WEALTH, PATIENCE, AND SUFFERING

James 5

Awareness

Before listening, reflect:

- How often do you think about money? Would you say money, or the need of money consumes your thoughts? Do you think more often about God or money?
- Reflect on your prayer life. How often do you pray? When are you most likely to pray? When have you consciously been aware of God's answer to one of your prayers?

In the closing chapter of James, the author quickly hits some major topics with great impact. He offers a grave warning about the spiritual health of the wealthy. He reminds faithful believers about patience, perseverance, and what they're really waiting for. And he offers those who are suffering both comfort and a robust theology for understanding their suffering. The letter closes with urgent and emphatic encouragement to all believers to utilize the great gift of communication God has blessed us with: prayer.

Listen:*Wealth, Patience, and Suffering*

Reflection

- Reflect on your life experience. How has money affected your spiritual life? Has having it or not having it affected how much you rely on yourself or God? Has your experience with money affected your level of gratitude? Has it affected the strength of your faith? How has it affected your prayer life?
- In John Calvin's New Testament Commentary on James 5 he writes, *"So it is a real consolation to know that what the world takes to be misfortune is for us a means of salvation. To the understanding of the flesh, this is strange: but the faithful may be sure that when they are tried by the Lord with various pains, they are blessed."* Reflect on that quote and hosts Dave Bast and Scott Hoezee's discussion about perseverance and patience. Think about an instance of suffering you've experienced in life. When you look back now, can you see blessing in it? Do you see growth or a maturing in your faith?
- Consider your earlier reflection on your prayer life. How has prayer changed you? After listening to Dave Bast and Scott Hoezee discuss confession and prayer (both personal and congregational), in what areas of your prayer life do you think you are doing well and in which areas would you like to grow?

Related Passages

- **Matthew 6:19-24**
  Wealth
- **Luke 18:18-30**
  Wealth
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Romans 5:1-5
Perseverance/Suffering

- **Philippians 4:6-7**
  Prayer

- **Ephesians 6:10-20**
  Prayer

Conclusion

Evaluate your spiritual health when it comes to money, perseverance, and prayer. What prayers of confession and/or thanksgiving do you need to offer God? Discuss with God the areas in which you are strong and thank him for his faithfulness; similarly, discuss with him the areas in which you see the need for growth or maturity and seek his guidance and grace.

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https://groundworkonline.com/episodes/wealth-patience-and-suffering

Printed on March 29, 2024

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