

Jason Huffman

4/21/23

James 5:7-9

Title: Be Patient

Discussion Questions:

1. When is it the easiest to be patient? Why? Can you remember a time when you were very patient? Why?
2. How do you feel about the Lord's return? Explain if possible.
3. Have you ever noticed issues with your heart spiritually? How did you or should you address them? How do you feel about being vulnerable?
4. If you knew Jesus would return this Friday, would that change how you live this week?
5. What were a couple of things you learned or were reminded of about God?

Last week we looked at a strong rebuke to the rich from James. And learned some important lessons about kingdom investing.

- Our lives are not our own.
- We are stewards of the life He gave us.
- We are at war, so don't hoard what we don't need.
- Invest in God's kingdom because it is the one that will last.

And so he tells them...in light of these issues of the rich...

5:7 Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See *how* the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. 8 You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

James gives a simple but challenging direction...Be patient.

**Patience is a result of the healthy presence...
...of the Holy Spirit in our lives.**

But **being patient** is more than a virtue, or evidence of the Spirit.
...Being patient is a choice of obedience.

TITLE: "Be patient."

1. Being patient is obedience.

-Patience is defined as the capacity to accept or tolerate delay, trouble, or suffering without getting angry or upset

-To persevere bravely in enduring misfortunes and troubles

Love is patient, patient in affliction, bearing w/one another

Patience also has a focus...

...so because I am waiting FOR something...

2. Patience increases with trust.

Where you put your trust will impact how patient you are.

The farmer trusts the seasons and so he waits patiently.

...He knows the seasons change...

- Getting out of church.
- Someone finishing a long story.
- Getting some work done on your car.
- Getting a doctor's appointment.

I trust from my experience that it will come to pass...

... and that getting angry doesn't help people or honor God.

When I am waiting for something or someone...

...and I trust them... patience is easier...

I can tolerate delay, trouble or suffering w/o getting angry or upset

**BUT...ultimately no matter the person or the circumstance...
...we can be patient because we are trusting God.**

James is here specifically talking about the Lord's return...

...This is an actual and historical occurrence.

Life is hard, but don't lose heart, get upset or be angry...

....Jesus will return.

Acts 1:9 Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. 10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, 11 who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven." ...James probably saw this event.

Jesus lived, died, and rose again, and He promises to return.

James likens Christ's return to farmers waiting for the rain.

In Israel, it rains in the fall and the spring...

...But there is more here than just: "be patient like a farmer."

In Israel...there is rain that gets the soil ready...

... and a latter rain that gets the harvest ready.

This early and latter rain can be a picture of Christ.

The first time Jesus came to get our hearts ready for the seed.

The second time Jesus returns for the harvest.

...to assess the fruitfulness of His field.

But there is another dynamic to this picture.

The early and latter rain is part of the blessing of obedience.

Deuteronomy 11:13 'And it shall be that if you earnestly obey My commandments which I command you today, to love the Lord your God and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, 14 then I will give you the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your grain, your new wine, and your oil.

The rain was an outward display of the favor of God for the people in real and right relationship with God.

Earnestly obey...and remember there is a reward.

....**The farmer who has done the work...**

...will receive the reward when the harvest comes.

The Lord says the grain, the new wine, and the oil.

Again, James reiterates be patient and he adds...

...Establish your hearts because the Lord's return is near.

3. Patience needs a heart foundation.

Establish means to make stable, place firmly, set fast.

Why do you establish something?

Why do you want to make something stable or firmly set?

If you have a chair and want to trust it, you place it firmly.

If you have a table and want to enjoy the meal, you make it stable

**We establish or strengthen things that have value or purpose
This is true for your heart.**

Your heart has value. It is an important part of who you are.

Proverbs 4:23 NLT Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.

Where your heart is at...

...will determine where your life is headed.

Is your heart distracted?

Is your heart overwhelmed?

Is your heart broken?

These things can direct you in negative ways...

...unless your heart is guarded or established.

If your heart is guarded or established...secure...

...you can more easily make decisions and go in directions...

...not dictated by outside circumstance or inner emotions.

A military outpost is also established/guarded against attack.

If you are on the offensive line, you establish or strengthen yourself for the opposition that will pressure you.

