

James – Patience and Endurance Js. 1:2-4

Introduction:

This week we will begin a series of lessons on the Book of James. It has been called:
The Book of Monday through Friday Religion
The Book of Everyday Christianity
The Christian's Book of Proverbs
The Gospel of Common Sense

It is very clear throughout the Bible that we must have patience.

1. **Col. 3:12** - Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;
2. **I Thes. 5:14** - Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all.
3. **I Tim. 6:11** - But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.
4. **II Tim. 2:24** - And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient,
5. The Christian needs patience.

There are three passages in James that we will look at today:

- 1:2-3 – How we gain patience
- 1:4, 12-18 – Why patience is important
- 5:7-12 – How long our patience must last

I. We gain patience through the various trials that we endure (1:2-3).

- A. James says to “count it all joy when we fall into various trials” (1:2).
 1. To help clarify this statement of James, James is not saying that it is good if we suffer for doing evil.
 - a. It is not good if we, by our actions, cause ourselves to suffer for doing evil.
 - b. **I Pet. 2:20** - For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God.
 2. However, if we suffer for doing good, we can have this joy that James talks about.
 - a. **Mt. 5:10-12** - Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. {11} Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. {12} Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

- b. **Acts 5:41** - So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.
 - c. **I Pet. 4:12-16** - Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; {13} but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. {14} If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. {15} But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. {16} Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.
- B. When we fall into these various trials, we can count it as joy because of the patience that it produces (**1:3**).
- 1. We know that trials and persecutions are coming.
 - a. **II Tim. 3:12** - Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.
 - b. **II Tim. 2:3** - You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.
 - 2. These trials and tribulations produce patience.
 - a. **James 1:3**
 - b. **Rom. 5:3-4** - And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; {4} and perseverance, character; and character, hope.
 - 3. Therefore we must bear these trials with patience.
 - a. **Rom. 12:12** - rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer;
 - b. **I Cor. 4:12** - And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure;
 - c. **II Tim. 4:5** - But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

II. Notice the two key reasons, according to James, why having patience is important.

- A. It is our patience that allows us to become “perfect and complete, lacking nothing” (**1:4**).
- 1. We are to “let patience have its perfect work.”
 - a. That is, we are to allow this patience that comes through trials to accomplish its task, or fulfill its work.
 - b. James goes on to tell us what the work of this patience is.
 - 2. Be perfect:
 - a. To be perfect describes something that has reached its desired end.
 - 1) It can also mean literal perfection (as in sinless).

- 2) However, because James is referring directly to humans, it cannot mean literal perfection.
 - 3) **Js. 3:2** - For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.
 - b. It is used mostly in the Greek to show maturity, or full-grown.
 - c. As we suffer these trials, it is not that we become sinless, but we become mature and are able to do greater things for the Lord.
 3. Be complete:
 - a. To be complete describes something that is whole.
 - b. In the Greek, this term was used to describe a sacrifice that was without blemish.
 4. “Thus those whose faith is sufficiently strong to enable them to endure trial develop patience which, when allowed to reach maturity, completely equip them, leaving them ‘lacking in nothing’” (Guy N. Woods, 39).
- B. We also must have patience to endure the temptations of this world (**1:12-18**).
1. We can have patience in temptations because we know it is not God who is tempting us, but rather it is Satan (**1:13-16**).
 2. We can have patience through temptations because we know that God gives us the good gifts and the perfect gifts (**1:17-18**).
 - a. Not only does God not tempt us and give us good and perfect gifts, but He also helps us to overcome our temptations.
 - b. **I Cor. 10:13** - No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.
 3. If we endure the temptations of this life, we "will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him" (**1:12**).
 - a. We know that if we endure these temptations, our reward will be greater than any suffering we may go through on this earth.
 - b. Our reward is a home in heaven.

III. Our patience must last “until the coming of the Lord” (**5:7-11**).

- A. James gives us three examples of patience.
 1. The farmer (**5:7-9**)
 2. The prophets (**5:10-11a**)
 3. Job (**5:11b**)
 - a. Job was able to see “that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful” (**5:11**).
 - b. Remember that God restored all, and more, to Job.
 4. In each case, patience was shown for a long time.
- B. We also must be patient for as long as it takes; even until the coming of the Lord.
 - a. **Heb. 12:1-2** (After talking about 16 examples of faith) - Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us

lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, {2} looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

- b. At least three times Jesus encourages us to remain faithful to the end.
 - 1) **Mt. 10:22** (When Jesus sends out the twelve disciples) - **And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved.**
 - 2) **Mt. 24:13** - **But he who endures to the end shall be saved.**
 - 3) **Rev. 2:10** - **Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.**
- c. **Heb. 10:36-37** - For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: {37} "For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry."

Conclusion:

1:2-3 – How we gain patience (“testing of your faith”)

1:4, 12-18 – Why patience is important (“perfect, complete, endure temptations”)

5:7-12 – How long our patience must last (“until the coming of the Lord”)

We need to develop patience in our lives. We need to remember the example of God Himself and the patience that He has for us.

II Pet. 3:9 - The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

God gives us a great opportunity to obtain this great salvation.

By suffering through various trials and tribulations we develop the kind of patience that will make us “perfect and complete.” It is the kind of patience that, if we endure temptations, will allow us to “receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.”

Today, do you have patience? Are you ready to receive that crown of life. Are you ready for Christ to return?