

Patience in the Pain (James 5:7-12)

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 19 October 2025

Preacher: Brett Sanders

[0 : 0 0] Amen. Amen. You may be seated, children. We are ready for Children's Church at this time.! You may make your way to the back to see Miss Savannah back there. And what a joy it is to be worshipping today. I'm so grateful to be here and just wanted to give a quick update on their mission team. That is, the three that have gone from our church and the over 200 from around the state, they have made it to Cuba. Clay, Lorraine, and Rex from our church here, we were a little nervous. They got the approval pretty quickly for the visas, but they didn't actually get the visas in hand. And it's one thing to know that they're approved, and it's a whole other thing to actually have them to show you have proof that they are approved. And so they got those. They were leaving about 2.30 on Thursday morning. Those got emailed out at 1 a.m., so about an hour and a half before they left. And so they were just a little bit nervous about that, but very thankful that that came through. They're already there serving and ministering. And so just continue to be in prayer for all of those that are in Cuba right now with the sons of Jubal, Jubaliers, and those with them.

So very thankful that they were able to make it. I'm going to start with a question here. Have you ever noticed how impatient people have become lately? I mean, I think we can all realize that people have become impatient lately. And a lot of times we think, oh, well, everybody else is impatient, right?

We're not impatient, but I want to ask you something. When was the last time or have you ever gotten really frustrated because you had to wait in line in a drive-thru for seven minutes? Has anybody ever, am I the only, okay, there's three of us that have. Everybody else is lying because I know you have. But we all, we get impatient with those things. But I want you to think about that with me for a second. Can you imagine if we shared that frustration with somebody 50 years ago, that we came in the next day, we're still mad about it the night before. You're not going to believe this. I had to wait seven, I ordered a double cheeseburger, fries, a Coke, and a milkshake, and I had to wait seven minutes for it. You're not going to believe that. And I can just imagine that the person that you're, the co-worker that you're talking to says, well, I had the same thing and it took me two and a half hours to make all of that. And so you can imagine that there's this, there's, there's something about it now where it's become really hard to be patient. You know, we, we live in a time where we have so many things going on and we have so many ways to make those things more efficient, yet we still are struggling with patience. We have microwaves that can heat up our food in 30 seconds, washers and dryers where you just dump everything. Well, at least I dump everything in and turn it on and let it go. And you have all of these things to make life more efficient, yet we're busier than ever and more impatient than ever. And so one of the things that I've found that is, that it's, it's difficult to do is be patient in the day and time that we live, but it's even more difficult to be patient when life is hard. When we're experiencing pain and suffering, and it's sad to say, but the first people to know that it's been a long, hard day for me without ever saying a word or my family when I walk in the door. If it's been one of those days, you know, your, your patience is a little thinner. It's more difficult. I, I, it's, it's hard to, to be patient with them. Patience when life is painful is tough, but patience when life is painful is what James is calling us to do. I'm sure that you can guess by now, somewhat from our previous interactions with James, that James's advice is usually direct. It's to the point and it's very practical. And I think you'll find that to be the case as we look at these, these passage, this passage today, as we look at verses seven through 12 of James chapter five. And so if you have a copy of God's word, want to invite you to turn with me to James chapter five. We're going to start in verse seven. And this is what it says.

[4 : 1 6] 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. You also be patient, establish your hearts for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble against

one another brothers so that you may not be judged. Behold, the judge is standing at the door. 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 remain 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. 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. You know, this passage is a, is a difficult one to preach because it's difficult to think about. Much of it is dealing with suffering in this life. And I don't know if you're like me, but I don't like to suffer very much. I don't enjoy suffering in my life and I don't enjoy as a pastor seeing suffering in your life. But one thing is certain, and that is this, because of sin, this world is not as it was created. The fall has affected this world. And in this world, we will experience pain and suffering. In fact, Jesus says this, he says, in this world, you will have tribulation. He says, in this world, you will have tribulation. You will have suffering. You will have pain. This is a promise from, you know, we love to, to claim the promises of Jesus. This isn't one that we're all the time claiming, oh, in this life, I'm going to have tribulation. But that's what Jesus says. But he also continues right after that. He says, in this life, you will have tribulation. But he says, but take heart. He says, but take heart. I have overcome the world. Yes, there's going to be difficulties. Yes, there's going to be hardships. Yes, there's going to be challenges that we face in this life. But we can take heart because Jesus has overcome the world. This is the hope that we cling to. This is the hope that James highlights in this passage. And so this week, I struggled some to outline this passage. There's those weeks when you read a passage and it's like it just jumps off the page to you and you can't write fast enough. And as a pastor, you love those weeks because it goes quickly there. But some weeks you struggle and you wrestle with a passage.

