

FAITH + WORKS

JAMES 5:1-20



OPENING

- Ask the group if this series has affected any change in their lives. Talk about what God has done over the last 10 weeks. Rejoice together, and give thanks to God in prayer!

SERMON REVIEW

- In the final chapter, James' tone becomes pastoral again. The concern he begins to address is, "So what we do now?"
- *Be patient.* Like a farmer: who prepares, plants, waters, prunes, waits, and harvests his crops at the right time. Normally, when patience decreases, burden increases. But with God, where patience increases, burden decreases. We tend to think God is slow. But he isn't slow, he's patient. (2 Peter 3:9)
- *Persevere.* Stand firm! Being patient doesn't mean slacking off when it comes to following Jesus. So when things get hard, keep hope alive - even though that's the most convenient time to quit. Those that persevere will be blessed, and will see God at work. (Galatians 6:9, Romans 5:3-4)
- *Pray.* James encourages faithful prayer in every single circumstance. In the midst of everything else, pray - go to the Father. We have to trust and believe that God will lead us onward.

DISCUSSION

- Begin by reading James 5:7-20 together. Review by listing the main themes.
- How does the metaphor of farming help us understand the need to be patient? And why is it so important that we should be *like* the farmer, not the farmer himself?
- What explanations and reasons does James give for remaining patient?
- Why is it that patience and perseverance are so intertwined in this passage?
- James lists a number of circumstances in which we should pray. What are they?
- What does it mean to pray in faith? (c.f., Habakkuk 3:1-15, 1 Kings 18:41-45)
- Is God's answer to prayer dependant on the way the person is praying?
- Reread 5:19-20. Why do you think James ends with this?

CHALLENGE

- Keep living out what we've learned. Our series has ended, but its effects shouldn't.
- Journal about what God has been doing and speaking through our study of James.

PLAN AHEAD

- Enjoy the rest of Holy Week! Happy Easter!