

James 5:7-11 – Patiently Wait for God’s Justice on the Wicked

Calvin, Geneva, TSK, Lexicon, Henry, GreekLexicon, Robertson, Vincent, JFB, Rienecker, Trapp, PNT, Clarke, Family, Gaebelein, Doriani, Scott, INT

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

When the Prime Minister declared that hockey and baseball were part of the national interest but churches weren’t, how did that make you, as a Christian, feel?

When you are denied a promotion at your job because the boss gave it to a more beautiful but less qualified lady, did you feel abused?

When you see preachers not talking about sin and salvation, and allow people to go to hell, what do you want to do?

When you saw police in tactical gear entering a church building and ordering people out who were worshipping, what was your response? Anger? Rebellion?

Today you will find in God’s Word the call to **patiently endure abuse**.

Our headings are:

Call to be Patient

Action of the Patient

Example of the Patient

Our goals are: **That you will be encouraged to patiently endure unfairness and abuse (knowing judgment will come on the wicked) and you will learn to wait for the time when you will be permanently relieved of all unfairness and abuse.**

Call to be Patient

7 Therefore **be patient**, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, **waiting patiently** for it until it receives the early and latter rain.

1. Apostle James called on Christians who were suffering at the hands of the envious to be patient and wait for God’s judgment.

In the 2nd part of the verse, he strengthened the requirement, telling them to be **patient in a big way!** (Macro patience)

Remember, the wicked rich envied and then robbed the poor by not paying them or paying them an unfair wage.

And the Apostle James knew the **abused could become bitter and that bitterness would change to a desire for revenge.**

So he called on the abused to be patient and wait...as every good teacher would tell his students.

Proverbs 20:22 Do not say, "I will recompense evil"; **Wait for the LORD, and He will save you.**

2. Apostle James encouraged abused Christians to wait like a farmer had to wait for his crops to come in.

A farmer is **not able to hurry his fruits.**

A farmer **could not bring the early and the latter rains.** He had to wait for God to send it.

When a farmer sowed corn, **he had to expect the corn would have to face some storms, so he had to pray for success!**

With patience, the farmer would receive his corn, make flour, and then have bread to eat. **Rewards came after.**

3. Lessons:

a. Stifle your desire to seek revenge, knowing vengeance belongs to the Lord, not to you. This was Apostle Paul's prayer for the Colossian church. That they would be...

Colossians 1:11 **strengthened with all might,** according to His glorious power, **for all patience and longsuffering with joy...**

b. When you wait for justice in silence, you are publicly saying God is wise and knows the best time and place for justice.

Luke 18:7 "And **shall God not avenge His own elect** who cry out day and night to Him, **though He bears long with them?**

Of course, **God does not bear with the wicked forever.** His anger will be meted out in full force on them one day.

c. Rely on the means God has prescribed for justice. Going "postal" is not the cure. If you have lawful means to redress grievances, do.

Go to court when you must.

Call the police.

Challenge the supervisor to the boss, if there is an issue.

Speak to church officers for ecclesiastical concerns.

And of course, **if you don't have lawful means, and sometimes you don't, commit your ways to the Lord** and wait on God's justice.

d. Always keep in mind your need to pray for your abusers and teach them if they would listen. Hating them, as easy as that would be, isn't one of your response options.

2 Corinthians 6:4 But in all things we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much patience, in tribulations, in needs, in distresses...

Action of the Patient

8 You also be patient. **Establish your hearts**, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

1. Apostle James then urged Christians to have their hearts firmly set in the Lord in order to wait for his coming.

They needed to have their hearts firm in the Lord because of their tendency to become envious of others.

Psalms 73:2 But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; My steps had nearly slipped. 3 **For I was envious of the boastful**, When I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

Christians had to let their faith be strong and their hearts be soft...resting on the promises of the Lord.

Christians had to **let that faith grow in love** – love for God and love for their neighbors.

This is **how Christians are established** in the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 3:12 And may the Lord **make you increase and abound in love** to one another and to all, just as we do to you,¹³ so **that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness** before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.

They had to know their true reward was having Christ as Lord and they had to **have loose attachments to earthly things.**

9 **Do not grumble** against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the **Judge is standing at the door!**

2. Apostle James then urged Christians not to grumble as they waited for the Lord to bring justice on their abusers.

Literally, he was saying, "Don't hold a grudge," against the abusers! If Christians did, they too would be condemned with the abusing enviers.