[7 : 10] And that was the case this week. And so the outline and the way that we're going to have this structure looks a little different than I typically do, we'll have one main overarching theme and point that we're going to be looking at. And then we're going to have several encouragements that go along with that. And so from this passage, the main thing that I want us to see this week is this.

Patience when life is painful is only possible when our eyes are fixed on Jesus. Patience when life is painful is only possible when our eyes are fixed on Jesus. I want to encourage you to look at that passage. If you still have your Bible open, look at this passage. There's something, there's a theme that keeps getting repeated all throughout this. And it's this idea of patience and waiting and steadfastness. Look at just the number of times it's said here. It says, be patient therefore. See how the farmer waits. You also be patient. As an example of suffering and patience, brothers. And then he says, remember those, we consider those blessed who remain steadfast.

And you've heard of the steadfastness of Job. So over and over again, you see this idea of patience, patience. But there's also another theme that is at play in this. To begin with, he says, be patient therefore. Now, if you ever see a therefore in scripture, you want to look to see what it's therefore. And usually it's referring back to what it was just talking about. And so previously, what James is addressing is these rich who were oppressing the poor, those unbelievers who were oppressing the Christians. And he says, you're experiencing all of these trials and tribulations at the hands of these wealthy unbelievers. And he says, now be patient therefore, brothers. So in the midst of that suffering, be patient. And he says an example of suffering and patience. And then he says, you've heard of the steadfastness of Job. Well, if there's one thing that we know about Job, it's that he suffered, right? And so what you see over and over again in this very short passage is both patience, this faithfulness, this steadfastness, and suffering working together. And sometimes it's hard for us to reconcile those things together. But that's what this passage is doing. This passage, more than addressing the cause of pain and suffering, is addressing what we do with pain and suffering.

If you're hoping that this passage is going to give you an answer for the pain and suffering, it's not going to do that, but it is going to show us what we do with that pain and suffering.

Much of our ability to have patience in this life hinges on our view of God. If we see God as a genie in a bottle who's only there to make our life better and give us everything that we could ever dream of and more, then this is going to be hard to hear, let alone apply this message this morning.

[10 : 18] But if we see God for who he is, then it changes everything. If we catch a glimpse of who God is, that he is so much higher and stronger and more powerful and wiser than anything we could

imagine, then it's going to give us some perspective on what to do in the midst of those difficulties.

And it is my hope and prayer this morning that we get a better glimpse of who God is. And that glimpse begins to put perspective in our lives that allows us to remain faithful in the midst of suffering. And so this passage is written to believers. He's now moving from the rich who oppress those and addressing them to going back to the brothers and sisters in Christ.

He's writing to believers and this is what he's sharing with us. And so the first encouragement that he gives to believers as a means of being patient in the midst of suffering is this. He says, to be patient because the Lord is coming. Be patient because the Lord is coming. He says, 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 late rains. You also be patient.

Establish your hearts for the coming of the Lord is at hand. And the first thing that I want us to be encouraged by concerning patience and pain is the fact that Christ is returning. Jesus is coming back.

And we know that Jesus is returning. And we know that when he returns, one of the things that he's going to be doing is judging sinners. And this should be a very sobering reality for us. Because the Bible doesn't mince words concerning who falls into the category of sinners. Each and every person, each and every one of us falls into that category of a sinner. Everyone is a sinner. Everyone has turned from God. Everyone has chosen themselves and their desires over God time and time again.

[12 : 34] But we also know from Scripture that you don't want to be the one paying the price for your sin. It will be an internal judgment that you do not want to be responsible for.

