

## FWG –Week of May 10, 2020

**Beverly Bowden-Smith**

**Song:** Come Thou Long Expected Jesus – Red Mountain Music (Yes! It is a Christmas song, but go with it. You'll see...)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vRAFQCOKigE>

(Or for younger families: Isaiah 11 – Rain for Roots <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CjOgGTZ-6OQ> )

**Prayer:** *Begin worship with prayer. Remember that we can go to our Father with all things in prayer and petition. What are you wanting/needing/worried about/frustrated by that you need to bring to Him? Bring it with a thankful and confident heart. He cares and He is able!*

**Text:** *Therefore, brothers, be patient until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth and is patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. -James 5:7*

**Explanation:** *Do you ever study a concept in theology and finish feeling like, "Well, that's awesome, but what do I do with this information??" That is where our friend James really shines. James the Just, as he was called, might be the G.O.A.T. when it comes to applied theology (except, of course, Jesus). His epistle is jam packed full of practical, hands-on, everyday ways to glorify God in our behavior. And some of it really steps on some toes...*

*He is addressing all kinds of situations with early Jewish Christians in this book. In some ways, they are being oppressed and mistreated. Wealthy Romans and Jewish leaders bully and take advantage of these Christian converts who have less political and economic power. But also, some bad behavior wells up from within the Christian community. Gossip, selfishness, favoritism, false teaching, pandering and even murder- God's people are pretty much acting like the rest of the world.*

*The sins on this list may seem different, but at their root, they are not. All sin, as James explains in v. 1:15, begins with desire. When we seek to get our desires (good or bad) met by any means other than God's provision, we sin. If we desire to be uplifted, we gossip to put others down. If we desire to be influential, we pander to the powerful. If we desire to be rich, we indulge selfish ambition. God can meet these needs though, if only we ask with godly motives. In fact, He already has met them for all of eternity through Jesus Christ. He is coming again to right all wrongs. All we have to do is wait patiently- contentedly- until God's fruit is in season. Our bellies will surely be filled and our every desire aligned to His will and met with abundance.*

**The Point:** *God's way is always the right way and His time is always the right time.*

**Application:** *How does this text apply to each member of your family?*

**Pre-K & Elementary Age:** *Pick a fruit with visible seeds (preferably one your child likes to eat!) like an apple, orange or watermelon. Explain how every single one of the building blocks for that fruit are inside the seed. Nothing can else can ever grow from that seed. If it's planted, it **will** become an apple/orange/etc. So... if that's true, couldn't we just skip all the business of waiting for fruit to grow and eat the seeds right now? Of course not! The seed would taste awful and they would be dry and hard to chew. We would also miss out on all the healthy vitamins that are in a mature fruit. However, if we wait for the right time, and let the seed be nurtured in the ground by God's good rain and warm sun, we will get to enjoy juicy, sweet fruit that is not only delicious, but good for us too!*

**Middle & High School Students:** *The middle and high school years are notoriously difficult because of all the social pressure to conform and be liked. Teens can be vicious in their treatment of each other. Bullying, gossiping, judging, and social cliques can leave some nasty scars behind. Has your teen ever been the victim of any of these behaviors? Or perhaps the perpetrator? Ask them to explore the connection between waiting for God to meet our innermost desires and how we treat others. How do you treat people if you do wait for God to act? How do you treat people if you don't?*

**Young Adult:** *It can be a lot easier to **look** like an adult than to **become** an adult. When Rocky and I were first married, we probably charged a bajillion dollars' worth of bacon cheeseburgers at Chili's because plopping down that American Express card and going out to eat felt very 'adulty.' Trust me, it wasn't. As young adults, we have lots of freedom and power to make ourselves look like we've achieved more than what God has entrusted to us. Going into debt, marrying the wrong person, making poor career choices- all of these things can have long-term negative consequences. Where in your life are you trying to force a square peg in a round hole so to speak? What desire are you trying to meet outside of God's provision? What does His word say about how He can meet that desire?*

**Adult:** *In the daily grind, we sometimes lose sight of the big picture of Christ. Get up, breakfast, carpool, email, deadline, meeting, carpool, dinner, laundry, homework, go to sleep, get up, do it all over again.... These days don't leave much time for contemplating eternity. Not waiting for God does often look like us trying to force our will in life, but sometimes not waiting looks a lot like simply giving up hope. Does the reality of your inheritance in Christ still inspire you and bring you joy? If not, you may need to make time for Sabbath and remember just what it is that you wait for.*

**Senior Adult:** *So, the kids are grown and gone. The grandchildren are busy with school and friends. You've retired from your career. You've built the house and the nest egg. You bought the boat, took the trips, smelled the roses- so many good experiences to be thankful for, but there is more to come! James says that there will be early rains and late rains. What late rains are you looking forward to? What wisdom can you share with the younger generations as they wait for even the early rains?*

**Song:** It Is Well with My Soul – Matt Redman

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dKi7dePvoK0>

**Prayer:** *When longing and discontent invades your thoughts, let that be an instant prompt to pray. Ask God to cultivate contentment in you. Confess to Him that His provision is enough. Ask Him to teach you to trust in His sovereignty instead of trying to control things in your own strength. Thank Him for both the early rains and the late rains; they are both grace.*