

*Salt Church*

*James 5:1-11*

***“Be Patient & Persevere”***

*September 20, 2026*

*The Fruit of Salvation*

**David & Cindy**

**Deacons**

*Recap*

*James 4:11-17*

- We heard the command “do not slander one another”
  - Slander and gossip destroy relationships and churches
- We were asked the question “who are you to judge your neighbor?”
  - This was not to say that we should not make judgements
  - But when we make judgements,
    - We should examine our own lives
    - Remember the grace and mercy poured out on us
    - Proceed in love and gentleness
- We were asked “What is your life?”
  - The reminder is that our life is but a vapor
    - Very, very, short
- We were instructed to say “If it is the Lord’s will”
  - In other words make your plans because that is good and smart
  - But remember none of us has been promised tomorrow
    - “IF it is the Lords will” keeps life in perspective

- We were given these final words, ***“If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn’t do it, it is sin for them.”***
  - This changes the definition for sin doesn’t it
    - In fact Paul adds in Romans that if anything bothers your conscience it is a sin.

### **Romans 14:23**

<sup>23</sup> **But whoever has doubts is condemned** if they eat, because their eating is not from faith; and **everything that does not come from faith is sin.**

### *Now we come to the final chapter in James*

- As with any letter, James will close with **strong final words** for the early church.

### **James 5:1-12**

***1 Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming on you.***

- Don’t miss the transition here”
  - ***“If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn’t do it, it is sin for them.”***
    - There is a danger in picking up the Bible and choosing a chapter to read without reading the preceding chapter.
    - We must remember that this is a letter sent to the early church. **(Context is king!)**
      - Pastor, who writes a letter with chapters and verses?

- The chapters and verses were added later so that there would be an easy way to reference it.

(side note)

- This is why Jesus and the Apostles quote the Old Testament the way that they do, ***“It is written”*** or ***“The prophet has said”*** and ***“The Law of Moses says.”***
- **Chapters** were not added nor quoted until 1227 AD
- **Verses** came some 200 years later in the mid 1400’s AD and they were for the **Old Testament only**
- It wasn’t until the **mid 1500’s** that we would have a **completed set** of the entire Bible in chapter and verse.

### **James 5:1-12**

***1 Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming on you.***

- Now, if the transition is that ***“you are in sin if you choose not to do what is right”*** we can conclude that some of the wealthy people within the early church were committing sin in the way they treated people and how they managed money. **(And they knew better!)**
  - ***This is not an indictment against all wealthy people,*** only those who **mistreat people** by not paying them and those who have allowed money to become more important than God.
- James makes it very clear that misery is the future for people who act like this.

***2 Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes. 3 Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire.***

- **Do you see what James has done?**

- He has traveled into the future where the wealthy person is dead and buried.
- The wealth is rotted.
- Their clothes have been eaten (meaning they were left behind and no one cared for them)
- The gold and the silver that was left on their bodies has corroded.
  - The testimony of that gold and silver is this:
    - The very thing that you placed your faith, hope, and trust in, actually destroyed you.

**James continues:**

***You have hoarded wealth in the last days.***

- ***“Last days?”***

- We learned last week that this letter was written between 44-49 AD.
  - That’s 1,982 years ago
- And we know this sense of urgency is expressed throughout the New Testament.
  - This means that **God wants all generations to feel** and understand this sense of urgency.
  - ***“These last days”*** clearly were not the return of Christ but they most certainly were the last days for that generation of Christians.
    - What’s the point?

- The point is that we should live our lives in a way that we believe one of two things could happen at any moment.
  - 1<sup>st</sup> we could die
    - 2<sup>nd</sup> Jesus could return
      - Both should motivate us to walk in righteousness now

### James continues:

- These wealthy people have hoarded money instead of paying their workers.

