

Sermon Series

HOPE for the HOUSE

A Study in James

DISCUSSION GUIDE

THE END IS THE BEGINNING

SPEAKER: Bo Stern Brady

DATE: November 2, 2025

TEXT(S): James 1:1-8

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE: This resource is designed to help you, or your group, step through a progression of engagement with the Bible passage(s) and the speaker's message. Our goal is to help you better understand and apply B4's teaching.

MESSAGE SUMMARY + DISCUSSION PROMPTS

James, the half-brother of Jesus, writes to a scattered, suffering church facing persecution and poverty. He urges believers to gain wisdom and hold onto a genuine faith. His pastoral letter calls the community to live out their beliefs through humble service, steadfast patience, and compassionate action. Faith is proven not by words alone but by perseverance, especially through trials *and* successes. Both of these test our trust in God's reality, goodness, and necessity. James reminds believers that God uses hardship to form Christlike maturity. So, a fruitful, hope-filled church grows by hearing and doing God's Word, embodying Jesus' way in everyday life with faith, wisdom, and love.

LEAN IN: These are icebreakers and warm-ups, mostly to get the group talking and start the flow of conversation. Choose one and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.

1. What's something you've had to learn to be patient with lately: traffic, technology, or a person?
2. When you hear the word "endurance," what's the first image or experience that comes to mind?
3. What's one valuable skill, habit, or lesson that only came through struggle or trial for you?
4. How do you usually react when something unexpected interrupts your plans: panic, pray, problem-solve, or something else?
5. Have you ever looked back on a hard season and realized it grew something good in you?

LOOK DOWN: These are questions about the Bible passage(s) from the message. Spend about 15-20 minutes discussing your choice of two or three questions:

1. James 1:2 says, "Consider it pure joy whenever you face trials." What kind of "joy" do you think James is talking about, and what kind isn't he talking about?
2. How does testing produce perseverance in real life? Can you think of a personal or biblical example that supports James?
3. Why do you think James connects wisdom (v.5) so closely to enduring trials (v.2-4)?
4. What does it mean to "ask in faith, without doubting"? How can we balance honest questions with confident faith?
5. What encouragement or challenge from this passage (James 1:1-8) feels most relevant for believers today who are navigating hardship or uncertainty?

LOOK OUT: *These questions help connect the world of the Bible to today. Spend about 15-20 minutes discussing your choice of two or three questions:*

1. When life gets difficult, what helps you keep going: belief, grit, hope, or something else?
2. Our culture often prizes comfort and success. What might we lose if we avoid struggle altogether?
3. Is there a difference between happiness and joy? What might that difference look like in hard times?
4. James says wisdom is available to anyone who asks God. Where do you usually turn when you need wisdom or clarity?
5. Why do you think so many people wrestle with doubt, even about things they believe deeply in?

LOOK IN: *These questions help you consider how to engage the teaching for yourself. Spend about 15-20 minutes discussing your choice of two or three questions:*

1. James writes to a church under pressure. When life presses in on you, what typically comes out: fear, faith, frustration, or something else?
2. How might your perspective shift if you saw challenges as opportunities for God to grow endurance in you rather than punishments or bad luck?
3. One part of the message asked: Is God real? Is God good? Is God necessary? Which of those questions do you find yourself wrestling with most often, and what helps you work through it/them?
4. How might our community look different if we became known for endurance, wisdom, love without favoritism, and prayerful dependence?
5. When you think about facing trials with “calm delight,” what does that actually look like for you this week, in words, choices, or attitude?

LIVE IT OUT: *These practical action steps help you apply this message to day-to-day life. Choose one prompt and talk it over for 5-10 minutes:*

1. “Patience and wisdom go hand in hand with trials.” What would it look like for you to let patience “finish its work” this week? How can you hold yourself accountable?
2. Act on one truth you’ve heard in this week’s message, and make a simple change. For example, pray for wisdom all week and note what happens.

You can find more on [our series resources page](#).