But we also know in Scripture that you don't have to be the one to pay that sin debt. Jesus willingly left the glory of heaven, lived the life that you and I couldn't live, that perfect life, that righteous life, and died the death we deserve so that your judgment, my judgment, can be placed on him and his righteousness can be given to me.

What this means is that the best way that we can prepare ourselves for the return of Christ is by giving our lives to him and placing our trust in him. And the best news is that this is something that you can do today. And so after the service, if this is something that you have in question where you've never given your life to Jesus, then there is nothing more that I would love to do than share the good news of the gospel with you. Because that is the best way that we can prepare our hearts and minds for the return of Christ. So we see that that part of patience and pain is understanding that we were created for another world. And because of Christ, we have the promise of that other world. This is what gives us hope in this world, that this is not our forever home.

This is not how it's going to be forever. We have the promise of heaven. David Platt says it like this. He says, patience when life is painful in this world is only possible when our eyes are fixed on another world. Patience when life is painful in this world is only possible when our eyes are fixed on another world. Christ is going to come again. When he does, he is going to redeem those who trust him.

The question that we must answer is, what will we be doing when he returns? There is so much speculation right now. And honestly, I think there's always been speculation. I think the early church, the apostles, I think they were pretty sure that Jesus was going to come back in their lifetime. I feel like they thought that. And in so many other places throughout history, people have been very confident in that. And we can look around and try to see things. And there's something to that. It shouldn't be something that we ignore, but we shouldn't put all of our effort in that. Because what we have find ourselves doing is we're being so concerned on when that will be and not what we will be doing when that happens. I don't know the best way to, I don't know when Christ will return, but the best way to prepare for his return is not to sit back and wait for his return, but to get busy doing everything we can, bringing people to faith in him until he does return. We must never get so focused on when that will happen that we lose sight of what we are supposed to be doing until that happens.

[15 : 44] He says, look at the farmer in this story for just a moment. 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. The farmer waits for the early rains and the late rains. Can I point out something obvious but easily overlooked here? I think the obvious truth here is the farmer can't control the rain. The farmer can't do anything about the rain, but the farmer can control what he does until that rain comes.

Platt again put it this way. He says, honor God with what you can control and trust God with what you can't control. Faithfully do what God calls you to do. Prepare for the harvest. Prepare for Christ's return. Live the faithful life that God has called you to live and trust God with what you can't control.

Be like the farmer here who works and prepares, but more than anything, he trusts. More than anything, he trusts that the rain is coming. Think about that. The farmer, if he didn't actually believe the rain was coming, all of that work would be in vain. He wouldn't even do it if he didn't believe that it was coming because he's dependent on that coming. He's dependent on that rain to give fruit to what he has been working on. What allows us to be patient in pain is the promise that the rain is coming, that Christ is coming, and when he does, he's going to come and he's going to make all things new. And so part of the patience in pain, part of the faithfulness that we have in the midst of suffering is understanding that Christ is coming. And we have a hope that is far greater than anything this world can provide. James also encourages us to be patient and truthful with others. Be patient and truthful with others. We see this in verse 9 and then jumping down to verse 12. It says, do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged. Behold, the judge is standing at the door. In verse 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. You know, it is all too easy when facing ongoing pressure and even injustices in this life to take our frustration out on those that we care about the most. How often are we kind and considerate to people that we don't even know? Yet as soon as we walk in the door after a hard day, our family takes the brunt of that frustration. We begin to grumble against one another. And when we do that, our focus is taken off of God and it's put on ourselves. Our agenda becomes what is most important. And we oftentimes find ourselves lying or at least withholding the truth in order to make sure we get our way and receive the recognition that we deserve. John MacArthur, he says it like this. He says, fallen men are basically liars. Children lie to their parents. Parents lie to their children.

Husbands lie to their parents. Parents lie to their children. Husbands to their wives and wives to their husbands. People lie to their employers who in turn lie to them and often lie to the public. Politicians lie to get elected and they continue to lie once they are in office. But people lie to the government, perhaps most notably on their income tax returns. Educators lie. Scientists lie. Members of the media lie. Our society is built on a framework of lies. And now with AI, you really don't know what to believe.

