



How to Stay Strong When You Are Stuck on Hold

James 5:7-12; John 16:33

John 16:33, *I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world.*

2 Thessalonians 3:13, *But as for you, brethren, do not grow weary in doing good.*

James 5:7-9, *Dear brothers and sisters, be patient as you wait for the Lord's return. Consider the farmers who patiently wait for the rains in the fall and in the spring. They eagerly look for the valuable harvest to ripen. 8 You, too, must be patient. Take courage, for the coming of the Lord is near. 9 Don't grumble about each other, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. For look—the Judge is standing at the door!*

I. God wants us to work patiently like farmers. James 5:7-9; 2 Thess. 3:13

A. Results don't happen overnight.
B. We must work while we wait.

C. The harvest is WORTH the wait. Galatians 6:8-10; PS 126:5-6

Galatians 6:8-10, *Those who live only to satisfy their own sinful nature will harvest decay and death from that sinful nature. But those who live to please the Spirit will harvest everlasting life from the Spirit. 9 So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up. 10 Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone—especially to those in the family of faith.*

Psalm 126:5-6, *Those who sow in tears shall reap with joyful shouting. 6 He who goes to and fro weeping, carrying his bag of seed, Shall indeed come again with a shout of joy, bringing his sheaves with him.*

II. God wants us to witness powerfully like the prophets. James 5:10-11a

James 5:10-11a, *For examples of patience in suffering, dear brothers and sisters, look at the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. 11 We give great honor to those who endure under suffering.*

A. They suffered even IN the will of God.
Matthew 5:10-12; 2 Tim. 3:12

Matthew 5:10-12, *God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of*

Heaven is theirs. 11 “God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. 12 Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way.

2 Timothy 3:12, ...everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

B. They remained faithful no matter *HOW* bad things got.

C. God's plan will never take you where His grace can't keep you! 2 Corinthians 12:7-9

2 Corinthians 12:7-9, ... So to keep me from becoming proud, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from becoming proud. 8 Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. 9 Each time he said, “My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.” So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me.

III. God wants us to withstand pressure like Job. James 5:11b-12; Job 1:20-22; Job 42:10-17

James 5:11b-12, For instance, you know about Job, a man of great endurance. You can see how the Lord was kind to him at the end, for the Lord is full of tenderness and mercy. 12 But most of all, my brothers and sisters, never take an oath, by heaven or earth or anything else. Just say a simple yes or no, so that you will not sin and be condemned.

Job 1:20-22, Job stood up and tore his robe in grief. Then he shaved his head and fell to the ground to worship. 21 He said, “I came naked from my mother's womb, and I will be naked when I leave. The LORD gave me what I had, and the LORD has taken it away. Praise the name of the LORD!” 22 In all of this, Job did not sin by blaming God.

Job 42:10-17, When Job prayed for his friends, the LORD restored his fortunes. In fact, the LORD gave him twice as much as before! 11 Then all his brothers, sisters, and former friends came and feasted with him in his home. And they consoled him and comforted him because of all the trials the LORD had brought against him. And each of them brought him a gift of money and a gold ring. 12 So the LORD blessed Job in the second half of his life even more than in the beginning... 16 Job lived 140 years after that, living to see four generations of his children and grandchildren. 17 Then he died, an old man who had lived a long, full life.

IV. God wants us to watch prayerfully for His return. James 5:8-9

James 5:8-9, You, too, must be patient. Take courage, for the coming of the Lord is near. 9 Don't grumble about each other, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. For look—the Judge is standing at the door!

APPLY God's Word to Your Life...

1. Are you like the farmer, working faithfully for God as you await His return?
2. Are you like the prophets, sharing God's Word whether it's popular or not?
3. Are you like Job, faithful to Him even in the storms of life?
4. Are you ready to stand before God in judgment?
5. What must you do to be ready to face HIM in eternity?