

STUDY NOTES

JAMES: A FAITH THAT ENDURES

a series at New City Church

www.newcityphx.com/sermons

The following content is based on the message "Fattened Cattle, Patient Farmers, and the Return of the Lord" on 3/31/19 at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. The following is not meant to be a full synopsis but rather a brief look at the main ideas. To use this Study Guide effectively you must listen to the message found at <http://www.newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

Leaders using these study notes for group study and reflection should read the Biblical text thoroughly before beginning, using this resource as assistance and not relying solely on this material for insight. We encourage all leaders to pray and ask the Spirit for revelation as they lead their respective community groups.

PRAYER

Pray and ask God to lead the discussion as everyone gets to share.

SCRIPTURE: JAMES 5:1-11

FATTENED CATTLE

James illustrates a picture for us of cattle being fattened up in order to be slaughtered for food. He compares that picture to us. He says that we have a tendency to live by consuming the things of this world. In doing so, we live in our fleshly indulgence and only store up for ourselves.

- *Why does the imagery of "consuming" things of the world work so well when talking about the way we have a tendency to live?*

LIVING IN THE LAST DAYS

James warns that living indulgently makes no sense because we are living in the last days. The ending of this age is coming soon so we need to decide what Kingdom we will occupy and live in it. We don't know when Jesus will return or how long we have left on earth. Jesus's resurrection gives us hope beyond the last days on this earth. If Jesus didn't rise from the dead, then we should live indulgently. But he did rise, so we should live as if he did.

- *Why is it so important to see the hope of life beyond the days on this earth?*

- *If you really believed that Jesus might return tomorrow, how would you live differently today?*

James tells us that we cannot spend our way into the kingdom. He warns that riches will literally consume you. Ecclesiastes 5:10 says, "He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor she who loves wealth, with her income."

- *What is your experience with never feeling like you have enough? How does the desire for more consume you?*

PATIENT FARMERS

James provides an alternative way to live. He illustrates how a farmer has to be patient with the seasons as they grow their crops. Just like the farmer, we should be patient in this world. Do you want to be a farmer or a cow?

- *Of all things that James could give us as an alternative, why do you think James's alternative way to live is to live with patience?*

JESUS IS FULL OF MERCY

This world's demands are relentless. You will never get enough or be enough for the world. But that isn't the way of God's Kingdom. The Lord is compassionate and merciful. He tells us that his yoke is easy and his burden is light. (Matthew 11:30)

**This world eats you from the inside out.
The Lord heals you from the inside out.**

- *Why do people think that God has high demands and the world has no demands? How is that thinking backwards?*
- *How do you feel like God's demands are light in comparison to the world's demands?*
- *Pray with each other to live with patience.*