shouted at the boy: “ ENOUGH IS ENOUGH, I HAVE WORKED ALL WEEK, I RARELY WATCH TV, STOP DISTURBING ME AND GO PLAY BY YOURSELF.”

1) a) Discussion question. Was Pei Shein patient?

b) Discussion question. Was Pei Shein suffering?

c) Discussion question. Do we suffer when we are doing God's ministry on earth? What does that look like?

d) Discussion question. What was Pei Shein's ministry as a believer, father, husband, staff, and worshipper at the church?

e) Discussion question. Is the method Pei Shein used correct? If not, what is the correct method to be patient?

f) Reflection question. What are some areas in which you are experiencing suffering? What has helped you to be more patient in waiting on God in these areas?

g) Reflection question. Has the way you've been waiting on God caused tension or friction in your relationships with others? If so, what are some things you can do differently?

h) Reflection question. In enduring suffering, what can help you to better align your view of God's character to who Scripture says He is?