

Sermon or Lesson: James 5:7-9 (NIV based)
[Lesson Questions included]

TITLE: Keep In Mind The Coming Judgment

INTRO: Have you ever noticed that small-to-medium size children have major problems working on a challenging project for which the payoff does not come until the end? They want to receive the benefits right away or else they will quit working on the project.

We as believers need to be careful not to fall into that kind of behavior as we live out our lives for the Kingdom. Let's take a look at some of the dynamics involved in waiting for the Lord to bring the payoff in the end - when He comes to judge.

In chapter 5 so far, rich people are warned and chastised about how their sinful use of wealth will generate a serious adverse response from God on Judgment Day. In these next verses, exhortation is broadened to include fellow believers or "brothers", who should likewise keep in mind the coming judgment and act accordingly now in preparation.

READ - James 5:7-9

vv.7-8

[Lesson Question: In this passage, what are we to be patient for and what are the implied circumstances why we need to be patient?]

SECTION POINT: Because the Lord will one day return and set things right, wait patiently and stay strong in the faith as you endure adversities in life.

- "patient" = Strong's #3114 "long-suffering; patient; forbearing"; 'forbearing' - (AHD) "To refrain from; resist; to hold back; to be tolerant or patient in the face of provocation"

Continued adversities

- - The return of the Lord Jesus is certain and near.
- - At that time, He will set things right.
- - Meanwhile, there will continue to be poverty, injustices, mistreatment, abuse, oppression, evil speaking and behaviors, and etc.
- - Expect that adversities like these will come upon you.
- - God has allowed or ordained that believers are to experience suffering of injustice (vv.5:4,6) and to "face trials of many kinds" (v.1:2).
- - Therefore, the mandate from God here is to patiently endure the sufferings, adversities, and trials of life until He comes to set things right.

Follow the example

- - Follow the example of the farmer, who patiently waits for timely rains that over time grow a valuable crop on his land.
- - Properly, the farmer trusts in God to supply the needed rains and grow the crops to produce a valuable yield.
- - The farmer waits over his crops for the growing process to go through its stages.

- - The farmer knows and patiently waits that the harvest will come at the end of the growing season.

Wait patiently

- - In the same way, we believers are to wait patiently upon the Lord to timely supply provisions and necessities for living life. (cf. Joel 2:23)
- - Even in the midst of hardships, we are to faithfully wait upon the Lord to supply, provide, and sustain us.
- - We know that the Lord has ordained 'seasons' or different experiences for periods of time for us to go through.
- - We also know the Lord has good purposes He is working to accomplish in our lives during those periods of time. (v.1:12)
- - And we find solace and rest within our confident faith that the Lord will return and make things right because He is "standing at the door" ready and eager to institute judgment. (v.5:9)

Stand firm

- - So, we are to persevere and remain obedient, "standing firm" (v.5:8) in the faith which produces both proper speaking (vv.3:9-10; 4:11) and doing good deeds (v.2:17).
- - We are to "set fast our hearts" (Strong's #4741, #2588), self-restraining, un-swayed, uncompromised, and unmoved in the midst of trouble, trials, temptations, weakness, provocations, and etc.
- - No matter what kind of adversity we face, our morals, conduct, faith, wisdom, and mission are to consistently remain intact, righteous, and unadulterated. (vv.1:27; 3:17)
- - We should expect and accept daily hardships, toil, suffering, inconvenience, oppression, shortfalls as normal.
- - - And we are to wait for desired luxury, comfort, prosperity, and utopia to come in God's time, which will be in the next life. (v.5:5)

v.9 - READ

[Lesson Question: From verse 9 in context, what else can we expect to happen when the Lord comes?]

SECTION POINT: To avoid future adverse judgment of yourself when the Lord comes, be careful not to speak against or judge others.

- - All the while, we remain mindful that the Lord can and will adversely judge us personally if we behave in an ungodly manner.
- - The Judge is ready and about to enter and act, poised to bring justice, pronounce judgment, rescue the oppressed, end the unjust suffering, and etc.
- - He will adversely judge us believers for speaking or "grumbling against others", which we speak as a result of our judging others.
- - Even though we may be mistreated by "other brothers", we do not have permission from God to speak against them because that puts us in a role of being judge, which only God is qualified to do. (v.4:12)
- - From the previous verses 1-6 in chapter 5, we believers will also be adversely judged for using our wealth in a sinful or inappropriate manner, like: hoarding (v.3), defrauding (v.4), living in luxury or self-indulgence (v.5), condemning or destroying other people (v.6).

BIG IDEA: Be patient, stand firm in the faith, and do not grumble against others as you wait for the Lord to come and bring judgment.

APPLICATIONS:

- - Has the certainty been set in your heart of the Lord's coming and bringing of judgment?
- - Can you keep His coming judgment in focus and prepare for it?

- - This means you will need to be patient with everything and everyone in life.
- - This means you will need to stand firm in the Lord, in the faith, and in righteous living.
- - This means you will need to silently endure the sinful activities and mistreatment from others around you.
- - This means you will need to wait upon the Lord to enact justice, retribution, vengeance, punishment, etc.
- - This means you will need to conduct yourself, your speaking, your thinking, and your actions in a manner that guards against yourself being adversely judged and furthermore ensures God's favorable judgment of you.

- - Can you wait patiently for the payoff to come in due time, at the coming judgment?

READ (as a closing) - Psalms 37:1, 7, 34:

1. "Do not fret because of evil men or be envious of those who do wrong;"
 7. "Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; do not fret when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes."
 34. "Wait for the LORD and keep his way. He will exalt you to inherit the land; when the wicked are cut off, you will see it."
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