

August 3, 2025
Real Wisdom for a Messy World
Be Biblically Patient
James 3:1-12

1. **Opening Discussion:** (You will probably want to use only one of these openers)

- a. Has there ever been a time when you had to wait for something important? What were the circumstances, and how did you respond during the wait? What did you do or say? Was there anyone else with you, and how did they react to the situation?

b. Definition of Patience:

Webster's dictionary online defines "patience" as being the state or quality of being patient; the power of suffering with fortitude; uncomplaining endurance of evils or wrongs, as toil, pain, poverty, insult, oppression, calamity, etc. In other words, "patience" is the ability to wait calmly for something without getting angry or upset. It means staying hopeful and steady, even when things take a long time or don't go the way we want. Is there anything else you can add to this definition?

c. Example from U.S. History:

One powerful example of patience in U.S. history is the Civil Rights Movement. For many years, Black/African Americans peacefully fought for equal rights under the law. Leaders like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. showed great patience by choosing nonviolent protests, marches, and speeches—even when facing hatred, violence, and arrest. Their patience helped bring about significant changes, like the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which ended segregation and made discrimination illegal. Are there any other examples you can think of?

2. **Prayer:**

- a. **Adoration** - Pray a Psalm or other Scripture to focus on praising God.
- b. **Confession** - Spend time confessing any known sins. (1 John 1:9)
- c. **Thanksgiving** - Thank God for answered prayers, blessings, gifts, and opportunities to serve.
- d. **Supplications**
 - i. Pray for the activities of LRBC and other churches in Prince William County and around the world.

- ii. Join in a prayer for the people of Israel, Ukraine, and the Palestinians.

Heavenly Father,

You are the God of mercy, justice, and peace. You see every tear and hear every cry. Today, our hearts are heavy for the innocent Ukrainian and Palestinian children, families, and elderly, and for the remaining Jewish hostages and their families. We lift all who are suffering and grieving, longing for Your comfort.

Lord, we pray for the Gospel to be sown and for you to draw near to those who have lost loved ones, homes, and any sense of security. Wrap them in your grace, mercy, and grant them peace that surpasses all understanding. Be near to the brokenhearted, and rescue those who are crushed in spirit (Psalm 34:18).

We plead for an end to the violence and destruction. Raise peacemakers. Stir the hearts of leaders and those in authority. Let justice—not corruption—roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

We also pray for Your Church amid the chaos. Strengthen your people to stand firm in hope, to serve with compassion, and to speak truth in love. May the light of Christ shine boldly in even the darkest of places.

Teach us to pray earnestly, to speak wisely, and to act justly with hearts full of mercy and love.

In the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace,

Amen.

3. Sermon Key Points

- a. Wait Patiently for Jesus to Return
 - i. We are commanded to be patient in the face of injustice and suffering
 - ii. Patience will be blessed
- b. Biblical Patience Has Specific Qualities
 - I. A Firm Heart
 - ii. A Pleasant Tongue

- iii. Trust in the Lord's Plan and Purpose
- iv. Simple Integrity of Speech

4. Bible Study:

a. **Sunday Afternoon** - As soon as possible after the sermon, make time to consider:

- i. What stood out to you the most in this sermon?
- ii. What new truth did you learn, or what truth were you reminded of?
- iii. Is there a particular Scripture passage you feel God is leading you to meditate on or commit to memory?
- iv. What is one thing God is leading you to do after hearing this message?

b. **Monday:**

i. This week's focal passage is James 5:7-12. Start each day's study by reading the entire passage and then meditating on the verses highlighted that day. Since the original letter did not have verse and chapter divisions (nor subject headings), go back and start reading at James 5:7-8.

