



## Establish Your Heart

### Read James 5:7-8 (ESV)

*Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.*

### Reflect

*What are you looking forward to the most about the coming of the Lord?*

Have you ever wondered what is taking so long? Why hasn't Jesus come back yet? We look around and we see the signs. Jesus said, "...you will hear of wars and rumors of wars...For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places" (Matthew 24:6-7). We watch the news on any given day and we see those things happening and we wonder, is it today? Is it tomorrow? We long for Jesus' return. The suffering on earth is immense. It is hard to witness and agonizing to experience and endure.

That is why I find James' words in today's verses so encouraging. James had just called out the wealthy wicked for their evil deeds. He assured them that the Commander of the armies of heaven took notice, and that swift judgment was coming upon them. Now, he turns back to address and exhort his fellow believers. "Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord."

I don't know about you, but patience is not a strength of mine. It is hard to wait for anything, but it is especially hard to wait when there is suffering involved. The longer we suffer the more prone we are to doubt and question. Is it ever going to happen?

That is why James urged the believers to **"establish your hearts."** In other words, settle the matter in your heart and be steadfast. The Lord is coming back. And while none of us know the day or the hour (Matthew 24:36), His

return is imminent. He could come at any moment! That should strengthen our resolve and shore up our faith.

I also find it easier to be patient when I know that there is a good reason for the delay. James used the analogy of a farmer waiting until his crops received the rains needed to be ripe for the harvest to show that there is a purpose to God's timing. Jesus is not just sitting around waiting for nothing.

The apostle Peter explained, "The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). What we perceive as His delay is really His incredible patience with us. Wise farmers don't pull up their produce before it is ready to be harvested. Like farmers, we should patiently wait until the harvest is ready.

Friends, I know this life is hard. It isn't easy to wait patiently for Jesus' return. But don't get discouraged. Keep looking forward to His coming. Establish your hearts on this truth: He is coming. And soon. Every day is one day closer.

### Respond

*Lord, I confess that some days it is hard to wait for Your return. There is so much suffering in this world. But I know that You have a purpose in Your delay and that Your timing is perfect. Strengthen my heart to continue to wait patiently for You no matter what I face in the future. Amen.*

### Reveal

When someone shares their frustration with the brokenness of the world, listen well, then offer to pray with them—asking God to give both of you patience and hope as you wait for His perfect timing.