

“Patience”

Action Guide



Being patient is difficult! In this action guide we will consider not the patience displayed by Job. Job managed a brave, persevering and enduring spirit in the midst of overwhelming afflictions. Instead, we will review what it means to be patient with our desires to get even or to retaliate when we have been wronged.

God displays this patience in the way He is slow to anger and exact vengeance. Either expression of waiting is difficult, but learning how to be patient towards those who deserve punishment is something we Christians desperately need to learn. Our understanding of this kind of patience not only will increase a Christians capacity to love some difficult people; it will also provide Christians a deeper appreciation of God delayed return.



Read James 5:1-12

In your own words, describe the person that James is describing in verses 1-6.

Read Luke 16:19-31

Why do you suppose the rich man was deserving of his punishment?

Now with both of these descriptions together what do you suppose James means when he writes, " Be patient, **THEREFORE** brothers and sisters until the coming of the Lord."

What is your reaction when you read that you are expected to be patient with people who are deserving of punishment not for a short period of time, but until the coming of the Lord?

Be patient until the coming of the Lord feels a lot like forgiving someone 70 times 7. It does seem that many of these expectations that are placed upon Christians are not meant for short time periods, but as actual ways in which to exist in the world.

The concept of "Coming of the Lord" is reference to the 2nd Coming of Christ. In other words, Christians are not to grow impatient with people like those described by James and Luke until Christ returns and establishes His kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Thus far, Christians have been expected to remain patient for well over 2,000 years!



What is challenging your patience these days?

Perhaps it feels counter-intuitive to display patience towards those who are deserving of punishment until Christ returns.

What benefit does James suggest a Christian will receive when they make the commitment to display patience until Christ returns? (Review verses 7-9)



Notice that James refers to Job's endurance not his patience (verse 11). James wants Christians to be like Job as they experience overwhelming persecution. James wants these persecuted Christians to face the harsh and unjust treatment they are receiving with unflinching determination and perseverance, this is why he calls upon the example of Job and the prophets. While these Christians are not losing faith in God, they must protect themselves from their growing desire to defend themselves, to retaliate against those who are harming them. Instead, James is instructing these Christians of the expectation to remain patient until Christ returns.

What blessings do you suppose are in store for Christians who are willing to remain patient until Christ returns?

How then are we to develop this type of patience in our life? Read James 1

Remember

“Patience is the ability to count down before blasting off.”