

**WAITING FOR THE SPRING RAIN**  
**JAMES 5:7-11**

How do we respond to rising pressures of life?

3 common responses when facing hard times:

–Give up–throw in the towel!

–Get even–seek to repay–“*Vengeance is mine!*”

–Fix it–come up with plan. “DO something!”

When we face pressure cooker of life,  
we ALL tend to become *practical* atheists.

*We ACT as if God doesn't exist!*

When we lose our job...

When we suffer big disappointment...

When we're rejected by someone we love...

We wonder, “*where's God?*”

We view suffering same as world around us.

We try to escape pressure

Church is suffering because of faith in Christ.

James encourages us to remain faithful.

**Exhortation for God's people in hard times: WAIT  
PATIENTLY ON GOD 5:7-11**

Opposite what WE normally do!

We strive to survive

We try to get by in *our* strength–*it doesn't work!*

**3 ways to wait for the Lord's coming**

Each presented as separate command:

**1. Wait with hope 7-8 “*Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, & how patient he is for the autumn & spring rains.*”**

<sup>8</sup>*You too, **be patient & stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near.***"

### **Example of the farmer 5:7**

Farmer waits for harvest, until both early rains & late rains produce abundant return.

Farmer takes advantage of early–autumn rains

–to prepare land *before* seed is sown,

In spring he waits for another wave of storms

–give crops final touch in preparation for harvest.

Impatient farmers try to shorten process; don't get same harvest as those who wait for God's time!

So **we wait patiently**, for both early & latter rains,

for the storms of life, *before* harvest, in order to receive abundant return.

*"Patience"* has to do with response to other people—to people who hurt us—"slow to anger"

In illustration of farmer—James cf. mistreatment by others, to storms which prepares crops for harvest.

*God uses that mistreatment*

*as way to make us all He wants us to be!*

The pressure *WE* face is different

–we don't face *physical* persecution!

We face insults, pressure at work, stressed marriages, frustrated dreams, credit card bills, high blood pressure, unruly kids...

Under pressure, we respond with criticism & blame!

After *all* the storms—through storms—God completes His work in us.

1:4 *“Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature & complete, not lacking anything.”*

When we understand that God uses the pressure to make **US** “mature & complete,”

...we stop trying to escape!

...we look ahead to harvest—to Lord’s coming!

### **Value of hope**

No particular value, in hope itself!

Value of hope depends on object of our hope!

Farmer’s hope: harvest will come!

**Our hope: the Lord will come**

When Christ returns,

we’ll reap benefits of waiting patiently.

So, we wait—**with hope**—with conviction He’s coming!

When we wait *patiently*, waiting for God to complete His plan—**trusting Him**—it’s hard to grumble about the pressure, or those responsible for pressure!

So, **we wait with hope!**

[ 2<sup>nd</sup> way to wait for the Lord’s coming: ]

**2. Wait without complaining 5:9** *“Don’t grumble against each other, brothers, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!”*

### **Warning about grumbling**

As we wait for God, stop complaining re. others

## Danger of judging

It's not our place to judge *other* people.

We're judged by standard we use to judge others.

Leave judgment up to God. *He'll do it justly.*

## Motive to avoid complaining:

***Judge is standing at the door!***

We wait patiently, without complaining, because we know **the Lord is coming soon.**

We know **He will judge justly!**

[ 3<sup>rd</sup> way to wait for the Lord's coming: ]

**3. Wait, imitating godly examples**      **Example of the prophets 10-11a** *"Brothers, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. <sup>11</sup>As you know, we consider blessed those who have persevered."*

Study ex. of O.T. prophets who suffered for God.

Name godly person of ANY generation.

I'll show you person who suffered, faced criticism:

Moses, David, Elijah, Jer., Micaiah; faith was ***tested!***

Prophets didn't suffer for doing wrong!

They suffered for doing what was right!

Why didn't God *DO* something?!!

Prophets stood firm; persevered under rising pressure—suffered for faithfulness!

They left ex. of what patience looks like.

***We look up to those who persevered!***

**Example of Job 11b** “*You’ve heard of Job’s perseverance & have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion & mercy.*”

Job suffered & left example of **patient endurance**.

He persevered; God rewarded (doubled his loss!)

We can be patient & wait, because we know...

***The Lord IS full of compassion & full of mercy.***

***In hard times, living faith***

***causes us to wait patiently on the Lord***

Are times hard? Are you feeling hurt & alone?

Elijah! Jer.! Moses! Paul, all did! ***WE WILL!***

***Wait for the spring rains!***

God will bring rich harvest, if we wait for *HIS* rains!

**What’s 1<sup>st</sup> thought when it seems God isn’t doing what we expect Him to do?**

Confusion & frustration result

because we have false expectations.

**We doubt God... He didn’t do what He said**

–at least, what we *thought* He said!

Our misunderstanding leads to doubt.

*We even doubt God!*

Years ago ***close friend*** went through time like that.

Missionary—committed his life to serving God.

He was being sent home; he wasn’t needed anymore.

He & his wife sat alone—out in the village—stunned!

It seemed nobody cared. They didn’t know what to do.

Have *WE* ever experienced that?

Gone through hard times, wondering if God cares?

Long period of suffering leads to discouragement

Discouragement takes our eyes off the Lord

We think about *ourselves*—how to escape affliction.

That's what's happening to God's people in 1<sup>st</sup> C

—They're discouraged.

James urges them **& US along with them**:

*In midst of hard times, wait patiently for the Lord!*

***Wait for the Spring rains!***

**We can trust Him in the dark!**

***“Never doubt in the dark***

***what God has told us in the light!”***

**The Lord's harvest is coming!**

***WAIT PATIENTLY ON THE LORD!***