1. Do you view yourself as being oppressed? If so, in what way?
2. In verse 7, James is speaking to believers who are burdened, and he encourages them to be patient. What motive should Christians have for being patient?
3. The literal return of Jesus Christ should be the motive for every Christian to be patient. We should also be encouraged that one day in the future there will be a bodily resurrection of believers and a rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).
4. As an illustration, James uses a farmer patiently waiting for harvest time and autumn and spring rains to arrive. Farming involves a long, tedious process of plowing the land, planting seeds, watering, fertilizing, and protecting what begins to sprout. Then, in anticipation of more rain, the crops continue to grow to full maturity. Similarly, believers are called to be patient like a farmer waiting for the Lord's return. In the meantime, Christians should be sowing the Gospel seed, baptizing believers, and discipling them to live righteously and serve God patiently.

ii. Based on this first reading, what is the most essential truth you see, and how should it influence your life?

1. Are you looking forward to Jesus' return? Are you viewing Jesus' return as a way to escape the trials and tribulations of your life? Is that the only reason we should long for His return?
2. Look at Titus 2:13 (ESV), "*Waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.* Christians should long for Christ's return because it means full redemption, justice, and eternal fellowship with the Lord.

c. Tuesday:

i. Look at verse eight again, "*You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.*"

1. While you wait for Jesus' return, you are to "stand firm" (NIV). The ESV and NKJV say, "establish your hearts..." The Greek word, *stērizō*, translated as "establish," is also used in 1 Thessalonians 3:13 and 2 Thessalonians. 2:17. How is the word "establish" used in these verses?
2. Did you know that God tells us in Hebrews 13:9 that we can counteract false teaching by "strengthening our heart by grace"?

ii. Pastor Brian explained that doubt is natural to a certain point. But when doubts creep in and are overwhelming, we need to firm up our hearts, remind ourselves of what is true about Almighty God.

1. Philippians 4:4-8 encourages believers to read, meditate on Scripture, worship, pray, and praise! How did we get peace? Look up Isaiah 53:5.
2. Remember to cast your troubles on God (Psalm 55:22) and not be like the world we live in (Romans 12:2).

d. Wednesday:

i. Read James 5:9. Grumbling is what the Israelites did in the Wilderness, and God doesn't like it. Let's look at some examples of their Grumbling: **Exodus 16:2 (ESV)** - "*And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness;*" **Exodus 15:24** – "*And the people grumbled against Moses, saying, 'What shall we drink?';*" **Numbers 14:2** –

"And all the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron...;" Numbers 11:1 – "And the people complained in the hearing of the Lord about their misfortunes...;" Deuteronomy 1:27 – "And you murmured in your tents and said, 'Because the Lord hated us he has brought us out of the land of Egypt...;"

1. In 1 Corinthians 10:10 (ESV), Paul refers to the sin of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram in Numbers 16-14-47. Because the Israelites were complaining about their food, some were judged, *"Nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer."*
 2. If you had been in the Wilderness, what would have been said about you in the Bible regarding your patience or lack thereof? Would you have been found grumbling?
- ii. God does not want Christians grumbling or judging, period! Look at James 5:9.
1. Do you grumble to others about stuff? Can that lead to the sin of gossiping?
 2. Explain in your own words Proverbs 16:28 and 11:13.
 3. Do you grumble and blame others for your troubles?
 4. One aspect of patience is not grumbling or complaining. What do Ephesians 4:2 and 1 Thessalonians 5:14-15 say about complaining and how we should treat others? Take time to make an honest inventory of how patient you are.
 5. Do you want to be judged? Verse nine states that if we grumble against our brothers and sisters, we will also be judged. Where will that judgment occur? Is it at the Great White Throne of Judgement or at the Judgement Seat of Christ (also referred to as the Bema Seat of Christ)?
 6. How easy it is to get angry and have a short fuse with those we love and with those we work with, even in a church setting. But it should not be so. In Matthew 7 3-5, we are told to take out the log from our eye before we attempt to take out the speck in our brother or sister's eye. Do not be quick to judge others, but be quick to judge oneself.

e. Thursday:

