James 5:7-11 *Dear brothers and sisters, you must be patient as you wait for the Lord's return. Consider the farmers who eagerly look for the rains in the fall and in the spring. They patiently wait for the precious harvest to ripen. [8] You, too, must be patient. And take courage, for the coming of the Lord is near. [9] Don't grumble about each other, my brothers and sisters, or God will judge you. For look! The great Judge is coming. He is standing at the door! [10] For examples of patience in suffering, dear brothers and sisters, look at the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. [11] We give great honor to those who endure under suffering.* ***Job is an example of a man who endured patiently.*** *From his experience we see how the Lord's plan finally ended in good, for he is full of tenderness and mercy. (NLT)*

A few years ago I planted a tree an 8 foot silver maple. I really wanted a full grown 60 foot tree. But I sure couldn't afford those trucks that move full size trees. Why is it so hard to wait for a tree to grow? Because it is so slow we don't even notice the growth. Many times the growth that is going on is under ground as roots establish themselves so that they can draw moisture and nutrients from the ground that cause growth. So I watered the tree and waited.

Spiritual growth is a lot like that. Many times we don't see fast or flowery growth. And because we are so conditioned to want it now many times it is hard for us to invest the time and effort because we don't see the results we want right away. As a culture we do not want to wait patiently for anything. Yet James reminds us that PATIENCE is one of those things which God expects and which is part of God's plan. Remember Job? He lost everything! Yet God restored it all. However, it took at least ten years for him to have all 10 children again. It took time for all his wealth to be restored and doubled. He is an example of how we are to wait patiently in our walk with God. Why? Because God is full of tenderness and mercy. He does not make us wait simply to aggravate us or frustrate us. He knows that roots take time to develop and being Steadfast and Patient are things HE longs for in us.

PRAYER: O Lord God, it is so hard for me to be Patient. But I do want to sink my roots down deeply in You and continue to grow. Help me to Trust You and to remain Steadfast and Committed in my walk with You.

Pastor Mark Kieft
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