

# The Path of Perseverance

## **Context**

*Written around AD 50 (first book of the NT to be written)*

*Around the same time as Paul's first missionary journey*

*Prior to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70*

## ***Author***

*He was one of the select individuals Christ appeared to after his resurrection (see 1Co 15:7).*

*Paul called him a “pillar” of the church (Gal 2:9).*

*Paul, on his first post-conversion visit to Jerusalem, saw James (Gal 1:19). Paul did the same on his last visit (Ac 21:18).*

*When Peter was rescued from prison, he told his friends to tell James (Ac 12:17).*

*James was a leader in the important council of Jerusalem (Ac 15:13).*

## ***Recipients***

*Its distinctively Jewish nature suggests that it was composed when the church was still predominantly Jewish.*

*It reflects a simple church order—officers of the church are called “elders” (5:14) and “teachers” (3:1).*

*No reference is made to the controversy over Gentile circumcision.*

*The Greek term synagoge (“synagogue” or “meeting”) is used to designate the meeting or meeting place of the church (2:2).*

## **James and the Sermon on the Mount**

- 1: the spiritual view of the law (Ja 1:25; 2:8, 12, 13; Mt 5:17–44)*
- 2: the blessings of adversity (Ja 1:2, 3; 2:5; 5:7, 8, 11; Mt 5:3–12)*
- 3: the dangers and the uncertainty of wealth (Ja 1:10, 11; 2:6, 7; 4:4, 6, 13–16; 5:1–6, Mt 6:19–21, 24–34)*
- 4: the futility of a mere profession of religion (Ja 1:26, 27; Mt 6:1–7)*
- 5: the contrast between saying and doing (Ja 1:22–25; 2:14–26; 3:13, 18; Mt 7:15–27)*
- 6: the true nature of prayer (Ja 1:5–8; 4:3; 5:13, 18; Mt 6:6–13)*
- 7: the incompatibility between the love of the world and the love of God (Ja 2:5; 3:6; 4:4–8; Mt 6:24)*
- 8: the need to forgive others if we would be forgiven ourselves (Ja 2:12, 13; Mt 6:14, 15)*
- 9: the tree known by its fruits (Ja 3:11, 12; Mt 7:16–20)*

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*But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. (NKJV)*

*So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing. (NLT)*

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*The Greek text, and it is a simple third person imperative,  
**ΕΧΕΤΩ.***

*“Let patience have . . . .”*

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***But God has evidently ordered reality that the path to spiritual maturity travels down the narrow path, the path of perseverance.***

## **James 1:4**

*If we are to be spiritually mature, then perseverance must complete its work. If it doesn't, if we don't embrace the pain but run from it, it can't complete its God-given task.*

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*Silver Bullet theology will not allow perseverance to finish its work.*

***God's good purposes for you do not include you remaining immature, incomplete and imperfect.***

*So what is the wording that James uses getting at?*

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*James would have us all cultivate is an **intensely active energy**, and not a mere passive endurance.*

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*2: We are who God has said that we are  
Sons and daughters who by grace share in the  
relationship that the Son has with the Father by nature*



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*2: Disappointment and Pain*

*3: Fear and Resignation*

# *RESULTS OF ENDURANCE*

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*The patience that James calls us to has a telos – and end:*

***Maturity, perfection, completion.***

*Expositors Greek Testament Commentary – “here it would mean those who fully attain to their high calling.”*

*RESULTS OF ENDURANCE*

*What is the high calling?*

***INTIMACY with God***

*When our faith and spirits rise and fall with second causes,  
there will be unsteadiness in our words and actions.*

*1: Unsteadiness in our words and actions.*

*2: Unsteadiness in their internal being.*



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*2: What if your need of the Father is your honor and not your shame?*

*3: AND to remind you of his eternal once-and-for all meeting of your need.*

*“Theology that begins with a center in man ignores the fact that God has already provided for us that response which alone is acceptable to Him - the offering made for the whole human race in the life, obedience and passion of Jesus Christ.”*

*Thomas Torrance*

*We have access to the Father, through the Son and in the Holy Spirit.*