"FAITH WITH BOOTS ON"

BIG IDEA . . . Part 13: "ENDURE TRIALS PATIENTLY" (Jam. 5:7-12)

INTRO: Pastor James is teaching us skills to develop for our faith to wear boots. A. Stanley . . . James wanted his readers to realize they could endure trials patiently because of God's character and promises. Read . . . We spend a lot of life waiting, don't we? We can't wait to start school, then can't wait to get out. We can't wait to fall in love, marry, have children, etc. – much waiting. Waiting tends to test our patience. We are the "Hate the Wait" (HTW) Generation. I am better, but I hate to wait. No verse to hurry up!

Illus: Ever noticed that the more expensive a restaurant, the longer you wait . . . five waits (to be seated, get menu, order, food, check) and call the server a waiter!

James tells us to develop our faith we must learn to endure trials patiently. His readers facing trials (1:2-4). He uses patient, patience, persevere, six times in passage. He uses three examples (farmer, prophets, Job) to answer three questions about enduring trials patiently.

I. *WHEN* SHOULD WE PATIENTLY ENDURE? (7, 10, 11) – Three special times we need extra dose to endure patiently. When . . .

A. CIRCUMSTANCES ARE UNCONTROLLABLE (v. 7b the farmer)

1. *Farmer* has little control over his circumstances. No way to farm w/o patience – constant wait to till, plant, prune, harvest, etc. Some factors are out of his control: weather, rain, sun, economy, labor, etc. So true in Israel, difficult to farm land that was dry, rocky, and crusty. Farmers do all they can and then trust (good strategy).*Keep working!*
2. Much of life is beyond our control. Still, we try to control it with worry. This is useless. We need patience in uncontrollable circumstances.

B. PEOPLE ARE UNCHANGEABLE (v. 10 the prophets)

1. The *prophets'* duty was to change the people and bring back to God. Largely, they resisted change and persecuted the prophets (Ex. 1 Kings 19:10,14; Matt. 5:11-12; Acts 7:52). *Keep witnessing!*
2. Patience is a must with people because all tend to resist change in behaviors. You must have a long fuse. Patient (macrothumos) means to be long to get heated (Heb. 11:35-38). ILLUS: Response to hurt . . .

C. WHEN PROBLEMS ARE UNEXPLAINABLE (v. 11 Job)

1. *Job* played in Superbowl of Suffering and won! He had it all, then lost it in two days (Job 1:13-19; 2:7-13). He suffered every kind of problem, plus a nagging wife (2:9). Worse of all, Job had no explanation. He had reason to ask, "Why me?" *Keep worshipping!*
2. Life is not fair. God never said it was. Sometimes, life makes no sense. Some things will not be explained until heaven.

II. *WHY* SHOULD WE PATIENTLY ENDURE? (8, 11) - James' examples from farmer, prophets, and Job provide reason to endure patiently ~ because of what we know of the character and activity of God. We have three reasons to endure trials patiently:

A. *PROMISE OF GOD* – Three times James reminds us the Lord's coming is near (7, 8, 9). Jesus' return is proof *God is in control*. Nothing can stop it. God is in control of history (His Story). His plan for my life is greater than any trial I face. "Stand firm" – strengthen your heart.

B. *PRIZE OF GOD* – Verse 11 says God *blessed* Job's patience. He was *rewarded*. God doubled all he had. It pays to be patient. Patience yields a valuable crop (v. 7): grows character, develops relationships, etc.

C. *PROVIDENCE OF GOD – Verse 11 says the* Lord finally brought *about*. *God is always at work*, even when we don't know or see. Delay is not denial. Like the farmer, we wait while God works. Paul said in Phil. 2:13 and Rom. 8:28 . . . He is *full of compassion and mercy* to see us through.

III. *HOW* SHOULD WE PATIENTLY ENDURE? - James suggests three attitudes while we wait:

A. *WAIT EXPECTANTLY* (7b) – "waits for land to yield. . .) Farmer expects a good harvest, do you? While he waits expectantly, he prepares for the answer. We show our expectation by preparation (Psa. 130:5). What are you waiting for from God? Are you preparing yourself?

B. *WAIT POSITIVELY* (9, 12) – Tend to grumble when impatient, get irritated, or frustrated. Easier to wait if can complain. James adds in v. 12, ". . . don't swear . . ." Don't make foolish vow in tough times (Matt. 5:34-37). Two verses Lam. 3:26 and Hab. 2:3. . .

C. *WAIT CONFIDENTLY* (8) *Stand firm* – Strengthen your heart. Job never lost his confidence. He never shut down his faith (2:10). It takes TRUST and *HOPE* to do this. Psalmist said "Be still and wait patiently" (37:7).

ILLUS – Keep your fork . . . the best is yet to come . . .

CONC: Where do you need to endure patiently – uncontrollable circumstance, unchangeable people, unexplainable problem? Don't forget, God is in control, He'll reward, as He is at work behind the scenes. What is it? Job, finances, illness, spouse, kids, etc. You can endure it patiently if know who God is and what He can do. Never grumble or swear! Satan wants us to get impatient with God. An impatient Christian is powerful weapon for enemy (Moses, Abraham). Are you enduring trial patiently? Or grumbling, complaining, even swearing? Confess it and trust Him. Someone to pray over you at table?