

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE / SEPT. 17

TO APPLY—NOT REHASH—THE SERMON

Read

Read James 5:7–11 and consider making some observations about the passage.

Sermon Recap

Review the sermon with your group, highlighting the following:

- Our culture of instant gratification is training us to handle suffering and waiting poorly.
- James calls us to wait for God’s return with patience (“long-suffering”) and steadfastness (“standing that won’t quit”).
- The prophets suffered as they spoke God’s words, and Job suffered unexplainably, but they remained steadfast because they trusted God’s good purposes. God *will* bring final justice and finish the work he started in his people.
- We may struggle to “count it all joy” (1:2) as we endure suffering. Even as we lament, we should be careful not to grumble inwardly or outwardly against God, our life circumstances, or other people.

Group Discussion

1. What comes to mind when you think of the Lord’s return? (*You might read Revelation 21:1–8 or ask the group to suggest other related passages.*)
2. According to James, what hope does a Christian have in suffering? How does this affect the way you live today?
3. James and Pastor J.D. gave examples of patience. Which of them stand out to you? Would you add any others?
4. Share about a season of suffering you have experienced. What helped you endure? How has suffering strengthened your trust in God?

WEEKLY RESPONSE QUESTIONS

- Reflect:** What has God been showing you through James about himself and his purposes in suffering?
- Respond:** What step can you take this week to cultivate a patient trust in God?
- Reach:** Who in your life needs to know the hope you have in Christ? Pray for an opportunity to share this good news with him or her.

PRAYER

- Praise God for his justice. Thank him for punishing Jesus for *our* sin, so that we are clean in his eyes (Romans 3:26) and can look forward to his return!
- Ask the Holy Spirit to convict us of ways we distrust God or rage against others in our suffering, and help us to turn from this.
- Pray that we would be diligent to remind one another of his promises for this life and eternity to come.