

Challenges of the Faithful Farmer

James 5:7-11

Introduction

Mark 4:26-29 (ESV) ²⁶And he said, “The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. ²⁷He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how. ²⁸The earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. ²⁹But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.”

The Farmer Metaphor is common in the Bible, especially in Jesus’ parables.

Emphasis in this parable:

- Chooses the Seed
- Prepares the Soil
- **Sows the Seed**
- Cultivates & Feeds
- Manages Pests
- **Patiently Waits**
- **Harvests the Crop**

I. PATIENT WAITING! Establish your heart.

James 5:7-11 (ESV) ⁷Be patient, therefore, brothers,^f 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. ⁸You also, be patient. **Establish your hearts,** for the coming of the Lord is at hand. ⁹Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. ¹⁰As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and **you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.**

2 Timothy 2:3-7 (ESV) ³Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. ⁵An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. **It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops.** ⁷Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

What are some things that contribute to wearying the heart of a faithful Christian?

Galatians 6:9 (NKJV) ⁹And let us **not grow weary while doing good**, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.

Revelation 2:3 (ESV) ³I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name’s sake, **and you have not grown weary.**

II. What Can Weary Us?

A. Chronic Health Issues

2 Corinthians 12:8-10 (ESV) ⁸Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. ⁹But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect

in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

B. The Pull of the World

Galatians 5:16-17 (ESV) ¹⁶But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, **to keep you from doing the things you want to do.**

1 John 2:15-17 (ESV) ¹⁵Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions—is not from the Father but is from the world. ¹⁷And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

The Spirit is opposed to the flesh.

Struggles with sensuality
Financial difficulties
Mid-life crisis
Sacrifices for others

SUBMIT TO GOD

C. The Harassment of the World

2 Peter 2:7-9 (NKJV) ⁷and delivered righteous Lot, *who was* oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked ⁸(for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented *his* righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing *their* lawless deeds)— ⁹*then* the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment,

Lot was oppressed and tormented by his constant awareness of, exposure to, and concern over the ungodliness of those living around him.

D. Sorrow Over the Unfaithfulness of Loved Ones

2 Corinthians 2:4 (NKJV) ⁴For **out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you**, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you.

2 Corinthians 12:21 (NKJV) ²¹lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and **I shall mourn for many who have sinned** before and have not repented of the uncleanness, fornication, and lewdness which they have practiced.

Grief of the soul can be debilitating, especially when a spouse, child, or sibling departs from Christ.

E. Discouragement Over the Carnality of Some Brethren

APATHY

Revelation 3:1-2 (ESV) ¹“And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: ‘The words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. “I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead. ²Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your works complete in the sight of my God.

HYPOCRISY

Romans 12:9 (NKJV) ⁹Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.

CRITICISM

James 5:9 (NKJV) ⁹Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be [£]condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!

III. Remedies for Weariness

A. Nurture Your Faith

1. Read and Meditate – Acts 20:32
2. Sing – Col 3:16
3. Commune – 1 Cor 10:16-17
4. Pray – Eph 6:18

Acts 20:32 (NKJV) ³²“So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

Colossians 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

1 Corinthians 10:16-17 (NKJV) ¹⁶The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? ¹⁷For we, *though* many, are one bread *and* one body; for we all partake of that one bread.

Ephesians 6:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—

B. Continue to Serve in Love

Hebrews 6:9-12 (ESV) ⁹Though we speak in this way, yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things—things that belong to salvation. ¹⁰For God is not so unjust as to overlook your work and the love that you showed for his sake in serving the saints, as you still do. ¹¹And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end, ¹²so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Hebrews 3:12-13 (NKJV) ¹²Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; ¹³but exhort one another daily, while it is called “*Today*,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Hebrews 10:24-25 (NKJV) ²⁴And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

Galatians 6:1-10 (ESV) ¹Brothers,[£] if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. ²Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. ³For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. ⁴But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone

and not in his neighbor. ⁵For each will have to bear his own load. ⁶One who is taught the word must share all good things with the one who teaches. ⁷Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. ⁸For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. ⁹And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. ¹⁰So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

1 Corinthians 15:58 (ESV) ⁵⁸Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

C. Remember the Cloud

Hebrews 12:1-2 (NKJV) ¹Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ²looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 10:35-39 (NKJV) ³⁵Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. ³⁶For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: ³⁷*“For yet a little while, And He [£] who is coming will come and will not tarry. ³⁸Now the just [£] shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him.”[£]* ³⁹But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

Conclusion

The Farmer Metaphor

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- Prepares the Soil
- Sows the Seed
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