Lesson 28 James 5:7-12

The Power of Patience

1. What three examples of patience does James give?

2. Where in the illustration of the farmer is the secret to endurance?

3. As we read about the prophets (vs. 10) what encouragement do we gain?

10 Take as an example of hardship and patience, brothers, the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

4. A. Why do faithful witnesses to God often undergo suffering and persecution?

B. Where is their reward?

5. Challenge Question: A. What lessons are provided by the book of Job?

James 5:11

11 Indeed we call blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of the perseverance of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, because “the Lord is compassionate and merciful.”

Job Introduction

Job, an oriental chieftain, pious and upright, richly endowed in his own person and in domestic prosperity, suffers a sudden and complete reversal of fortune. He loses his property and his children; a loathsome disease afflicts his body; and sorrow oppresses his soul. Nevertheless, Job does not complain against God. When some friends visit him to condole with him, Job protests his innocence and does not understand why he is afflicted. He curses the day of his birth and longs for death to bring an end to his sufferings. The debate which ensues consists of three cycles of speeches. Job's friends insist that his plight can only be a punishment for personal wrongdoing and an invitation from God to repentance. Job rejects their inadequate explanation and calls for a response from God himself. At this point the speeches of a youth named Elihu   
(Job 32-37) interrupt the development.

In response to Job's plea that he be allowed to see God and hear from him the cause of his suffering, God answers, not by justifying his action before men, but by referring to his own omniscience and almighty power. Job is content with this. He recovers his attitude of humility and trust in God, which is deepened now and strengthened by his experience of suffering.

B. What meaning can the book of Job have for Christians today?

6. What can God accomplish in us through suffering?

7. When are you tempted to hoard rather than to give?

8. The Lord's coming provides a backdrop for James' word to the rich and to those who suffer. What different reaction would you expect each group to have to the prospect of the Lord's return?

9. How reliable are you in fulfilling your commitments?

10. Since reliability or faithfulness is a fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22) how might you improve in this respect?

Galatians 5:22-23

In contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.