



SERIES: FEBRUARY – MARCH FAITH IN REAL LIFE

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Scripture: James 5:9

TITLE: The Return of the King

"What are the chances he will show up?" Those were the words I heard before I did a major burnout in front of my high school the day before graduation. In 1999, I had this sweet Camaro that was meant to lay rubber. So what else should a guy do but leave a mark in front of his school? But I began to get cold feet, so my buddy, and now pastor friend, said, "What are the chances the principal will show up?"

Well, after I did the most amazing burnout, I saw that blue truck come over the hill and enter the parking lot. It was my principal. He was not happy and ready to judge accordingly. Many of us live as though the judge isn't at the door ready to finalize the verdicts. Well, James has a wake-up call for all of us in James 5:9 (CSB).

Brothers and sisters, do not complain about one another so that you will not be judged. Look, the judge stands at the door!

The letter from James is Christianity 101. It displays the beauty and the power of the Gospel. It shows the responsibility and the freedom in our faith. In chapters 3 and 4, James has talked about the power of our words. They can build up and burn down. Our pride can drive our words to fights. And now in chapter 5, he encourages the believers to not be complainers about one another.

Now, we don't know what they were saying. It could have been a complaint that the trials and/or blessings weren't the same. So they were calling each other out. It could be the common practice of lashing out at one another over their external circumstances. Regardless, they were all over each other much like a couple of siblings griping all over each other.

James says, "knock it off." Why? Because the judge stands at the door.

It's like what I'll sometimes do before coming home. I call my kids to say, "Hey. Be ready. I'll be home soon." Sometimes, I find the house clean and kids getting along. Other times I find them unprepared and picking on each other.

We are to be patient and live intentionally because the return of Jesus is imminent. Now, it's true for the Christian, we do not fear facing judgment for our sins. We are God's children. We won't want to lose our reward. Instead, we want to hear "Well done" from the coming Judge and King.

So here's my challenge for you today: ready up. Jesus' return is imminent. He's called us and said so in His Word. Are you getting along with your brothers and sisters in the body of Christ? Are

you living the life that God saved you for? If not, begin right now. If so, keep it up and lovingly encourage each other to do the same.

When we live out the transforming power of God's grace as we await the King, we will win the day!