



Just Grow Up!

James - A Manual for Maturity

Patience in the Midst of Life's Storms

1. What is an instance in your life where you had to demonstrate patience? Was it hard or easy for you? Why do you think people have such a hard time being patient? Can you think of an example where being impatient made things worse?
2. What is patience? Why do you think God puts such a high value on patience? According to Galatians 5:22, where does patience come from? What does that mean for us?
3. Pastor Rick said that there were three reasons why we need patience in life's storms, what were they? Why do these characteristics make it so hard for us to bear them?
4. Read Hebrews 12:1-4. According to this passage, what must we do if we are going to successfully weather life's storms? Why was it a joy for Jesus to endure the cross? What should we learn from His example about weathering hard times?
5. Read Hebrews 12:5-11. According to this passage, why does God allow hardship in our lives? What does the word "discipline" mean? Is this the same as punishment? Why should God's discipline cause us joy?
6. What are the three attitudes toward God we must develop in order to patiently weather life's storms? Read 1 Peter 5:10. What is the promise in this verse?

ANSWERS

1. A Biblical example would be Numbers 21:4-7.
2. Patience is the ability to delay current fulfillment in order to enjoy a greater fulfillment in the future. Biblically it is the ability to resist taking action ourselves in order to allow God to take action in the future. Patience is valued so highly by God because it requires faith in the goodness of God in order to allow God to work instead of working things out ourselves. Galatians 5:22 says that patience is one of the fruits of the Spirit which means we must be controlled by the Holy Spirit in order to have patience.
3. The three reasons are that storms are: a. uncontrollable; b. unchangeable; and c. unpredictable. Storms are hard for us because we have no control over them and if there is one thing that makes us uncomfortable as humans, it is not having control over something in our lives.
4. We must keep our eyes on Jesus and look to His example for how to handle life's storms. The joy for Jesus was not the suffering, but what would come about as a result of His suffering: the possibility of salvation for all humanity. He focused on the result, not the process. We must do the same, focus on what God is going to do in us as a result of trusting Him in the storm.
5. This passage tells us that God uses hardship in our lives as the means to discipline us. The Greek word for discipline in this verse means "training". Although it can involve punishment when needed, it does not mean punishment. It is on the job training, God uses hard times to teach us how we are to live in reliance on Him. Discipline should cause us joy because this passage says the end result is that it will produce "a harvest of righteousness and peace" in our lives, which means to become more like Jesus.
6. The three attitudes are that we must wait expectantly for God's divine intervention, wait excitedly for God's rescue and relief, and wait confidently for God to work it all out for our good. 1 Peter 5:10 is the verse that actually promises that God will intervene in our struggles.