

# Lesson: Strong and Wise (The Book of James – Part 1)

The book of James contains a plethora of information for believers to become mature in their relationships to Christ. This series of five lessons will cover each chapter of James with the goal of outlining how we can become stronger in our faith. In part 1, "Strong and Wise," there will be an emphasis on trusting God's plan, persevering through difficulties, and obeying the bible. In addition, several opportunities for the teacher to share how God has worked in his or her life will bring the scripture to life for the children in a practical way.

**OBJECTIVE:** To introduce the book of James and discuss ways to become mature and wise Christ-followers.

**MAIN IDEA:** To become a strong and wise believer, we must trust God's plan, persevere, and obey the bible.

**SCRIPTURE PASSAGES:** *James 1:5-8, 12, & 22-25*

## **Introduction**

**OPENING PRAYER:** "God, help us become stronger and wiser as Christians so we may better serve you. Amen."

**OPENING ACTIVITY:** Ask the children to choose a partner to read *James 1* out loud with one another. Give each pair a question sheet and pencil. Then ask the children to answer the questions as they read:

1. Who was James (a servant of God and Jesus)?
2. Who is to blame for our sin (we are)?
3. What does God consider to be "pure" religion (looking after those in need and keeping ourselves from being polluted by the world)?

Go over the answers together as a class. Then say, "We have already learned a little bit about James, chapter 1. As we study this entire book, we will learn how to behave and grow as Christ-followers by relying on God."

## **Lesson**

1. Outline the history of the book's author, James. Say, "This book was written by James, one of Jesus' brothers. There were also two disciples named James, so it's important to understand that it was Jesus' brother who wrote this book and not one of the disciples." Go on to explain that James was the lead pastor of the Jerusalem church, but it wasn't until after Jesus had died and been resurrected that James became a believer. Ask, "Why do you think James didn't believe in Jesus until after his resurrection (because they were siblings, so it must have seemed strange that Jesus was the Son of God)?" Explain that James' book is about maturing as believers, so it gives us spiritual wisdom concerning everyday situations. Say, "Over the next five weeks we will look at each chapter in the book of James to discover how we can be 'strong' (mature) in our faith."
2. Read *James 1:5-8*. <sup>5</sup>If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. <sup>6</sup>But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup>For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; <sup>8</sup>*he is* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways." Help the children understand the main idea of these verses (if we ask God for wisdom, then we need to believe he will give it to us). Ask, "Has someone ever promised you something and then broken their promise? Well, part of becoming a strong believer means trusting that God doesn't break his promises even though others do. We can rely on him as the source of true wisdom." Looking back at verse 8, ask the children to pick out the descriptive words for someone who doubts God (double-minded, unstable). Point out that a spiritually wise person lives their life according to God's ability to provide, and holds on to that assurance even during hard trials. Tell the class about a time when you trusted God for wisdom through a trial and how he remarkable provided for your needs.
3. Read *James 1:12*. Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him." Ask, "What does it mean to persevere (to continue doing something even when it's hard)? Trials and hard times will come to everyone, so it's important to consider how we act during difficulties." Ask the class to come up with common emotions during difficulties (trials) and write the suggestions on the board. Point out the emotions that can negatively affect our Christ-like influence on others. Admit that it's normal to be frustrated during a trial, but a strong Christian will remember that it's not an excuse for misbehavior – God will help us and give us peace during trials when we continually rely on him. Ask, "What will we receive when we successfully '[stand] the test' of trials (the crown of life)? Who is promised that reward (those who love God)?" Tell the children that God allows trials in our lives to draw us closer to him and make us stronger and wiser as believers. Consider sharing with the class about a trial you are currently experiencing and how God is helping you.
4. Lastly, discuss how James (like many other writers in the bible) uses analogies to help explain a topic. Say, "An analogy is when two things are compared so we can better understand the message. See if you can find the analogy in *James 1:22-25*. <sup>22</sup>But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving

yourselves. <sup>23</sup>For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; <sup>24</sup>for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. <sup>25</sup>But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does." Read the passage out loud and ask for a volunteer to point out the analogy (a person's reflection in a mirror). Emphasize that knowing God's word, yet disobeying it, is as silly as looking at your reflection in a mirror and forgetting what you look like! Comment, "We learn from these verses that a strong and wise believer will do what the bible says." Complete the lesson by outlining the message of salvation for anyone who may not be a believer and allow time for questions.

