

James 5:7-11
Be Patient

Warm Up

In what ways has the world grown more impatient? Do you think we get more impatient the older we get?
What are the things that cause you to be impatient?

Background and context

When we are ill and go to the doctor or hospital we are called a patient. This comes from the Latin word *PATI*, meaning 'to suffer' or 'endure'. Therefore a patient is one who endures suffering. This is what James calls all believers to do. It is more than the daily inconveniences of life, but enduring the hardships of the Christian life; unjust persecution, unanswered prayer and unfulfilled expectations, having the hope that Jesus will return and make all things right.

Thinking it through: Main discussion/activity



READ James 5:7-11. What are the surprising things in the passage? What is new? What don't you really understand?

1. James uses the example of a farmer to explain patience. What is it that a farmer can control and why does the farmer need patience?
2. **In v8** James says we must 'stand firm'. What do you understand this to mean?
3. Patience is **not** being stoic and 'putting up with it'. What does it mean to be patient? How does knowing God's character (**v11**) and plan help us?
4. James points us to the prophets as examples of patience. Why? What do you know about Isaiah and Jeremiah as examples of patience? (Maybe do some digging into their stories)
5. James also cites Job. Why is Job an interesting example of patience?
6. **V11.** What does James suggest is the long term outcome of our patience? What did the Lord bring about in Job's life?
7. The story of Job challenges the inadequate theology that 'only good things happen to good people.' Why is Jesus the perfect example of this inadequacy?
8. **v9.** Suggests we should not grumble. Why? What does grumbling lead to?

Discipleship and Application



9. In our own lives we will endure suffering. How do you practise patience? What hope do you look forward to, in order to strengthen you? What scriptures encourage you?



Try to leave 15-20 mins to talk about prayer needs of the group and to pray.

There are many creative ways of praying together: writing prayers, using candles as a focus, reading prayers or praying for each other in pairs.