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Willerup United Methodist Church
Sermon Notes
Pastor Marvin Singh
The Book of James, Lesson 10
Patience in Suffering



This is the tenth in our series of meditations based on the book of James. James was written by the brother of our Lord Jesus, who called himself a servant of God and Jesus Christ. It was primarily written to Jewish Christians who were scattered in many nations. James talks in this book about practical religion: trials and tribulations, how to apply the Word of God in our daily life, the worldliness in the church and Christian perspective.

Patience in Suffering

James 5:7-12

7 Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains. 8 You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. 9 Don't grumble against each other, brothers, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door! 10 Brothers, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. 11 As you know, we consider 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. 12 Above all, my brothers, do not swear--not by heaven or by earth or by anything else. Let your "Yes" be yes, and your "No," no, or you will be condemned.

In this passage of Scripture three times the word “patience” was used and one time “patient.” It is used in the context of the coming of the Lord.

There are three examples given by James on patiently waiting – farmers, prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord, and Job.

1. Patience- Biblical patience is a God-exercised, or God-given, restraint in the face of opposition or oppression. This is also the character of God, who is slow to anger. It is also used in New Testament as long-suffering, defined by R.C. Trench as ‘a long holding out of the mind’ before it gives room to anger.

New Bible Dictionary, Third Edition, InterVarsity Press, pg. 873

Patience – An active endurance or opposition not a passive resignation. Patience and patient are used to translate several Hebrew and Greek words. Patience is endurance, steadfastness, long suffering, and forbearance.

Holman Bible Dictionary, pg. 1077

Patience is also one of the fruits of the Spirit. Galatians 5:22-23.

2. The Lord’s Coming is mentioned in this passage.

It warns us about his coming and the signs about his coming.

Matthew 24: 26-51; Mark 13:24-31; Luke 21:25-33

a. His coming will be **visible**.

What will be the sign?

Sun - darken, Moon - dark, stars - fall, and heavenly bodies - shaken.

b. He will be coming on the clouds with **power and glory**.

What will be the sign?

Trumpets by angels announcing his return,

Gathering of the elect from four winds - North, East, West and South. (N-E-W-S).

c. The sign of the fig tree
The twigs will be tender, the summer is near.

d. Warning about the exact time
No one knows,
Not even angels in heaven,
Nor the Son of Man,
but only the Father.

What will be the sign?
In Noah's time – they were eating, drinking, partying, marriages etc.
Keep Watch - because you do not know on what day your Lord will come
Be understanding – what time – so keep watch - you all must be ready. Be watchful.

The Bible tells about Christ's coming in two phases. The one to receive the church - body of believers, which we call the rapture, and second coming to judge the world and establish his millennium rule on earth. Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left. Matthew 24:40-41.

Different theologians have different views on the Rapture. 1
Thessalonians 4:13-18

- a. Pre-tribulation - The church will be taken out of this world before going through persecution or tribulation.
- b. Mid-Tribulation - The church will go through the tribulation and once the Anti-Christ is revealed, it will be taken out.
- c. Post Tribulation - The church will go through the tribulation.

Christians should not debate and fight about when and how, but the Lord's command is - BE READY.

The coming of the Lord is imminent.

There are examples give such as the servants and the ten virgins.

Matthew 24:42-51; 25:1-13.

a. The servants should be ready at any time for the return of the Master. If they are not expecting their master then they can become lazy and neglect their assignment, become restless and doubtful, and frustration will take hold of them. They will be grudging against their own brothers and sisters.

b. The ten virgins - five were ready to go with the Bridegroom, with their lamps on and the other five foolish were not ready when He came. They were left out.

3. Three examples of Waiting Patiently in this passage:

a. The Husbandmen (King James Version), the farmer in other.

See how the farmer waits, for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains. (James 5:7)

He tills the ground, prepares the soil, puts in the seed, waits for the rain, the sun shines, he takes out weeds and waits for the crop to be ripe and then waits for the second rain and then harvests. He did not wait for the rain to come and hurriedly plant the seed. He is always on his toes and ready.

To get the fruits he is patiently expecting but also ready in preparation.

b. The Prophets - 'As an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.'

James 5:10

We have such a 'cloud of witnesses, who went before us and suffered and came out victorious.

“And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Joseph, David, Samuel and the prophets, who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies....” Hebrews 11:32-38.

c. Job. Job 42:10-17

He was stripped of all worldly possessions, deprived at one stroke of all his children, tortured in body with sore disease, tempted by the devil, harassed by his wife, and calumniated by his friends. He nevertheless held fast his integrity, resigned himself to the divine dispensation and charged not God foolishly. His perseverance despite the disasters he faced kept his faith and did not abandon his trust in God. Finally the Lord brought to life the restoration of Job’s fortunes.

Adam Clarke’s Commentary on the Holy Bible, pg 1233-34

So

A. Wait patiently on the coming Lord.

Waiting with patience will strengthen us.

It nourishes the Spirit of quiet bearing of present ills.

It enables a man to be patient amid care and disappointments.

It uplifts with the cheer of a high hope

B. Patience helps us in conducting our duties.

a. Patience should keep us from restlessness. When we wait or are expecting someone coming, we become anxious and worried. What time is that person coming? What happened, if they are delayed? Instead of becoming restless, we should meditate on God’s word and what He has done for us, remembering his promises given to us: by

communion with God which brings personal satisfaction to the soul; and active service, which takes a man off from perilous brooding. It affects us - we become restless, anxious, dissatisfied. Instead of spending our strength in service, we shall spend it in worrying and restless watching.

b. Patience should keep us from doubting. The restlessness might make them neglect their work, but doubting would altogether change their character of their work, from work for Christ to work for self.

If the servant thinks that his master has delayed his coming, the doubting will soon will lose all wise restraint of himself and eat and drink with drunkenness.

The Preachers Homiletics Commentary, Vol. Timothy- James. pg. 610-611 James writes not to lose your heart, not to give way to doubts and fears. He encourages us to nourish our souls into such spiritual strength that we can throw off from us all possessions and atmosphere of doubts.

c. Kindly build your relationship with one another. Let your yes be yes and no be no. There should be truth in all our conversations, so that it should never be felt necessary to buttress it with an oath. Do not take an oath which you can not substantiate or follow. Be sincere in all your conversation. Matthew 5:33-37