

# THE FUTURE IS WRITTEN

— JAMES 5

## MAIN TAKEAWAY

Bible prophecy is God revealing history in advance. What we believe about the *last days* will affect us in *these days*, and what we know about the *afterlife* will influence how we live in *this life*.

## INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

**Pastor Greg mentioned many “signs of the times” and said, “Bible prophecy is not given to *scare* us, but rather, to *prepare* us.” How can you react to current events by looking at them through the lens of faith rather than fear? How does Bible prophecy help you focus on your faith?**

**James told the church to be patient until the coming of the Lord. Pastor Greg mentioned that this is not speaking of a passive resignation, but a *patient expectation*—like a kid on Christmas Eve. When you think of the return of Jesus, what are you most looking forward to?**

## UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

**HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ TITUS 2:11-14 & REVELATION 1:1-3**

**Pastor Greg explained, “Instead of obsessing with the *when* of Jesus’ return, we should focus on the *what* of Jesus’ return. Why is it important to study Bible prophecy, and what should we do in light of it?”**

- Understanding Bible prophecy brings hope in a hopeless world (Titus 2:13)
- Understanding Bible prophecy unravels the mystery of history (Revelation 6:10)
- Studying Bible prophecy brings sense to our suffering (Revelation 21:4)
- Understanding Bible prophecy brings a specific blessing to us (Revelation 1:3)

**How is your life affected by what you believe about the future? How have you personally grown by learning about Bible prophecy?**

## **HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JAMES 5:7-11**

***Be patient (v.7).* James used the example of farming to illustrate the way in which we should patiently wait for the coming of the Lord. How does this example teach you about patience and reveal your need to trust God with what you cannot control?**

***Be courageous (v.8).* How should the hope of Christ's coming make you brave? How is this seen through Stephen's example (Acts 7:54-60)?**

***Be aware of the afterlife (v.9).* What should Christians be doing as the opposite of grumbling against one another—especially when considering Jesus' return and judgment of believers (2 Corinthians 5:6-10)?**

***Be trusting (v.11).* James calls believers to look to the prophets and to Job as examples of suffering and patience. In what ways have you done this? How do these examples from the past help you trust God and remain steadfast today?**

## **APPLICATION**

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

**How does having a patient expectation for Jesus' return motivate you to share the gospel (2 Peter 3:9)?**

**How does a focus on the return of Jesus personally help you grow in patience, courage, and trust? How does it encourage unity with other believers and an awareness of the afterlife? How should your future hope impact the way you live today (1 John 3:2-3)?**

**This Week's Assignment: Engage someone with the message of the gospel.**

## **PRAYER**

Thank God for the first coming of Jesus and pray for his "Kingdom to come" as you wait for Jesus' second coming (Matthew 6:10). In light of Jesus' soon return, pray that you will be patient, courageous, aware of the afterlife, and trusting.