



# DISCUSSION GUIDE

THIS WEEK: JAMES 5 – The wisdom of waiting

## GETTING STARTED

What is one thing you are thankful for this week and what is one thing we can pray for you this week?

Remind each other of our simple expectations for meeting together

*How is waiting hard for you? What “tries” your patience most and why?*

*When has waiting, exercising patience benefited you in the long-term?*

## QUICK REACTIONS FROM THE MESSAGE

How would you summarize/paraphrase the message in your own words?

What point/idea resonated most with you? Why?

Did you disagree with something said, or what do you think should have been added or expanded on?

In what say does the harsh criticism of the wealthy make you feel uncomfortable, why or why not?

Of the 6 ways we are to be patient as we wait until Christ returns, which one is most relevant to you right now and Why? (1. Not grumbling or complaining about each other, 2. With grit and endurance, 3. By not making promises you don't mean to keep, 4. By trusting God and asking for help, 5. By practicing foundational spiritual disciplines, 6. By reaching out to the prodigal and wanderer.)

## EXPLORE THE PASSAGE [James 5]

(Yes, these questions can seem silly, however good discussion and interpretation of the Bible begins with having a proper understanding of the basic facts; who, what, when, and where in the text.) Work through this quickly, the answers are fairly obvious.

What warning did James give to rich people? (5:1-3)

What misfortune lies ahead for the wealthy? (5:1-3)

Who should "weep and wail"? Why? (5:1-6)

What will happen to all the possessions of the wealthy? (5:2-3)

What attitude does God have toward hoarding wealth? (5:3)

For what reasons will the rich be punished? (5:4-6)

Who have been the victims of rich people? (5:4-6)

What do luxury and self-indulgence have to do with the trouble that lies ahead for rich people? (5:5)

What do we need to do as we wait for the Lord's return to earth? (5:7)

What illustration did James use to describe the kind of patience we need? (5:7)

Why should we be patient about Christ's return? (5:8)

Why should we avoid judging others or grumbling against them? (5:9)

What will happen to Christians who grumble against their fellow believers? (5:9)

What people serve as good examples to us? How? (5:10-11)

In what ways does God help us when we must endure suffering? (5:11)

What warning did James give concerning taking oaths? (5:12)

What is the alternative? (5:12)  
What should a person do when he or she is in trouble? Why? (5:13, 15)  
What should a person do when he or she is happy? Why? (5:13, 15)  
What should a person do when he or she is sick? Why? (5:14-15)  
Why is prayer important? (5:15)  
What are the elders of the church to do for someone who is sick? Why? (5:14-15)  
How can a person have his or her sins forgiven? (5:15)  
Why should we confess our sins to one another? (5:16)  
Who is a good example of how God answers prayer? How? (5:17-18)  
What is a Christian's responsibility toward a fellow believer who has wandered? (5:19)  
What is the benefit of helping a person find their way back to Christ? (5:20)

## QUESTIONS THAT HELP US UNDERSTAND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TEXT

In what ways is James connecting his idea of faith without works being dead, with faith without generosity is dead?

In what way does James answer the question about why Christ has not returned yet?

How will God reward us if we are patient?

What lessons from Job and Elijah's experience can we apply to our lives?

What kinds of reasons do Christians judge and complain about each other?

Why does how we wait as Christians, matter as much, if not more than that we exercise patience as we wait?

In what way can you and I become better "waiters" as followers of Jesus?

What prevents Christians from confessing sins and praying for each other?

If we confess our sins to God, why should anyone else have to know about it?

What causes Christians to stumble and fall away from their faith?

How could you help someone (and who) who has drifted away from his or her relationship with Christ?

## APPLY THE PASSAGE

What do we learn about God and about ourselves in this passage?

What may God be asking you to change, do differently, repent of, pray about as a result of engaging with this passage?

How can we pray for each other?