Rather, **believers were to groan for others who sinned against them.**

Believers were to spend time in the Word of God, reminding themselves of his promises...including singing!!!

James 5:13 Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms.

Some of those Psalms would include the Psalms of imprecation...Psalms of judgment.

3. Apostle James then urged Christians to wait for God's judgment, knowing it was coming soon.

Look at the remarkable language of Jesus, showing this was referring to his soon coming to destroy, not only the wicked, but the source of their wealth in Jerusalem.

Matthew 24:33 "So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near — at the doors!

“Standing at the door” speaks of the act of entering. Can this possibly mean more than 2000 years? Never in history has 2000 years meant ‘soon!’ But it surely would fit with a few years after when Jerusalem was destroyed in AD70.

(The only way to think this was referring to the end of the world is to assume (as some theologians today) that James and the other Apostles were fooled into believing the end of the world was coming soon.) And think of the implications of what that is saying: They are accusing the apostles of writing untruths.

4. Lessons:

a. Christians aren't made of steel, so you need reinforcement to wait for God's justice on the wicked. This means you must remember God's promises through his Word and sacraments. Feed on them. Remember his love for you! Remember his justice is sure. This will cause you to be patient.

b. If you don't know doctrine, you will faith is surely weak. If you don't teach your children doctrine, their faith will be weak. Let them learn of God and his great love...and his patience...and his justice...

c. When you recognize other people's sins, don't use other people's sins as the basis of excusing your own sins. Pray that God would forgive the sins of abusers. Your desire must be to see them repent.

d. You too will face God's judgment if you complain against his providences. In fact, your sin could be worse if you sin directly against God. The man who is envious

and an abuser, is first sinning against man, which is not as grievous as sinning directly against God. So watch your own heart.

Example of the Patient

10 My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. 11 Indeed **we count them blessed who endure**. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord — that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.

1. Apostle James then challenged Christians to be patient by referring to the examples of prophets who had to patiently endure challenging times as they waited for God's justice.

2. Who were some of these prophets who had to endure troubles while patiently waiting for justice.

a. Job. He endured trials (which God permitted) of the worst sort. He was stripped of all his worldly possessions, though innocent, but he patiently endured and did not sin. He recognized he deserved nothing and was thankful for what he had.

Job 1:21 And he said: "**Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked shall I return there.** The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD."

Job 2:10 But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. **Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?**" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

b. Moses. Moses saw the injustice of Egypt on God's people, but he had to wait 40 years to begin the exodus, and then another 40 years for them to enter the Promised Land.

c. Elijah. Elijah constantly ran from Ahab and Jezebel, until God destroyed Ahab, and then his wife, in a most gruesome way.

d. There are many more examples, but look at one of Apostle Paul.

2 Timothy 2:3 You therefore **must endure hardship** as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 9 for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, **even to the point of chains**; but the word of God is not chained.

3. Lessons:

a. One way to bear afflictions is to know afflictions will end. That is most certain.

b. One way to bear afflictions is to know you will be rewarded in the end for your patient endurance.

Matthew 5:11 "**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.

c. One way to bear afflictions is to know you will bring glory to Jesus as others see your patient endurance.

b. Know God's heart is always moved when his people suffer. He is not indifferent to your needs. But he knows the injustice you might face is good for you. Trust him.

Conclusion:

God wanted his church to **be patient and wait for him to bring justice** on their abusers. He told them what they should be doing as they waited for justice. He gave them examples of prophets who were patient in order to encourage them to patiently endure.

Beloved in the Lord:

1. The sins of the abusers, while directed to you, are ultimately against God and he would bring justice at his own time.

2. Stop obsessing about it. Stop complaining about it. Do the work God has called you to do during this time. God knows if you obsess and complain about the abuse, you would not do what you should. You wouldn't have time to do what you should. You would be bitter. You wouldn't be a good spouse, parent, or brother or sister in Christ.

3. Show grace in suffering injustice. That will encourage your brothers in Jesus. That will be an evangelistic gesture to the world still in darkness. They will know God is working in you and may want to know about him.

Finally, know that **no sin escapes God** and that **any sin is enough to condemn you to hell** forever. But there is a way out. If you see Jesus dying on the cross for sinners, and if you cry out to him for forgiveness of your sins based on his death, God will remove all your sins and make you his child. If you don't join God's family, you will remain in the Devil family, and hell will be your home.