

Strengthening Our Hearts for the Coming of the Lord

James 5:7-12

Introduction:

1. The selfish one fattens himself up for the slaughter; while the patient one strengthens himself for the Second Coming
2. Most times, those who are strengthening themselves are going to be persecuted by the selfish.
3. James' advice on how to strengthen our hearts is to be, patient, enduring, and be wise with our words.

Discussion:

I. Strengthening in our Patience (7, 8)

- A. How long are we to be patient?
 1. Until death or the coming of the Lord (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)
 2. No matter what comes our way, we are not to stray from the truth.
 3. Patient- to suffer long or be long minded. We look to the end to help us along the way
 4. A farmer does not give up because his crops do not grow overnight.
- B. What does patience look like?
 1. Establishing your heart, for the coming of the Lord
 - a. Establish- to fix firmly or strengthen
 - b. Hebrews 12:1-2; 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13
 - c. Compare with James 5:5
 2. It is preparing and being ready for that day
 3. It looks like a farmer waiting for His crops (1 Corinthians 15:58)
 4. He does not know when he will reap his harvest just like we don't but we always need to be ready (1 Corinthians 13:3)

II. Strengthening in our Endurance (10, 11)

- A. Suffering comes with the territory
 1. The Prophets suffered
 - a. Job suffered much and for a long time (Job 1:6-2:13)
 - b. Hebrews 11:33-ff
 2. The apostles suffered (Peter, James, Paul, etc..)
 2. Jesus suffered and so will those who follow Him (John 15:18-25)
- B. Suffering has its reward
 1. Those who endure will be count blessed!
 2. Job was rewarded greatly! (Job 42:10-17)
 3. The Lord sometimes needs to test (not tempt) us to see if our faith will remain strong (1 Peter 1:6-9)
 4. There is not temptation that we cannot overcome (1 Corinthians 10:13)

III. Strengthening in our Words (9, 12)

- A. We are not to complain about one another
 1. 1 Corinthians 10:10; James 4:11
 2. Even if one is causing you harm, there is no need to complain
 3. We are known by our love for the brethren, not what we think is wrong with the brethren (John 13:15)
- B. But above all!!
 1. James has already spoken on some very serious topics. It is hard to think there is something even greater that they should worry about?
 2. Not keeping your word, is a big deal
 3. We should not have to say an oath, like "I swear by ____" or pinky swear.
 4. We should be known for our truthfulness and our reliability
 5. The old saying goes, "Let your word be your bond"

Conclusion:

1. There are always and will always be two types of people, those who are drawing to God and those who are going away from God. We are never static; the bible speaks about those who are not faithful as being resisted by God, and for those who are faithful as drawing to God.
2. James' advice is simple to understand but hard to practice. Patience comes with trials, Endurance comes by suffering, and wisdom in our words comes from the word of God.
3. God was patient with us, Jesus sacrificed for us, and the Holy Spirit brought us the word of God. It takes all three to remain faithful. We need God's patience, we needed Jesus's sacrifice, and we needed the word of God!