You know, Catherine sometimes gets fooled by, I should have asked her before I told this story, but sometimes she gets fooled by those AI videos that you see online. And so she was watching something the other day. She goes, look, look, look at this. This is amazing. And she showed me this video and it looked like a backyard security camera that was just on somebody's backyard. And all of a sudden you see this bear walking through the backyard and it gets on a trampoline and starts bouncing and jumping on the trampoline. She goes, isn't this amazing? And I said, sweetie, I'm pretty sure this is AI. And she's like, no, no. And she started looking through the comments. She's like, okay, it's AI.

[20 : 22] But you don't know what to believe anymore. So much of this is going on, that is going on, it's hard to see it. We live in a world full of lies, but Christians should stand in stark contrast to this.

Our words should be true. If we want people to believe what we say about Christ, then what we say about everything else better be true. It better be true and trustworthy. When our focus is taken off of God and placed on ourselves, we begin to lie and we begin to argue with others. And in doing so, we become so much less effective in reaching people with the greatest truth the world has ever known. Now, if you are in a game or watching a game, do you know when the game is over? Do you know when a team is defeated?

It's not necessarily always when that scoreboard hits zero, but when you look across the sideline or you look at your own sideline and you see your team start arguing with one another. All of a sudden, when you see the other team arguing amongst themselves, then you know, oh, we've got this. Because they're no longer fighting against you, they're fighting against themselves. They're no longer taking their energy and working together to accomplish a goal, but now they're bickering and fighting amongst themselves. Now, a good coach can rally everyone back together, but as long as you are fighting with each other, you are being very unproductive against the other team. And churches that fight amongst themselves are very unproductive in the kingdom of God. When we

see all of this bickering and going on with one another, we become so much less effective to reach our lost and dying world. This is not how we want Lord Jesus to find us upon his return. Sam Alberry, he notes, he says again, it is the nearness of the Lord that is our impetus to live rightly. The judge is at the door and it is hard to imagine him nearer than that. The handle is about to turn and we are about to speak to one and so we are to speak to one another in such a way that we would not be ashamed of the Lord Jesus himself being within earshot. We must live in such a way that people see there's something different about us. Let our actions, the way that we interact with brothers and sisters in Christ, show a lost and dying world that there's something different about us. That even in the midst of suffering, even in the midst of pain, there's something different about them. And let that be what drives us to share our faith.

Finally, James encourages us to be patient because God is faithful. Be patient because God is faithful. Verses 10 and 11 says, as an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the name of the Lord. Behold, we consider those blessed who remain 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.

When you think of the people, the faithful people of the Old Testament that we may call heroes of the faith, there is no doubt that many prophets will come to mind as you think about those people. [23 : 58] Yet many of them lived a life of suffering. Many of them, when you actually look at their lives and and now we look back and think, oh, these are great men of faith who stood up for the Lord.

But that's not necessarily how they were all seen at the time that they were living. And this is why I think it is so important for us to see this and that we need to be reminded of this because it is possible for for Western Christians, especially to feel as though comfort in life and going and everything going well are the norm in the Christian life. And that it is abnormal when we experience difficulties. But the Bible nowhere leads us to have such an expectation. Indeed, it is full of examples to the contrary. Suffering of one kind of one another is normal for the life and for the people of God. It is not a sign that things have gone wrong.

James says, look at the prophets. Look at the suffering that they experienced. And I firmly believe that if James lived longer and he wrote this at a later date, he would have also included the apostles in that.

He would have said, look at the people. Look at the apostles. Look at the ones who were with Jesus, who are faithfully following him. Look at how they've suffered. Look at the difficulties that they're going through. It is not a promise that life is going to be easy. God never promises a life of ease. That is why a health and wealth prosperity gospel is so dangerous. Because it is a lie. Your best life now is not here, but the life to come. That's the hope that we cling to. And then he uses the example of Job. Now, if there's two things that we know, if there's one thing we know about Job, it's that he suffered. But if there's two things that we know about Job, it's that he was patient, right? You hear the patience of Job and you hear the suffering of Job. And so Job is used as an example here of this patience and suffering working together. God never promises that this life will be a life of luxury that is free of hardships. But he does promise that he loves us and that he will be with us.

