

Louder Than Words #10
Living in Light of Eternity

Word

Scripture Reference

James 5:1-12

Discussion Questions

1. What significant things in life do you think are worth waiting for?
2. Every person born on earth is made for eternity. For a Christian, death is just a doorway to cross going into the realm of eternity. The Apostle Paul who lived with his heart fixed on eternity wanted to spend his life pleasing God. In the same manner, when pleasing God becomes your purpose and you begin to live your life for eternity, you find better meaning and hope in your life. But how do you live in view of eternity? How does it affect your actions and the pursuits of your life? These actions and pursuits speak louder than words to an unbelieving world of your authentic relationship with Jesus Christ. Read James 5:1-12. James began this passage by writing about the foolishness of living for the temporary in verses 1-6. There is no middle ground between eternity and temporal. It is either one or the other. He gave three reasons why it is foolish to live in the temporal. First, all the things you work for and want will decay (v. 1-3). The Bible never condemns the rich for being rich. It is not a sin to be rich, however, the pursuit of it and how it affects the person whom to trust and rely on could lead to sin. How did James forewarn the rich about their wealth? Discuss how new things decay and/or become obsolete. How does money or your possessions affect your relationship with God?
3. Secondly, injustice will be found out and dealt with (v. 4). If anyone has used any unethical means to get what he or she have or taken advantage or cheated others to enrich himself or herself, then God will deal with that person. Discuss how the rich take advantage and hurt those who have less. How do you think the Lord will deal with them? On the other hand, how can the rich be of great help to the less fortunate?
4. Thirdly, your luxurious pleasures are only temporary (v. 5-6). If you are only living for the enjoyment of all the luxuries that this present life has to offer, then that's all you are getting. What does it mean to live in luxurious pleasures? How does it affect a person's relationship with God? Discuss the ways you can use money to reflect what is significant to God.

5. The Bible also gives us four ways on how we can live in light of eternity:
 - a. Be patient because the Lord is coming (v. 7-8). What illustration did James use to explain the kind of patience you need? What is the purpose in waiting for those who are living in light of eternity?
 - b. Do not judge because the True Judge will come (v. 9). Discuss why we should keep away from judging others or grumbling against them. Does it mean that you should allow others to step over you? How do you feel when you don't allow yourself to worry about how you can get back at other people who have wronged you?
 - c. Persevere and endure to the end for a reward (v. 10-11). From these verses, what people serve as good models to us? How? How far can you endure for the sake of the Lord? What reward can you expect from God when you persevere and endure suffering and shame for Him?
 - d. Speak the truth so we don't get into trouble (v. 12). How did James caution Christians as to swearing? What should you do in order that others will trust your words?

Walk

What you think about Heaven determines what you think about the present. In order to live in light of eternity, you should understand the foolishness of living for the temporal; that everything you work for will decay; that injustice will be found out and dealt with; and luxurious pleasures are only temporary. Instead, be patient because the Lord is coming; do not judge because the true judge will come; persevere and endure to the end for a reward; speak the truth so you don't get into trouble. What changes can you make in your normal use of money to please God? With what issues in your life can you ask God for patience these days? What steps do you need to take to avoid judging people in your life? Is there a promise that you need to keep? How do you plan to do it?

Worship & Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you that my life on earth is just temporary. Thank You that I can look forward to a perfect place with my perfect Father in heaven. But as I am still here on earth, help me to live my life in light of eternity, that instead of dwelling on material things and pleasures that are temporary and will decay and become obsolete, I will think of what will last forever. Thank you that you are coming back. Help me to wait for your return patiently. And while waiting, help me to be concerned of others and do what I can for those who need You instead of judging and criticizing those people. Help me to love my family, friends, classmates/co-workers in the way you want me to love them. Help me to speak the truth and keep my word, for it reflects how a believer lives for eternity. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.