

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

For the week of September 27-October 3, 2020

“THE PRACTICE OF PATIENCE”

GETTING STARTED

To the facilitator: Use this section to introduce the topic. If possible, give a brief recap of the sermon.

Share a memorable point, a spiritual lesson, a personal application, a question, or something that challenged you from the sermon last Sunday.

Share what you would consider your best moment and your worst moment in the past week.

GROUP DISCUSSION

Read James 5:7-11.

1. The first command James gives us is, “Be patient.” What does it mean to be patient? Is this a virtue that is easy or difficult for you? What situations or people cause you to think or act without patience? What are the results when you are not patient?
2. *Discuss.* Why does the farmer need to be patient? Has the farmer been passive prior to waiting? What is in his control after he plants? Are the rains necessary and what does the farmer do to ensure their arrival? What details can the farmer control in the growing cycle and what details are out of his control? Upon what rewards does the farmer wait? What beliefs/convictions cause the farmer to expect the rain and wait on the fruit?
3. In using the illustration of the farmer, James twice gives the command to be patient. Think of a situation in which you have recently lost your patience, or a recurring situation that consistently tries your patience. How would you apply the answers from the farmer illustration (Question #2) to your situation?
4. Twice in the passage James says that Jesus is returning. What does the “coming of the Lord” have to do with patience (verse 8)? Is it merely about awaiting his arrival, or is it also relevant to the decisions we make now?
5. The psalmists sometimes complained to the Lord. Is this okay? If you’re in a bad situation (work, home, etc.) is it wrong to complain to those in charge? To complain to a friend? How does James’ command in verse 9 fit into these situations?

6. (Optional) Pastor Nic shared the example of Jeremiah as an illustration of patience. Can you think of other prophets (Old and New Testament) who would’ve been tested with patience in the midst of suffering? What about Job? How might his situation have been a test of patience?

7. What is the difference between patience and perseverance? In verse 11, James says there is blessing that comes through perseverance. On the flip side, we can rob ourselves of a blessing if we decide not to persevere. How does lacking perseverance under trial result in possibly missing some things that God has in store?

8. [NEXT STEPS]

Bearing the fruit of patience today leads to God’s blessings tomorrow.

- ☐ I will learn the way of “active patience.”
- ☐ I will be thankful and not grumble.
- ☐ I will pray and ask for God to grant me patience in my current problem.
- ☐ I will be alert to practice patience even in the normal day-to-day dealings of life.

Don’t forget to:

- ☐ Go through the devotionals everyday this week.
- ☐ Have a regular daily time of prayer and reading of God’s Word.
- ☐ Commit 30 minutes a day for God’s intervention in this fight against the COVID virus.

CLOSING THE SESSION.

Close the session by taking the time to pray for one another. Consider the following as you pray:

- Pray for the Holy Spirit to grow the fruit of patience in your life.
- Take the time to pray for our nation, for peace and for the gospel to prosper during this time of the pandemic.
- Pray for those who are hurting, going through fear, worry and anxiety in the group.
- Pray for your unsaved family, friends and loved ones.