### **"Crown of Life"**

To prepare, use the crown template to draw and cut out a crown out of foam paper for each child. Then write, "Crown of Life" across the length of each crown. During class say, "*James 1:12* tells us we will be rewarded with the crown of life for persevering through trials (a true sign of a strong believer). We are going to decorate our crowns as reminders of God's rich rewards for those who trust and obey him." Allow time for the children to decorate their crowns with markers, stickers, glitter glue, and other various craft supplies. Lastly, help them complete the craft by punching holes in each end and tying an appropriate length of twine so they may wear their crowns.

### **Conclusion**

RECAP: Becoming strong and wise in our faith requires trusting God's plan, persevering through trials, and acting on our beliefs.

CLOSING PRAYER: "Lord, help us as we grow in faith. We trust that your word will make us stronger and wiser in our relationship to you. Amen."

## **Lesson: Strong and Active Faith (The Book of James – Part 2)**

Having a strong and mature relationship with Jesus Christ requires deliberate actions that model one's faith. In this second part of the "Book of James" series, children will explore what James 2 has to say about a Christ-follower's actions matching the word of God.

**OBJECTIVE:** To teach the children that addressing personal sin, actively serving others, and trusting God's plan are all ways that will help them become stronger in their faith.

**MAIN IDEA:** Growing stronger as a believer requires deliberate actions that represent one's belief in Jesus Christ.

**SCRIPTURE PASSAGES:** *James 2:8-11, 14-17, 20-23*

**Introduction** **OPENING PRAYER:** "Lord, show us how to move forward in our faith through intentional, Christ-like actions. Amen."

**ICE BREAKER ACTIVITY:**

Say, "Today we are discussing how our actions should match our beliefs, but first we are going to participate in an activity that will identify the actions of common jobs." Prepare at least ten index cards with a well-known occupation (teacher, doctor, policeman, etc) written at the top of each card. Allow the children to choose a card and ask them to list several actions for the job. When everyone is finished, ask each person to share their list and briefly discuss additional actions for each job. Lastly, comment, "We can now understand that having a title, such as teacher, doctor, or policeman, requires matching actions. The same is true for us as Christians!"

## **Lesson**

1. Briefly discuss the book's author, James (the brother of Jesus), and remind the class that his book explains how to become a strong (mature) believer. Ask, "Does anyone remember James' occupation (the lead pastor of the Jerusalem church)?" Emphasize that because he was responsible for teaching many people, James' book contains spiritual guidance that is easy to understand, but it is addressed to those who are Christians. Share the gospel with the class and allow a few moments for the children to respond. Then say, "James points out sin and directly tells us how to deal with it as believers. Let's get started with *James 2* to learn how our actions must match our beliefs."
2. First, explain that we have to deal with personal sin. Read *James 2:8-11*. If you really fulfill *the royal law* according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself,"<sup>[a]</sup> you do well; <sup>9</sup>but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. <sup>10</sup>For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one *point*, he is guilty of all. <sup>11</sup>For He who said, "Do not commit adultery,"<sup>[b]</sup> also said, "Do not murder."<sup>[c]</sup> Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of

the law." Ask, "What sins are addressed in this passage (favoritism, adultery, murder)? What is unique about those particular sins (they hurt others)?" Emphasize that we must ask God to show us our sin and be aware of how it affects others if we want to become strong and active believers. Say, "Apparently there was an issue with believers in James' day acting as if their sins were insignificant in comparison to other sins. However, the entire bible tells us that all sin disqualifies us from saving ourselves and makes us 'lawbreakers'." Reiterate that a growing Christian will become more aware of his or her own shortcomings in view of God's gracious gift of salvation through Jesus Christ (instead of excusing or overlooking personal sin).

3. Next, read *James 2:14-17*. <sup>14</sup>What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? <sup>15</sup>If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, <sup>16</sup>and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? <sup>17</sup>Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead." Ask for a volunteer to summarize the message of these verses (our actions must match our beliefs). Comment, "This passage gives the example of telling someone to 'keep warm and well fed,' without giving them clothes or food. Can we think of additional examples of mismatched faith and actions (such as consoling someone without praying for them or not helping a classmate with their homework because you'd rather do something else)?" Discuss how faith without actions isn't faith at all – it's dead! State that strong and active believers understand that their actions play a pivotal role in their faith and make sacrifices to serve God and others.
4. Comment, "This last passage uses Abraham as an example of someone who actively lived his faith. But before we read, let's talk about what we already know about Abraham." Allow some time for the children to comment about Abraham's life, such as being God's chosen patriarch of the Hebrew people, being married to Sarah, or having his son, Isaac, at a very old age. Read *James 2:20-23*. <sup>20</sup>But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>21</sup>Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? <sup>22</sup>Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? <sup>23</sup>And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."<sup>[b]</sup> And he was called the friend of God." Ask, "What specific event in Abraham's life did James use to show his actions matched his faith (offering his son Isaac as a sacrifice to God)? What blessings did Abraham receive for being obedient ("credits" of righteousness, he was called God's friend, etc)?" Explain that even though Abraham didn't end up actually offering his son Isaac as a sacrifice, God was pleased that he was willing to be obedient in such a profound way. Say, "Sometimes acting on our faith can be scary, but the Lord will help us be active in our faith when we trust his plan and rely on his strength."

