



## Yes and No **JAMES 5:7-12** Message Reflection Guide

Sometime near the end of his life, Anthony Ashley Cooper, the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, is reputed to have said: "In the last 40 years, I do not believe that I have had one conscious thought that did not include the idea of the return of Jesus Christ." An overstatement? Perhaps, but it goes a very long way toward explaining the amazing career of one of the Victorian era's most successful social reformers.

That same preoccupation is evident throughout the New Testament. It is the stated or implied reason behind nearly every ethical injunction in the writings of the apostles, and without question, it framed the life of the Early Church. The first generation of Christians even began their ordinary interactions with the greeting "Maranatha," an Aramaic expression meaning "The Lord is coming!"

**Conversation Starter** Have you ever ignored a warning? What happened?

### **Getting Into The Scriptures** Read James 5:7-12

Pastor Jason said: "Christ's return is imminent and the timing unknown. In the meantime, we are called to say "YES" to obedience and "NO" to sin." What signs do you see happening in the world today that point to the "imminent return of Christ"?

**Say yes to patience and no to control.** What type of situations test your patience?

**Say yes to faithfulness and no to discouragement.** On a scale of 1 to 10, how easily are you discouraged? Is there a pattern to what causes you to feel discouraged? What has been a helpful practice for you in fighting discouragement?

**Say yes to being constructive and no to complaining.** What does complaining reveal about your heart? Share an example of a time you chose to be constructive instead of complaining, what happened?

**Say yes to compassion and no to indifference.** There are a multitude of needs surrounding us, it can often become overwhelming which causes us to become indifferent. What are you doing to show compassion and meet a need?

**Say yes to integrity and no to compromise.** What tempts you to compromise or cut corners? How has practicing integrity benefitted your life?

### **Making It Real**

Christ's is coming soon. Why do you think God has not told us when it might occur? Why do you think God is waiting? How would your life be different if you did know the exact date and time?