
Living in the Joy of Patient Expectation

Sermon Text: James 5:7-11

“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 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.” (James 5:7–11 ESV)

There is a real joy to experience in this troubled life through the patient expectation that all is truly well.

How do we live in the joy of that patient expectation of all being well amid the difficulties we experience?

You Can Live in the Joy of Patient Expectation by Looking to the Reward

“Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord.” (James 5:7a ESV)

We look to that reward because it’s true - the Lord IS coming back (7a).

“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,” (Titus 2:11–13 ESV)

We also look to the reward because it is promised – we have the promise of a future (7b-8a)

“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....” (James 5:7–8 ESV)

We look to the reward because God’s word says it is imminent (8b-9)

“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.” (James 5:8–9 ESV)

We Can Live in the Joy of Patient Expectation by Looking to Our Examples.

“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.” (James 5:10–11 ESV)

“We see it [this suffering that required patience] exemplified in the prophets, who were highly privileged but not protected against the strains of life. Their privilege and their trials went hand in hand. Jeremiah was hunted by the men of his home town specifically because they wanted to stop him from speaking in the name of the Lord. Ezekiel suffered painful bereavement as the setting in which he delivered his message [in the name of the Lord]. If Daniel had not suffered deportations we would never have heard of him or benefited from his ministry. Hosea’s marriage breakdown was in itself the Lord’s word to and through him. Privilege and suffering, suffering and ministry just belonged together in the lives of the prophets.” – J.A. Motyer

“We would rightly call Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea and others, people on whom God’s blessing rested. Indeed we often react in the same way to contemporaries in whom we see the virtue of endurance. We covet it for ourselves. We would like to think that in similar circumstances of oppression or of illness we would be as resolute, even if we have grave doubts that we could manage it.” – J.A. Motyer

“... You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.” (James 5:10–11 ESV)

Though he slay me, I will hope in him;... ~Job 13:15 (ESV)

“For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!” (Job 19:25–27 ESV)

We Live with Patient Expectation by Looking to the Savior

“... and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.” (James 5:11 ESV)

The Lord has steadfast purpose.

“I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you;” (Job 42:5 ESV)

The Lord is compassionate and merciful.

“The LORD works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed. He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel. The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him. For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust. As for man, his days are like grass; he flourishes like a flower of the field; for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more. But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children’s children, to those who keep his covenant and

remember to do his commandments. The LORD has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all.” (Psalm 103:6–19 ESV)

“And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” (John 17:3 ESV)

Conclusion

What is it you must do to live in the joy of patient expectation? Again, look to the reward. Look to our examples. And look to the Savior. But there is one thing in common with all three...God’s word. It really is our very life.

Questions to consider:

- When you consider God’s word, of what value is it to you?
- How does God’s word (considering the three points of the sermon, below) inform the level of faith, joy, contentment, trust you live in amid the very real difficulties you experience from day to day?
 - God’s word and the promised return of Christ
 - God’s word and the examples of faith (take time to consider Hebrews 11)
 - God’s word and the gospel of Jesus

“The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb.” (Psalm 19:7–10 ESV)

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.” (Colossians 3:16 ESV)

“And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.” (Deuteronomy 6:6–9 ESV)

Benediction

And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 5:10-11)