

# From Sorrow to Destiny

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*James 1:2-7*

## I. Some trials are only solved by perseverance.

- A. There are trials of many kinds (James 1:2).
- B. Some trials do not end without persevering in faith over a period of time (James 1:3-4).
- C. Perseverance allows God to shape our character and grow our faith for higher purposes (Hebrews 11:6—e.g. Abraham).
- D. Perseverance is like farming.
  - 1. We sow with effort but don't see the results until later (Psalm 126:5).
  - 2. We look for signs of progress.
  - 3. We water our seed supernaturally by “prayer and petition with thanksgiving” (Philippians 4:6; Luke 18:1-8).

## II. The opposite of sowing and persevering is the spirit of poverty.

- A. The spirit of poverty is about surviving the moment until the next crisis. There is little sacrificial investment or planning for the future.
- B. Jesus addressed this spirit in the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-29).
  - 1. All of us have areas where we are lazy. “Lazy” refers to a reluctant, slothful attitude and an unwillingness to act (Matthew 25:26-27).
  - 2. God wants us to intentionally invest in every area that is important to Him—and us (Matthew 25:29).
- C. Sometimes we are so confused we don't know where to begin. That's why it is important to take “wisdom journeys” with God (James 1:5-8).
- D. Take the first step today—“at once” (Matthew 25:16).

## III. Lessons from Jacob, the man who wrestled with God

- A. Jacob had a major promise from God for the future (Genesis 28:10-15, 20-22)
- B. The testing of Jacob's faith produced perseverance. The next 20 years looked nothing like the promise. But Jacob became mature and complete, able to receive everything God had for him (Genesis 31:38-42).
- C. The momentum of Jacob's past history with God gave him the confidence to receive his full inheritance. At a strategic moment with God, he literally wrestled with God, activating his destiny (Genesis 32:22-31).
- D. How many destinies are never fought for because of the lack of previous history of perseverance with God?
- E. Jacob's problems led him to amazing promotion in his life. Every problem is an opportunity for more, not less (James 1:2; Romans 8:28)

*Mike Hudgins  
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