## Conclusion

RECAP: Growing stronger and more active in our faith requires recognizing and repenting of sins, deliberately serving others, and obediently trusting God even when we don't understand his plan.

CLOSING PRAYER: "God, show us every day how to act according to your word. We want to be stronger in our faith and lead others to you. Amen."

## Lesson: Strong and Kindly Spoken (The Book of James – Part 3)

A strong believer knows his or her words have the power to draw or push others away from Christ and avidly desires to honor God through their speech. In "Strong and Kindly Spoken (The Book of James – Part 3)," children will learn to stop and think about their words, consider how their speech affects others, and come up with positive substitutions for everyday, sinful responses. In addition, they will learn that humility is required to speak kindly spoken words and become a strong Christian.

OBJECTIVE: To give the children an understanding that kindly spoken words positively influence our actions and help us become stronger believers.

MAIN IDEA: Kindly spoken words positively affect our growth as believers by increasing our desire to serve and helping us battle pride.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES: *James 3:2, & 9-12, Matthew 5:13, James 3:17-18*

### **Introduction**

OPENING PRAYER: "Lord, help us understand the power of our words and how we should represent you through our speech. Amen."

ICE BREAKER GAME: "Shuffled Words"

Preparation: Cut out a sheet of letters for each team, shuffle each stack, and place them in a plastic baggy.

Say, "We are going to play a game that will teach us to work together and think before we speak." Pass out the envelopes with the cut out letters.

Explain to the class that they will answer a series of questions by silently finding the right letters with their partner, spelling the answer, and holding the letters up for you to check. Keep score for team by adding a point for the quickest correct answer. Comment, "The key to this game is to participate *silently* so we can practice thinking before responding. If you talk, then I will take away one of your points." Play the game by asking the following bible questions (you may add more questions if there is time):

1. What was the name of the garden where Adam and Eve lived? (*Eden*)
2. Who built the ark? (*Noah*)
3. Who was swallowed by a whale? (*Jonah*)
4. Who killed Goliath? (*David*)
5. What kind of animal threatened Daniel's life? (*lion*)
6. Who was Jesus' mother? (*Mary*)
7. Which sea was divided so Moses and the Hebrew people could run from Pharaoh? (*Red*)
8. Whose is the enemy of God? (*Satan*)

Reiterate to the class that taking the time to think before we speak, even when we think we know an answer, is important if we want to become strong and mature believers.

## Lesson

1. Say, "We are going to start the lesson by reading a verse that addresses how our words influence our actions." Read *James 3:2* For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he *is* a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body." and ask for a volunteer to explain the verse's message in their own words. Emphasize that only Jesus is perfect, but the verse tells us that corrected, appropriate speech will lead to better behavior. Comment, "Kindly spoken words help create a more determined desire to serve." To help apply the verse, give an example of a scenario where unkind words are replaced with kind speech (for example, if someone takes a possession then we can respond with, "That doesn't belong to you, and I will ask for an adult's help if you don't return it," instead of, "Hey, I'm going to beat you up if you take my things again"). Acknowledge that a quick, reactive response to others typically results in unkind words. Say, "We must take the time to choose kind words if we want to become stronger believers."
2. Review with the class that the author of this book, James (the brother of Jesus), uses analogies to make his points clear. Comment, "An analogy is when two things are compared so we can better understand an author's message. See if you can find the analogies in these verses." Read *James 3:9-12* With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. <sup>10</sup>Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. <sup>11</sup>Does a spring send forth fresh *water* and bitter from the same opening? <sup>12</sup>Can a fig tree, my

brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.” and help the children identify the analogies: fresh water and salt water flowing from the same spring and a fig tree producing olives. Ask, “What would you think if you saw an apple tree producing bananas? Or if you went to get a drink of water from the faucet and it was salty? Likewise, the bible tells us that kind and unkind words do not go together.” Read *Matthew 5:13*. “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.” Compare Jesus’ words on saltiness with the feeling we get when food lacks flavor (disgusted, annoyed, disappointed, etc), and how our actions as believers should “flavor,” or positively influence, the situations we encounter. Say, “Strong believers seek to encourage others through their speech instead of being negative or insulting.”

