



LORD,

help me to hold out

S E R M O N G U I D E

Lord, Help Me To Hold Out

James 5:7-8

INTRODUCTION

When frustration, discouragement, and disappointment grip your heart and your mind, it can cause you to consider giving up. Maybe that's where you find yourself today. Maybe you're considering giving up on life, giving up on your marriage, giving up on your career, or even giving up on God. If that's you, then this message is for you, because James, in today's key passage, gives a dose of encouragement to those who are on the brink of giving up.

KEY POINTS

1. Correct Wrong Thinking

James talks about people in the church who have a false sense of confidence in what the future holds, and as a result, they make certain plans in an uncertain future. James addresses those who had embraced the theological idea that faith in God guaranteed certain outcomes in the future. In other words, he was talking to people who thought they could tell God what to do. We can't just name it and claim it, blab it and grab it, and then expect that whatever we declare God must make happen. No, we need to correct this wrong thinking and shift to praying according to God's will and God's plan, rather than trying to make our own will and our own plan come to fruition.

2. Remain Patient

Patience is a consistent threat and constant theme that undergirds just about every faith story in the Word of God. In Genesis, Abraham heard from God at the age of 75, but he didn't receive the promised son, Isaac, until he was 100 years old. Joseph went from the pit at 17, then to prison, before he arrived at the palace at age 30. Job lost it all in Job 1, but by chapter 42, the Lord turned it all around and gave him double for his trouble. All I'm trying to say is that the Bible teaches that patience is a part of God's process, and we do ourselves a disservice by thinking the blessings of God are microwavable and available on demand. We need to remain patient if we are going to hold on and not give up.

NOTES

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3. Suffer Long And Stay Put

Patience is the counsel that James begins his letter in Chapter 1, and it’s his counsel as the letter closes. James uses two words for patience in his writing. One means long-suffering, and the other means to stay put when you’d rather run away. God is not going to right all the wrongs in this world right away, so believers must endure with patient expectation.

That’s what the farmer does. He suffers long not knowing when the crops will appear and stays put being unable to control the rain. During seasons when there’s too much rain that could cause the crop to rot, and seasons when not enough rain could cause the crop to dry up, the farmer suffers long and stays there when he’d rather run away. But he stays there, James says, because the harvest is precious. He endures the good times and the bad times under conditions he can’t control, not knowing when the crop will yield fruit because the harvest is worth waiting for. We would be wise to follow this example.

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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Have you been practicing any wrong thinking that you need to correct in order to align your will with God's will?
2. What is something you are having to be patient for right now, but you're feeling tempted to give up?
3. What is one practical way you can suffer long and stay put as you wait for the harvest of the Lord's work in your life?