- i. In verse 10, James identifies the Old Testament prophets as examples of individuals who patiently endured difficult circumstances to make known God's truth and will. How did the prophets become such patient people? It was through tribulation. Were you aware that in God's economy, to obtain Godly patience requires suffering. Remember, tribulation, and our trusting in God's plan and purpose allow us to grow in the ability to deal with problems patiently.
- ii. Hebrews 11:36-38, provides a list of the types of suffering the prophets endured: "Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ *They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated—* ³⁸ *of whom the world was not worthy—wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.*" The prophets endured, they stood fast and held unto their faith in God without grumbling or complaining.
- iii. Are you currently undergoing difficult circumstances? Remember that God will use trials to grow your faith and patience. Therefore, pray and look at your circumstances differently. **Romans 5:3** states, "*Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance.*" Remind yourself that God loves you more than you could ever imagine. How do we know this? Read and meditate on Galatians 2:20.

f. Friday:

- i. In verse 11, James provides another example of fortitude through trial. It is the story of Job, who lost money, property, livestock, employees, and his daughters and sons. During these losses, his wife did not act as his helpmate (Proverbs 27:15).
- ii. Through all of this loss, Job grew in his knowledge of God. At the end of the book, Job truly understood the mercy and compassion of God. That's one of the characteristics or results of patience, faithfully submitting and relying on God's mercy and compassion.
- iii. Just like Job kept his eyes focused on the great hope of the Lord. Therefore, we should also keep our eyes on the prize of that day when we stand before God because of our identification with Christ. Are you keeping your eyes of Jesus?

g. Saturday:

- i. Don't swear and don't curse is the teaching of James in verse 12. That is something many people do when they do not get their way. Impatient people are characterized by swearing and cursing. It should not be named among us. Look at the beginning of verse 12, it says, "But above all." Wow, may I suggest that this might mean swearing and cursing are "above all" the other prohibitions written in the Bible? Really? Please don't do it!
- ii. Study on your own the different types of swearing and cursing found in God's word. Here are some examples:
 1. "Swearing by oaths." Jesus was put under an oath by the High Priest in Matthew 26:63. The law of Moses demanded that a Jew respond when placed under an oath (Leviticus 5:1). Additionally, Paul made an oath in 2 Corinthians 1:23 and Galatians 1:20. So, what is James speaking about in verse 12? I believe James is saying that a man's or a woman's word should be trustworthy. No oath or extra guarantee should be needed. However, we know that in this broken world, people are so untrustworthy that oaths are required. But what should we be known for? As Pastor Brian said, "If you say it, mean it! If you don't mean it, don't say it!"
 2. I know one family, and they have an oath, "Pumpkin, Trust me, Believe Me," as a guarantee that what the person is saying is true, especially if they are saying something that appears to be unbelievable. Can you guess which LRBC Pastor came up with that phrase?
 3. "Frivolous swearing" - The unrighteous have mouths that are "full of curses and bitterness" (Romans 3:14)
 4. "Hypocritical swearing" - James 3:10-11
 5. "Silent, universal swearing" - Ecclesiastes 7:22

5. Application:

- a. In James 5:7-8, we are reminded to "*be patient... until the coming of the Lord,*" just like a farmer who waits for the harvest. In today's world, where everything is instant—from food to communication—it's challenging to stay on God's timing. But true biblical patience means having a "*firm heart*" rooted in trust that Jesus is coming again to make things right (Titus 2:13). When we suffer injustice or go through trials, do we grumble like the Israelites (Exodus 16:2), or do we hold on to God's promises

like the prophets (Hebrews 11:36–38)? Ask yourself: *What does it look like to live with patience today?* Are you viewing your current struggles through the lens of eternity, or are you tempted to complain and take matters into your own hands?

- b. James 5:12 warns us, "above all... do not swear," emphasizing that our words should be honest and full of integrity. In times of stress, it's easy to let impatience take control of our tongue, but God's people are called to speak with *grace and truth* (Ephesians 4:29). When things don't go your way, do you resort to harsh words, empty promises, or even cursing? Instead, follow the example of Job, who suffered greatly but remained faithful and grew in his understanding of God's mercy (James 5:11). Let this be a challenge: *Can others trust your word?* Ask the Lord to help you speak in ways that reflect a heart established by His grace (Hebrews 13:9) and a life that waits patiently for His return.