

Patience in Suffering

11.15.09

7 Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. 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. 8 You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. 9 Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. 10 As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. 11 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. 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. James 5:7-12 ESV

“Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. Connected to v. 1-6. “Patience”

Describes the self restraint that doesn’t try to get even for a wrong that has been one. This is to be our pattern until Jesus returns.

“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. In Palestine, two rains fall that are critical for a good harvest. The 1st is in autumn just after sowing and the 2nd is just before the harvest in April or May. Both were critical for a good harvest.

“You also, be patient.” James applies the illustration to his hearers.

P: Patience in suffering should be the pattern for followers of Jesus until Jesus returns.

Putting Feet on It:

1. Recognize that you don’t become more patient by ‘trying harder’ to be patient.
2. We become more patient by confessing & repenting of our lack of patience and by depending upon Jesus to work out His patience within us.
 - a. Galatians 5:22. “Fruit” is singular. Repent of your sin and allow the Spirit to bring the Gospel to bear in your life.

Is patience in suffering my pattern? If not, what needs to change?

“Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.” Lit. be strong in the inner man;

Provide solid support for establishing a person and enabling him to stand unmoved by trouble.

P: The return of Christ should be an encouragement for the establishment of our hearts and our patience in suffering.

Do I look to the return of Christ to motivate me to suffer well?

“Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. Lit. to sigh, to groan. Speaks of inner distress more than open complaint. Specifically, not the outward denunciation but the unexpressed bitterness or smothered resentment that would come out in a sigh. God is judge.

Putting Feet on It:

1. Identify *where* it is happening. (Home, Work, Church, etc.)
2. Get to the heart of the matter.
 - a. We grumble because of our prideful hearts that want what we want when we want it.
3. Stop. Confess. Repent. Cling to Jesus for grace for the outside situation that you are grumbling about and the inside situation that is behind it.

“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.”

P: The heroes in the Bible have been given to encourage us to heroic faith in God and patience in suffering.

Are we engaging the “little h” heroes and ultimately the “capital H” hero for encouragement and empowerment for patience in our suffering? If not, what needs to change?

“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. Unclear on exactly how this fits with the rest of the passage, but the principle is clear.

P: Followers of Jesus are to be men and women of their word.

Are you someone of your word?

The Gospel is our only hope for fulfilling these commands.

The Good News: All that it requires, it provides.

Works Consulted: *Expositor’s Commentary, MacArthur Study Bible, ESV Study Bible, MacArthur Commentary on James, The Bible Exposition Commentary, The Bible Knowledge Commentary, A Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Old and New Testaments, New Bible Commentary, The Outline Bible, Tyndale Concise Bible Commentary, Wilmington’s Bible Handbook, Word Pictures of the New Testament*