Think about the words from Lamentations 3 with me. This is Jeremiah writing here. And he says this, he says, he has made my chains heavy. He has turned aside my steps and tore me to pieces. [26 : 27] He has made me desolate. My soul is bereft of peace. I have forgotten what happiness is. So I say, my endurance has perished. You see, Jeremiah is writing at a very dark and difficult time in his life. The nation that he loves so dearly is rightly experiencing the wrath of God. And it's very difficult and emotional time for him and the people of Israel. But he also knows that God's faithful.

He also knows the promises of God. And so in the midst of this lament, he says these words. He says, but this I call to mind and therefore I have hope. The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases. The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases. How do we know the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases? Well, it's abundantly clear as we read through scripture. It never promises that we'll not experience difficult times. In fact, it tells us that we will. But what it makes very clear is that we have a God who is there with us on every mountaintop, every valley, and everywhere in between.

And he continues, he says, his mercies never come to an end. They are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, says my soul. Therefore, I will hope in him. The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him. It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord. Isn't it wonderful to know this? That God's mercies know no limit.

And they are something that we can experience fresh every single morning. The question now becomes, do we believe all these things and do we trust them? In the midst of pain and suffering, our patience, our steadfastness, our faithfulness depends on our belief in the faithfulness of God and our belief that he's coming again to make all things new. My favorite way to think about this as far as placing your faith and your trust in Jesus and understanding what that means is, is thinking of it as a trust fall. And I don't know if you've ever done a trust fall, but there's two elements at play when you're doing a trust fall.

[28 : 45] One, you have to trust the person's ability to catch you. You're not going to do a trust fall with someone who doesn't have the ability to catch you, no matter how willing they are to do it.

You're not going to do a trust fall then if they don't have the ability to do it. And then the second part at play that a lot of times that we don't even think about is you're putting a lot of trust in their willingness to use their ability to catch you. And their willingness to actually be there to catch you. And once you have both of those things, once you have confidence in both of those things, then you're willing to do a trust fall. All throughout scripture, we see that God is able and we see that God is willing. Paul in Ephesians says, now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or think according to the power that is work in us, God is able.

And then Paul in Romans says, if God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all, how will he also not with him graciously give us all things? God is willing. If the impossible didn't stop God, the giving of his only son didn't stop him, then nothing will stop him from loving you. Nothing will stop him from being there in the midst of pain and suffering with you. This is what we cling to. Patience when life is painful is only possible when our eyes are fixed on Jesus. Believe in the promises of God. Keep your eyes fixed on Jesus and remain faithful to what God has called us to do no matter the circumstances. Father, thank you so very much for your word.

Thank you for the encouragement that it gives us that doesn't gloss over the fact that we're going to deal with pain and suffering, but it meets it head on. Letting us know that in this life, there will be tribulation. There will be difficulties, but we can take heart because we know that you have overcome the world. And so God, thank you for that promise. And Lord, I pray that if there's somebody here today that doesn't have that assurance, that they've placed their faith and their trust in you, that they've given their life to you, that they can have the hope that we're talking about today. Lord, I pray that you give them the boldness and courage to step forward and say, I want to follow Jesus. I want to give my life to him. I want to trust him and give it all over to him and experience the peace that comes from knowing that he's my Lord and Savior. So Lord, I pray that there's somebody here today that doesn't know you as their Lord and Savior. You would give them the faith, give them the courage to step forward. But Lord, we also pray for each and every one of us.

[31 : 52] Because we've all experienced suffering. We've all experienced pain. We may not be experiencing it right now, but there's a good chance we have in the past and there's a certainty that we will in the future. So Lord, give us the ability to remain faithful and steadfast in the midst of it, keeping our eyes fixed on you. The source of our life, the source of our hope, the source of the peace in this life.

And God, we thank you that this life, this earth is not our eternal home, but that you have a place prepared for us, that we will get to spend eternity with you. Thank you for that hope. We ask all these things in Jesus' precious name. Amen.