

-----ENEMIES OF INNER PEACE-----

INNER PEACE IN THE MIDST OF TRIALS

James 1:2-4

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PREAMBLE

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing (James 1:2-4; NKJV).

The Amplified version renders James 1:2-4 this way...Be assured that the testing of your faith [through experience] produces endurance [leading to spiritual maturity, and inner peace]. And let endurance have its perfect result and do a thorough work, so that you may be perfect and completely developed [in your faith], lacking in nothing. Consider it nothing but joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you fall into various trials.

Brethren our texts for discussion today, **James 1:2-4** have some words that are at variance with each other. It talks about - JOY, VARIOUS TRIALS OR LIFE CHALLENGES, FAITH, PATIENCE, SPIRITUAL MATURITY OR GROWTH and all produces an INNER PEACE in the life of a faithful Christian.

According to the Bible, patience is a form of perseverance and endurance that allows us to respond to frustrating circumstances with grace and self-control. Patience is a virtue the world or worldly lacks as they want everything speedily. Patience is not a personality trait but the by-product of the presence and work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts and minds of believers (**Galatians 5:22-23**).

Patience leads to harmony (synchronization) with others, endurance to handle difficult circumstances, and an expectant attitude of hope that things will get better. It is built on the foundation of trust in God's providence and power. It demonstrates a thoughtful and careful attitude toward others' feeling.

Anyone can be patient, but there is a higher level of patience that comes from God through His Holy Spirit presence and work in our lives.

Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way,

consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.

Patience is evidence of strong character, developed in abrasive relationships and challenges, as you pass each test of your faith, you will build a higher degree of patience, resistance or that, that buffers your endurance when you are tested again. God develops patience in us through our relationships with others.

Some people that come our way may not be by accident or hard luck, they could be help build our tolerance level. Abrasive relationships teach us to patiently endure. God is involved in long term patience development plan in our lives, that is the more reason why the Scripture says count it all joy when pass through divers' challenges, cause the Lord is trying to mould or sculpt you fit for His use.

Proverbs 16:32 paints the picture clearer... Better to be patient than powerful; better to have self-control than to conquer a city. When confronted with divers' life challenges, it's better to be patient and have self-control to manage the process and trusting God for His providence rather than demonstrating strength and domineering.

Ephesians 4:2 encourages us to "Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making

allowance for each other's faults because of your love." Applying these principles in our lives will grant us inner peace as we will be at peace with ourselves and our neighbours.

Patience is a characteristic of love. The more loving you become, the more you will model the nature of God in your life. Our Eternal Father is the perfect example of patience. That patience will be tested and grow under the pressure of relating to other people including our loved ones. Every day we fail to measure up to God's perfect standard of patience, yet God is slow to get angry and loves us unconditionally.

We are expected to practice this even in toxic relationships with others. **Romans 5:3-5**... "We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love". This guarantees inner peace!

Hebrews 10:36 advises us to seek for... Patient endurance is what you need now, so that you will continue to do God's will. Then you will receive all that he has promised. What is Patient endurance? Patience is the calm, composed ability to wait or endure provocations and delays without becoming frustrated, while endurance is strength to persist through, withstand, and bear up

under prolonged hardship, pain or stress.

Together, they represent a resilient, long-term fortitude against adversity. Patient endurance are essential for the navigation of long-term trials, such as personal struggles, waiting for goal to materialize, or maintaining faith. Example life struggles, using patience to keep a good attitude while using endurance to keep going e.g., Promotion at the workplace.

EFFECTS OF IMPATIENCE [GREAT ENEMY OF INNER PEACE]

Causes Mistrust Trust, Doubt and Disobedience Impatience may cause us to rush ahead and take matters into our own hands. At first, we may trust that God will handle the situation, but when the answer is slow in coming, we begin to think that God needs some help. We begin to listen to wrong counsel.