***4 Look! The wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty.***

- Couple of things here:
  - The Bible has something to say about paying people:

### **Deuteronomy 24:14-15**

***14 Do not take advantage of a hired worker who is poor and needy, whether that worker is a fellow Israelite or a foreigner residing in one of your towns. 15 Pay them their wages each day before sunset, because they are poor and are counting on it. Otherwise they may cry to the Lord against you, and you will be guilty of sin.***

### **Leviticus 19:13**

***13 Do not defraud or rob your neighbor. Do not hold back the wages of a hired worker overnight.***

## **Romans 4:4**

**4 Now to the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift but as an obligation.** (The wages must be paid according to the agreement)

## **1 Timothy 5:18**

**18 For Scripture says, “Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain,” and “The worker deserves his wages.”**

## **We must remember:**

- At this point, the early church only had the Old Testament writings so I'll conclude with Jeremiah

## **Jeremiah 22:13**

**13 “Woe to him who builds his palace by unrighteousness,  
his upper rooms by injustice,  
making his own people work for nothing,  
not paying them for their labor.**

- God completely destroyed that King and his family because the king was in love with his wealth and power and he didn't pay the workers.
  - This message is for those kinds of people.

## **James continues:**

***5 You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter.***

- This statement carries more weight than we realize.
  - Food was a real issue for most people within the church.

- To have people within the church who “fattened themselves” while others didn’t have enough to eat made James and the Holy Spirit angry.

***6 You have condemned and murdered the innocent one, who was not opposing you.***

- **What does that mean James?**

- The poor were condemned for being poor
- The poor were murdered through starvation and poor treatment.
  - All of this was carried out while the wealthy man lived in plenty.

**Pastor, where is God in all of this?**

- The answer is in **the last sentence of verse 4**

***“The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty.”***

- The “Lord Almighty” should be translated “The Lord of Heaven’s Armies.”
  - Some of your Bibles translate it “Lord of Host” or Lord of Sabaoth.
    - No matter how it is translated we need to hear what James is saying through the power of the Holy Spirit.
    - When we do not pay our employees
    - When we do not pay our debts

- When those who have been wronged by our sinful actions cry out to the Lord:
  - God intervenes as the **LORD of Heavens Armies!**

**So, verse 6 ends with a sober warning for those who carry the weight of wealth.**

- **Do what is right before the Lord lest He come to you as your adversary.**

Pastor, what does the Lord expect of me as the worker that hasn't been paid?

James anticipates that question:

***7 Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming.***

- God is patient
  - We should be patient (It's a command)
    - Does James want us to be patient until the return of Jesus or is he saying be patient until God the Lord of Heavens Armies does something?
      - The answer is YES!
- The command on our life is to **be patient** until the Lord shows up.
  - How He shows up is none of our business
    - The command is the same for both events "Be patient"

**James continues:**

*See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, **patiently** waiting for the autumn and spring rains. <sup>8</sup> You too, be **patient** and stand firm, **because the Lord's coming is near.***

- What a wonderful example!
  - ***The farmer does his work.***
    - He prepares the ground
    - He plants the seed
    - And he waits upon the Lord.
      - But it doesn't stop there!
        - The farmer knows the Lord
        - He has history with the Lord
          - He knows the Lord's nature and in that knowing he understands that God sends the rain in the spring and autumn.

**James reminds us that it is critical for the child of God **to know** God's nature.**

- God is **patient** with everyone, even the self-centered wealthy guy
- But God also hears the cry of those who are being mistreated
  - James reminds us to put our faith, hope, and trust in the one true and just God
    - Meaning we must **patiently** trust God as our provider.
      - Both as a wealthy person and as a not so wealthy person

*<sup>9</sup> **Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!***

- Why would GOD say this at this point in the letter?
  - ***Because grumbling is an excuse!***
    - It is an excuse for not going to your brother or sister in which you have an issue.
      - God rightly judges that kind of lazy behavior.
        - Satan loves to destroy churches that get lazy!
      - The fact that the Judge is capitalized and standing at the door leaves no doubt who James is referring.

