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Cultivate Endurance

Job 1:1—2:10

I once climbed a mountain with a bunch of high-school kids, or tried to. It sounded like such fun. And it was for awhile. They galloped ahead while I trudged behind. We saw mountain wild flowers, amazing rocks and peaks through swirling mists. I trudged higher. We stopped to take pictures and redistribute backpacks. I crawled up a field of fallen rocks, slowly. Another staffer noticed that I was pale, staggering and incoherent. It seems my physical endurance was not up to that particular task. Fortunately, the character trait of endurance is not limited to physical prowess. It shows itself in many areas: in projects, relationships and in faith.

GROUP DISCUSSION. When it comes to endurance, I am like (a) a sprinter: I commit quickly, but I finish quickly too, (b) a hurdler: I skip over the hard parts but keep running, (c) a backpacker: I hike a long distance and carry a lot of stuff, (d) an observer: I don't commit at all if I can help it, (e) a baseball player: when it rains I head to the dugout, or (f) other: _____. Explain.

PERSONAL REFLECTION. Mentally survey your history of projects, relationships and faith. In your estimation, is your endurance rating higher, lower or about right as a person of integrity. Ask God to point

out what is appropriate for you in the study ahead.

Job faced an endurance test of gigantic proportions. *Read Job 1:1—2:10.*

1. What troubles you about this story?

2. What successive blows came upon Job?

3. How do you picture Job “before” and “after”?

4. What seems to be the issue of discussion between Satan and God (1:6-12; 2:1-5)?

5. Why was this an important subject for both Satan and God?

6. What additional temptations did Job’s wife offer?

7. Notice Job’s responses to pain. What do these responses suggest about Job’s view of God and of himself (1:20-22; 2:10)?

8. Who won this round of the battle? Satan? God? Job? Explain.

9. What benefits have come to you because of your relationship with God?

10. What is your ability to endure in faith if these benefits were to be taken away?

11. What project, event or relationship is currently testing your endurance? How?

12. How could you better practice endurance in the ordinary events of your life?

Pray, worshiping God for who he is. Bring to mind as many names for God and as many adjectives as you can think of that describe him. Use these in your prayers of worship.

Now or Later

Can you love God for himself—not just the benefits of knowing him? Examine your own motives in God’s presence, and ask God to deal with what you see.