Some even say God help those who help themselves. An example is Abraham's wife, Sarah in **Genesis 16:1-2** "Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar; so, she said to Abram". "The LORD has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her."

Abram agreed to what Sarai said". Sarah knew that she was to have a child, but God waited twenty-five years to make this promise come true. In the meantime, Sarah took matters into her own hand and created a mess, which till today

humanity still feels the impact of the couple's decision. When we trust God, we need to trust him completely, even if it means having to wait. Impatience often stems from a lack of trust in God's timing, leading to disobedience and loss of, or delay in, blessings. **Exodus 32:1-4**.

Bad Decisions

Impatience can lead to bad decisions. When you are impatient, you may make decisions without fully considering all the factors. Therefore, it can result in poor choices that have negative consequences. An example in Bible of impatience driven by fear and threat was recorded in **1 Samuel 13:8-14**.

"Saul waited there seven days for Samuel, as Samuel had instructed him earlier, but Samuel still didn't come. Saul realized that his troops were rapidly slipping away. So, he demanded, "Bring me the burnt offering and the peace offerings!" And Saul sacrificed the burnt offering himself. Just as Saul was finishing with the burnt offering, Samuel arrived.

Saul went out to meet and welcome him, but Samuel said, "What is this you have done?" Saul replied, "I saw my men scattering from me, and you didn't arrive when you said you would, and the Philistines are at Micmash ready for battle. So, I said, 'The Philistines are ready to march against us at Gilgal, and I haven't even asked for the LORD's help!'"

So, I felt compelled to offer the burnt offering myself before you came.” “How foolish!” Samuel exclaimed. “You have not kept the command the LORD your God gave you. Had you kept it, the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your kingdom must end, for the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart. The LORD has already appointed him to be the leader of his people, because you have not kept the LORD’s command.”

- ✓ King Saul story seems very striking, sympathetic, painting the picture of patience and the need to heed to simple instructions despite being in a very challenging situation.
- ✓ He waited patiently under threat and fear for seven days in Gilgal as instructed by Samuel. Quite unfortunate that at the nick of the time he bulged and disobeyed God, this caused him his kingdom and life.
- ✓ Impatience can lead to disobedience, causing you to miss God’s blessings in your life and taking wrong decisions that could impact one for a life time.

Hinders Career Development & Impedes Personal Growth

- ✓ Impatience can hinder career choices and development. When you are impatient, you may rush into decisions without fully thinking them through, resulting in poor choices that harm your career prospects and in some case regrets.
- ✓ Moreover, when you are impatient, you may become

easily frustrated when things move slower than you would like, leading to decreased productivity and missed opportunities.

- ✓ Impatience can impede personal growth. When you are constantly impatient, you may not take the time to reflect on your actions and make meaningful changes. As a result, it can prevent you from growing and developing as a person.

Example;

- ✓ A Student that may be seeking admission into the University, probably have been unsuccessful for one or two years to gain admission for a particular course of interest may jump on another offer by the university to study another course quite different from his desired passion.
- ✓ Another example are some employees or staff that keeps changing jobs because of promotion or job incentives, some later in their peak career finds themselves stuck as relevant Career development they were supposed to obtain from lower job groups were missed.

Causes Regret

- ✓ Impatience can also cause regret. When you are impatient, you may make impulsive decisions you regret later. It can lead to feelings of disappointment, frustration, and even self-blame.

- ✓ An example could be a young boy or girl sent to school or to learn a trade, instead of concentrating on his/her learning/study, they focus on activities met for later part of life.

Some resultant effect actually troubles the soul and some actually alter one's success in future. Some hurriedly do things or take decisions the hurts them throughout their life time.

Limits Opportunities

Impatience can limit opportunities. When you are impatient, you may become frustrated and give up on pursuing goals or opportunities that require patience and perseverance. As a result, it can prevent you from achieving your full potential.

Studies show that impatient individuals may earn 13% less on average, have higher job turnover, and are less likely to complete education.