***Listen to these words:***

- “Church Hurt” people come from churches that do not deal with people who hurt people.
  - **And hurt people, hurt people!**
    - We must love each other enough to talk to them in private about what they said or what they did that caused the hurt.
      - Sometimes, if not most of the time, it is not intentional.
        - ***Do Not Take the Bait of Satan!***
          - DON’T DO IT!
          - Let’s create a culture where we think before we speak
          - Let’s create a culture where we understand how we do something is just as important as what we do.

**1 Corinthians 10:31**

<sup>31</sup>Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, **do all to the glory of God.**

**James continues:**

<sup>10</sup> **Brothers and sisters, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.**

- The last Old Testament prophet was John the Baptist.
  - He spoke the truth
  - Jesus said about him, *“Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist”*
    - Greater than Abraham, Issac, Jacob, Moses, David, Elijah, Samuel!
- What did John suffer?
  - Prison and later he was beheaded as a favor at the Kings party.

***Pastor that doesn't bring me much comfort!***

- I know,
- That is because we are processing our lives as the one that we live **on this earth.**
- Our life is but a vapor **on this earth,**
- Our eternal life is the one we should be concentrating on!
  - What we do here on this earth matters
    - It will shape and mold our eternity
      - Satan does not want God's people to understand that!

## **What does that mean Pastor?**

- It means that we actually put into practice the things that we have learned!
  - **It means** pursuing holiness!
  - **It means** pursuing sanctification!
  - **It means** giving and serving!
  - **It means** not gossiping and causing dissention!
  - **It means** witnessing and discipling!
  - **It means** being patient with others and yourself!
  - **It means persevering! (NEVER GIVE UP)**
  - **It means** that we understand that it is not going to be easy but we do understand that it will be worth it!
- **EVERYTHING GOOD IN YOUR LIFE CAME THROUGH SOME TYPE OF STRUGGLE, PAIN, OR SUFFERING!**
  - This is why James through the power of the Holy Spirit says to consider the prophets of old.
    - *All of them suffered*
- **NONE OF THEM REGRET IT!**

Last verse:

***<sup>11</sup>As you know, we count as blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.***

- James reminds us that **The Lord of Heavens Armies** is not asleep!
  - He will and does intervene according to His plan.

## Pastor didn't Satan strike Job?

- He did but not without Gods permission.
  - Satan took all 10 of Jobs children
  - Satan took Jobs wealth
  - Satan took Jobs health
    - But **Job persevered** as all children of God persevere.

## Satan **did not** and **does not** get the final word in our lives!

- Jesus is the author and perfecter of our faith
- Jesus said that there will be difficulty especially for those who chose to walk in the faith
- But Jesus also promises to never leave us nor forsake us.
  - **This life is not the end**
    - We must see and understand this truth
      - We currently reside within the land of the dying
      - But when we die, we enter into the land of eternal life!

## James chose Job on purpose

- The wealthy righteous guy who did everything right still had to go through the storm
- **Job** fixed his eyes on the Lord and **persevered**
- The final results were recorded in the last pages of the book in his name.
- God gave him back double everything Satan had taken from him
  - Double the wealth
  - Completely healed

- 10 more children (which means 20 children in heaven)

### **We close with these reminders from James 5:**

- **We all have a responsibility** to do what is right before the Lord  
**We all must be very patient** with each other
- **We all must remember** the prophets who were mistreated and murdered for speaking truth
- **We all must remember** our brother Job, his losses, his perseverance, and his reward.
- **We all must remember The Lord Almighty who comes to the defense of the defenseless.**

### **Church,**

- **It is up to us** to show the world Jesus.
- **It is up to us** to be the salt and light of the earth.
- **There is no plan “B”!**
- **It starts with us** and it starts with how we love each other.

### **John 13:35**

***By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”***

### **Close in prayer**