

***TO LIVE IS CHRIST*****Perseverance and Prayer James 5:7—20**

*We consider blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy. Jas. 5:11*

**Day 1: Read James 5:7–20.**

1. What hard times have been making James' readers long for Christ's return (vs.7)? (Review Jas.2:6b–7; 5:1–6.)
2. Do you need to be urged to be patient as you contemplate Christ's return? How often do you think of it? Do you ever long for it? Why or why not?
3. What is the difference between standing firm (vs.8) and not standing firm?
4. What things will the Lord's coming change? (Rom. 8:18–25; 1 Jn. 3:2–3; Rev. 21:1–5; 22:1–5)

**Day 2: Read James 5:7–9.**

5. Why is James' choice of farming imagery an apt illustration of patience?
  - a. What does the "valuable crop" mean to the farmer?
  - b. What does the farmer control in the production of the crop? What does the farmer not control?
  - c. What specific correlations do you see between the life of the Christian and the work of the farmer?
6. Why does James single out the sin of grumbling (vs. 9)? What does James say will happen if you grumble against each other?
7. Grumbling is an example of how we can become impatient with one another and the Lord. Where do you need to stop grumbling and submit to God's process for you?

**Day 3: Read James 5:10–12.**

8. How did the prophets suffer? Why did they suffer? (vs. 10; 1 Kings 22:24–27; Jer. 38:4–13; Heb. 11:35–38)

9. Job is known for his patience, but in verse 11 he is described as persevering. What is the difference between patience and perseverance?
10. What did the Lord “finally [bring] about” in the case of Job? (Skim Job 42.) Were God’s blessings to Job primarily spiritual or material? (Job 42:1–6; Matt. 5:3)
11. God’s testing and God’s compassion: are they consistent? Why or why not? (Review Jas. 1:2–5.)
12. Who is James quoting in verse 12? (See Matt. 5:33–37.) What is the gist of verse 12? Where can you apply this verse in your own life?

**Day 4: Read James 5:13–16.**

14. What is your first reaction to trials and suffering? To times of happiness? How does James urge us to meet the lows and highs of our lives?
13. What is the relationship between prayer and patience?
15. How do you know whether or not your prayers are prayers of faith? Look at the way Jesus prayed (Mk.14:36) and the way he taught us to pray (Mt. 6:9–13). What do Jesus’ prayers have in common?

**Day 5: Read James 5:16–20.**

19. Why is it so important to “confess your sins to each other and pray for each other” (vs. 16a)? What impact does this kind of sharing have in the church community?
18. Think about the other believers you are close to. Do you know them well enough and love them well enough to speak into their lives and have them speak into yours?
20. Are you righteous enough to pray effective prayers? Why or why not?
21. Recall some of the main themes of James. Why is James 5:19–20 a good way to close this letter?