

# Hope in Suffering

Series: A Hopeful Life

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**Scripture:** James 5:7-12

<sup>7</sup>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. <sup>8</sup>You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. <sup>9</sup>Don't grumble against each other, brothers, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!

<sup>10</sup>Brothers, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. <sup>11</sup>As 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.

<sup>12</sup>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.

## Group Session

### **Opening Questions**

Do you ever feel like you've gone through a time of suffering? Is it something you can share with the group (in one minute or less)?

### **Discussing the Scripture & Life**

1. How are some ways that people deal with suffering? Are there any ungodly ways people deal with it? (grumbling, swearing) What are some godly ways we deal with suffering?
2. Sometimes we need to be patient. Sometimes all you can do is wait. Why do you think there are times in God's grand scheme of things that His will for us is to wait? (Sometimes the trial is about someone else, not us. Sometimes he wants us to learn over time.)
3. Hebrews 6:19 talks about having hope as an anchor for the soul. We have the hope of Christ in our hearts. How can that be a help for us in times of suffering?
4. Ream Romans 8:18. How does the truth of this verse help us endure suffering in a godly way.
5. Some suffering is beyond our control. Ps. 27:14 tells us to "Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD." What does it mean to wait on the Lord? How can we be strong and take heart?

6. Job had some strong things to say about suffering. Job 2:10 says, "He replied, "You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?" In all this, Job did not sin in what he said."

Is it difficult for us to believe that God uses suffering in our lives? How does Satan figure into the equation?

7. Galatians 6:9 give us hope. It says "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."

Have you seen people give up? How does that effect the end result?

What responsibility do we have to one another in times of suffering? What does it do for us to know that someone else cares?

8. Read 2 Peter 3:9.

*The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*

How can we be patient with God when we don't understand His plan?

### **Closing Challenge**

Read the following suggested "next steps." Which of them most needs to be applied in your life?

#### Possible Next Steps

1. Resist the temptation to blame all my suffering and pain on Satan.
2. Wait on God, especially when I'm in a hurry.
3. Make a deliberate effort not to grumble and complain.
4. Tell someone who will hold me accountable.