3. Lastly, ask each child to think about a person he or she knows who speaks kind words and list one or two descriptive words about that person on the board (such as patient, encouraging, wise, forgiving, etc). Then read *James 3:17-18* But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. <sup>18</sup>Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.” and add any additional qualities that may have been left off the class list. Say, “When we focus on showing these qualities then it will be easier to speak kind words. However, selfishness and pride must be pushed from our hearts if we want to honor God through our speech. We need to consistently pray that the Lord would help us use our words for lifting others up instead of bringing them down.” Take a moment to explain that unbelievers have no choice but to use unkind words because Jesus doesn’t live in their hearts. Christians, on the other hand, have the Holy Spirit to show and teach us how to be better examples for Christ. Comment, “If you’ve never accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior, then today is the day to make a decision. Speak to me or another Christian adult if you want to be forgiven of your sins, believe in Jesus, and spend an eternity in Heaven.”

## “Choosing Kind Words”

Write the following “unkind words” prompts on the index cards or pieces of paper. Ask the children to choose one or two cards and write kind responses to replace each prompt. Then discuss each prompt and the kind responses to encourage the children to keep practicing ways to replace unkind words.

1. “Why did you break my pencil? You are so stupid!”
2. “You are mean! I hate you.”
3. “Can’t you do anything right? You’re useless.”
4. “What is taking so long? Why can’t you hurry up?!”
5. “Don’t tell me what to do! You aren’t my boss.”
6. “My mom is so annoying. She’s always telling me to pick up my room.”
7. “My teacher is so boring and dumb.”
8. “You’re not cool enough to be friends with me.”



9. "The food you made is nasty! Give me something else."
10. "He is so bad at math. Why can't he learn faster?"

## **Conclusion**

RECAP: Christians should think before they speak, use their words to encourage and lift up others, and choose humble, servant-like speech over selfish responses. When we are obedient in these ways then we will become stronger believers.

CLOSING PRAYER: "God, give us the desire to use our words to lift others up instead of bringing them down. We know that our obedience will help us become more mature believers and lead others to you. Amen."

# Lesson: Strong and Humble (The Book of James – Part 4)

Growing humility is a necessary trait of a strong believer in Jesus Christ. This fourth lesson of the Book of James series, "Strong and Humble," will teach children how to embrace humility and incorporate it in their daily lives. Also, by identifying Jesus Christ as the ultimate example of humility, the children will understand that sacrificial service and humility are results of obeying God.

OBJECTIVE: To teach the children that humility is necessary in a strong believer's life and give them practical ways to become increasingly humble.

MAIN IDEA: Becoming a strong and humble Christian requires deliberate submission to God, resistance toward temptation, and sacrificial service.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES: *James 4:1-3, 7-10, 1 Corinthians 10:13, James 4:13-17*

## Introduction

OPENING PRAYER: "God, we submit ourselves to you. Give us humble hearts so we may learn more about you and reach others for Christ. Amen."

"STRONG AND HUMBLE" WORD SEARCH:

Say, "Today we will learn how to become stronger Christians through humility. We are going to complete a word search that introduces words relating to humility." Allow time for the children to complete the word search and briefly explain how each word in the search relates to humility.

## Lesson

1. Ask, "What does the word 'humble' mean (children may use the words from the word search)? Why is being humble hard (because we sin and want to get our own way instead of making sacrifices for others)." Explain that pride is a sin and the opposite of humility. Read *James 4:1-3*. Where do wars and fights *come* from among you? Do *they* not *come* from your *desires* for pleasure that war in your members? <sup>2</sup>You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet<sup>[a]</sup> you do not have because you do not ask. <sup>3</sup>You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures." Using the verses, ask the class to list the outward expressions of pride (fighting, killing, being jealous, etc). Then ask them to think about the opposite, humble reactions (walking away, refusing to hurt someone, being thankful, etc). Comment, "One thing is for sure – we must accept humility into our lives if we want to become strong believers." Tell the class about a humble person you know and the positive influence he or she has had on you because of their humility.
2. Next, read *James 4:7-10* <sup>7</sup>Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. <sup>8</sup>Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *you* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded. <sup>9</sup>Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and *your* joy to gloom. <sup>10</sup>Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up." to find out how to be humble. Ask, "What can we do to increase our humility (submit to God, resist the devil, come near to God, repent, grieve over our sins, etc)?" Emphasize that first submitting to God is necessary if we want to become strong and humble Christ-followers, and then we must actively resist temptation. Say, "God will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we can bear and will even provide a way out(*1 Corinthians 10:13*)! We must ask the Lord to give us self-control so we can resist the devil and embrace humility."

