

Lesson 8
PERSEVERANCE THROUGH PRAYER

“You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.”
(James 5:8)

PERSEVERANCE: Read James 5:7-12

James teaches us not to look to our wealth to save us but to be patient and persevere.

1. What do you learn from verses 7-8?

What if the Lord had come back ten years ago? Where would you be? As the Lord has patience, we too should have patience about our circumstances and with others—until God comes back!

2. In light of James instruction concerning patience and perseverance, what does he advise in verse 9, and why?

God is so good, and we tend to look at the negative aspects of others that irritate or trouble us, and forget how much God has blessed. This then becomes the main focus in our minds and it causes us to lose the joy of God's blessings—and it could stumble us in times of trials and temptations, causing us to fall into judgment and condemnation.

3. Verses 10-11 tells us about the prophets as an example of perseverance and suffering. Share your observation.

Verse 11 says, “You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.” These are good examples of men who learned to wait upon God. Job's end was more glorious than before his trial: more children and more riches. It takes great perseverance during a trial to know the end of the story, remembering God is compassionate and merciful.

4. Why do you think James makes such a strong emphasis about avoiding oaths and swearing in verse 12? See Matthew 5:33-37.

One Step to Freedom

Chapter 4: Obedience to God's Word

Jesus brings up the subject of taking oaths to verify that we are speaking the truth. Usually an oath is said when a person doubts your word. And of course some will say, "I swear to you by God." James says you don't need to do that. Be a person of your word so that people can trust what you say. And when you say yes, then do it. If you say no, then stand by it. Jesus says, "Anything more is from the evil one." We tend to get out of situations with our words instead of persevering through it.

PRAYER: Read James 5:13-18. James brings up the necessity of prayer and its benefits while persevering through temptations.

5. If you are suffering, what should you do? (verse 13)
6. What should you do if you are cheerful?
7. What does James instruct if you are sick? (verse 14)

In verse 15 James makes a correlation between sickness and the forgiveness of sin. There are some sicknesses directly attributable to sin, so there is a direct tie between the sin and the healing.

8. We should only confess our sins to God. Verse 16 commands us to confess our trespasses (faults or mistakes—not sins) to each other—someone we trust. What happens when we do?
9. Explain what happens when a righteous person prays with us and for us fervently?
- 10 According to verses 17-18, who has a nature just like ours? Why did God answer his prayer?

An effectual, fervent prayer is from a sincere heart. It's a prayer that arises out of desperation or tremendous need. When it says to "pray earnestly," that means to pray continuously, again and again. In times of trials and temptations, we should model this type of prayer.

Read James 5:19-20. In closing, James instructs believers to encourage each other and pray for one another when we go through trials and temptations.

In review, James gives many practical guidelines for a faithful Christian walk. The bottom line is that our faith should affect every aspect of our lives; from our words to our actions, our faith needs to be sincere and committed.