

In Seasons of Distress

James 5:7-20 (NIV)

1. In seasons of distress...

Fix your heart on Jesus.

“Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains. ⁸You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. ⁹Don't grumble against each other, brothers, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door! ¹⁰Brothers, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹As you know, we consider blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.” (vs. 7-11)

Patience is passive endurance.

2. In seasons of distress...

Speak with Integrity.

“Above all, my brothers, do not swear—not by heaven or by earth or by anything else. Let your “Yes” be yes, and your “No,” no, or you will be condemned.” (vs. 12)

3. In seasons of distress...

Pray and Confess.

“Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise. ¹⁴Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. ¹⁶Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.” (vs.13-16)

4. In seasons of distress...

Don't forget others.

“My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back, ²⁰remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins.” (vs.19-20)

5. In seasons of distress...

Remember Jesus will return.

Small Group & Personal Reflection Questions:

1. Read James 5:7-11 Describe a time when you had to wait on God? What did that feel like? What did you learn from that experience? Would you change the way you handled that experience? How are you growing in this area?
2. Read James 5:20 and Matthew 5:33-37. Why is this so important for the health of the church? How can a lack of integrity hurt the church? What do your friends who don't believe in God think about Christianity? Why?
3. Read James 5:13-18. Have you ever had someone pray for an issue or challenge in your life? What did that look like? What was the outcome? What is the connection between sin and sickness in our lives? How can confessing our sins help?
4. Read James 5:19-20. Have you ever “wandered from the truth?” How did you make it back? How did your return “cover a multitude of sins” in your life? Who do you know that is far from God? How can you begin to reach out to them this week?