Not only is your heart valuable and important for direction...

...it will be attacked and under pressure.

There is tremendous pressure on their hearts and ours.

There are demonic temptations and fleshly enticements.

...There are attacks on our faith and...

...pressure in our life to compromise or quit.

If we are going to wait for the Lord with patience...

...We need our hearts established...

...in God's truth and in God's character.

4. Patience is established with purity.

Psalm 24:3

Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord?
Or who may stand in His holy place?
He who has clean hands and a pure heart,
Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol,
Nor sworn deceitfully.

Some people say they love God...but...

Their heart is not pure, there are other ingredients in there.

...They love the idea of God...

... but they don't really trust and obey Him.

They may or may not be saved, but...

... they don't bring God glory...

... they don't have assurance...

...they don't enjoy or fulfill all that God has for them..

...and they add little to anyone else's life.

On the other hand...

...some follow all sorts of religious rules...

...but their hearts are not pure.

...They trust their own righteousness and works.

They look religious but they live a lie and idolize their religion.

So James is saying...be patient, Jesus is returning...

...Wait patiently and be established.

Let's touch on this idea of His return briefly...

James wrote this 2000 years ago-but Jesus has not returned yet.

...So what does James mean His return is at hand or near?

A day is as a thousand years...so it's been a couple of days?

It is also nearer than we first believed...

...We are closer today to our own personal return...
...or the global return of Christ.

NO ONE knows the day or the hour of His return.

...But it is described with a word...

The return of Christ is imminent...it can happen at any time.

There is nothing that needs to happen or be fulfilled for His return

James is famous for jumping from topic to topic.

But anyone who has waited knows this is an issue.

9 Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!

When we get tired of waiting, we can easily begin to grumble.

This word is often translated groan or grief.

Ugh. Good grief...

“This world is so dark, these people are so selfish, this state is so messed up, this generation is so...”

James encourages us...

...Do not grumble or groan against one another.

Encourage, edify, uplift, plant the seeds and water the field.

The Judge is at the door.

All that you hope to see judged...will be judged in God's timing.

...And God will judge us as well.

The Lord is going to return so be comforted and established.

And the Lord is standing at the door, so behave yourself.

God is both Father and Judge. He is love and He is just.

Let's finish with one last point about our hearts...

The same passage in Deut. where God speaks of the blessing of the rain He also speaks of the importance of our heart.

5. Patience is a heart check.

16Take heed to yourselves, lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them,

Life will test us.

Waiting is hard.

Hearts can be deceived.

Idols can be tempting.

This is true...in Egypt, in Israel, or in Orange County.

Our hearts are the core of who we are.

We need to strengthen and establish our hearts.

We need to take heed and pay attention to our hearts.

A while ago I was sitting on the couch and my heart was racing, I had shortness of breath and pain in my chest.

...so I went to get it checked out.

Sometimes you experience something that confuses you.

You don't understand why or what or what is going on.

Take the time to check your heart.

Don't make assumptions.

How do you do that?

Talk with the Lord and be quiet with Him.

Read the Word, talk with close friends, reach out to a pastor.

Be vulnerable and honest.
Be aware of your reactions under stress.

Sometimes this kind of thing can be scary.

Being vulnerable, checking our heart, dealing with our lack of patience...we may think it is too much or too hard.

...But it actually life giving.

There was a basketball player **Ronny Turiaf** who got drafted by the Lakers but when they gave him his medical they found an enlarged aortic valve that required open heart surgery.

The Lakers voided his contract, but held onto his rights.
They paid for his surgery but no one knew what would happen.
At first, it was so upsetting for him to find an issue with his heart.
It seemed to be the end of his dreams.

The doctors just wanted to keep him alive...
...never mind playing basketball.

But after a six hour open heart surgery, six months later he was back on the court and ended up with a great career.

**The reason I tell you all this is patience can be a heart check.
When you struggle with being patient...check your heart.**

When we find something that is off in our hearts...

...that needs to be addressed...

...don't hide it, don't bury it...

...It is not a bad thing, it is a life thing.

Jesus is the Great Physician.

You might think heart surgery is going to kill you, but it is actually going to save your life and help you fulfill your purpose, and be able to wait patiently for the Lord's return.