Example, in those good old days when learning a trade or getting educated was in vogue.

Learning a mechanic may take minimum of three to five years while to learn how to drive a car or truck may take less than six months.

Some that are impatient go for the shorter program. Same applies for the University education, an undergraduate pushing a medical doctorate degree may veer off to take a lesser program. Majority of our youths today are driven by impatience with the desire to make it

now without the patience and perseverance to pursue a career or learn a trade.

The resultant effect could challenge inner peace when they get older. Rushing can lead to missing out on better opportunities and creating long-term, irreversible, or difficult-to-rectify problems.

Ruins Relationships

Impatience can strain relationships with family, friends, and loved ones. You may become easily frustrated or agitated when you are impatient, causing tension, conflicts and a lack of, or poor communication with the people around you. leading to loss of friends and strained relationships – all these are enemies of inner peace.

Being impatient can also lead to impulsive behavior that can damage relationships and cause regret later.

Causes Health & Emotional Problems

Impatience can also cause health and emotional challenges. Impatience is linked to stress, anxiety, and a higher risk of frustration and irritability. For example, when you are constantly impatient, you may experience increased stress levels, which may lead to physical and mental health issues such as high blood pressure, heart disease, depression, and anxiety.

WAITING FOR THE LORD NEEDS PATIENCE

- Waiting for the Lord reveals our need for God's strength and gives God

the full access to exercise His might on our behalf or lives. **Isaiah 40:31** reassures..... “*but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint*”.

We will find renewed strength to tackle our challenges by trusting in the Lord to work. He will bring us what we need when we need it.

- Delays and difficulties are not sign that God is ignoring us. As we wait for God to work, we can exercise being patient. We have hope and confidence because we know that he hears our prayers in those hard time {**Psalm 40:1**}.

For God is pleased when, conscious of his will, you patiently endure unjust treatment. Of course, you get no credit for being patient if you are beaten for doing wrong. But if you suffer for doing good and endure it patiently, God is pleased with you. {**1 Peter 2:19-20**, NLT}. When we refuse to take things into our hands, God takes them into His.

The Lord brings Justice and vindication to those who wait and trust on Him. God may seem to delay

CONCLUSION

To achieve inner peace in the midst of trials, patience is the key to enduring suffering and life challenges. Suffering is better endured when patiently endured (**2 Thessalonians 1:4-5**).

And because of his glory and excellence, he has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world’s corruption caused by human desires. In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God’s promises. Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, and

(in our sight), but He is never late. Our self-centred and perception makes us incapable of seeing things from God’s point of view. What God promises will happen according to His perfect timing, not ours. Habakkuk 2:3 “This vision is for a future time. It describes the end, and it will be fulfilled. If it seems slow in coming, wait patiently, for it will surely take place. It will not be delayed”.

Waiting for the Lord means bringing our timetable into synchronization with God. We try not to rush ahead of him or linger too far behind Him. Waiting on the Lord is relying on Him as the source of our daily strength for all situations, realizing our total dependence on Him, and maintaining our hope in the promises of His word. “*I wait [patiently] for the LORD, my soul [expectantly] waits, And in His word do I hope*”. {**Psalms 130:5**} see also **Isaiah 30:18**.

Lamentations 3:25 - The LORD is good to those who wait [confidently] for Him, To those who seek Him [on the authority of God's word]. God blesses those who wait for Him. The waiting can become an opportunity to seek God’s presence in other ways and seek to know Him more deeply.

knowledge with self-control, and self-control with patient endurance, and patient endurance with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love for everyone. {**2 Peter 1:4-7**, NLT}.

As we allow God's power to strengthen us, patience is a by-product that develops. The more we patiently learn to walk with Him and wait with Him (Removing the Spirit of impatience), and then we appreciate his patient endurance with us, the more we grow in the joy of just being with him instead of worrying about what will happen next. Patience will help us enjoy our relationship with God right where we are today. It will also transform our relationship with others.