Lastly, explain that humility requires selfless, sacrificial service (like Jesus, who even gave up his own life). Read *James 4:13-17*. Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will<sup>[a]</sup> go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; <sup>14</sup>whereas you do not know what *will happen* tomorrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. <sup>15</sup>Instead you *ought* to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that." <sup>16</sup>But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.

<sup>17</sup>Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do *it*, to him it is sin.

Ask, "Were the people in these verses being humble or prideful? How do we know?" Reiterate that our goals in life must match God's plans to truly make us strong and humble believers.

### **"Servant Hands, Humble Heart"**

To prepare, make your own craft ahead of time for the children to view as an example. During class, allow each child to choose a piece of construction paper and their desired marker(s). Say, "This craft will remind us that it takes servant hands and a humble heart to become a strong Christian." Ask the class to turn their papers horizontally and write, "Servant Hands" at the top center of the page. Then have them write "Humble Heart" at the bottom center. Next, guide the children to draw a heart in the middle of the page. Using a paint color of your choice, imprint each child's left hand on the left side of their paper. Then repeat with the right hand on the right side of the paper. Give each child several wet wipes to clean their hands. You may then allow the children to paint the hearts or color them with markers (being careful not to touch the wet paint on either side). Display the finished crafts throughout the classroom.

### **Conclusion**

RECAP: Becoming a strong and humble Christian requires submission to God, resistance of temptation, and repentance over personal sin. When we sacrificially serve like Christ, then our humility will grow and even positively affect others.

CLOSING PRAYER: "Lord, give us the strength to sacrificially serve and have humility in our lives. Amen."

# Lesson: Strong and Patient (The Book of James – Part 5)

Waiting on God's timing is hard, but a maturing Christian understands that patience is necessary for an increasing growth in the faith. In this fifth and final part of the Book of James series, "Strong and Patient" will outline the reasons and positive results of patience. Also, children will learn that we should be patient with others because God is patient with us!

**OBJECTIVE:** To explain the reasons why patience is a necessary part of a strong believer's faith and how our patience encourages and helps others.

**MAIN IDEA:** Having patience will lead to God's blessings, provisions, and rewards. Also, we should be patient with others because God is patient with us.

**SCRIPTURE PASSAGES:** *James 5:7-9 & 10-11, Job 42:10-17, 2 Peter 3:8-9, James 5:19-20*

## **Introduction**

**OPENING PRAYER:** "Lord, help us learn to be increasingly patient as you reveal your plan for our lives. Amen."

"A TIME FOR PATIENCE" DRAWING:

Comment, "Today we are learning about becoming more patient so we can grow stronger in our faith. Reflect on a time when you had to be patient and then draw a picture of what happened." Before moving on to the lesson, ask for a few volunteers to explain their drawing and what they learned about God through their experience.

## **Lesson**

Say, "It can be so hard to be patient, but the book of James tells us that trusting in the Lord's timing is a part of every strong, maturing Christian's life." Read *James 5:7-9.* 'Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of

the Lord. See *how* the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. <sup>8</sup>You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

<sup>9</sup>Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned.<sup>[a]</sup> Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!

Explain that having patience within God's plan is much better than "*grumbling*" because negativity leads to God's judgment. Talk about a time when your impatience lead to despair. Comment, "Just like a farmer waits for crops to grow, we must wait on the Lord if we want to experience the blessings of his provision."

1. Read *James 5:10-11*. My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. <sup>11</sup>Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end *intended by* the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful." Ask, "Who is used as an example in this passage (the prophets and Job)? Let's turn to *Job 42:10-17* to find out the results of Job's patience." After reading the passage, point out the incredible blessings that were in store for Job's patience because of God's "*compassion and mercy*." Referring back to the children's drawings, ask them to comment about the good results of their patience. Say, "We should never forget that our patience sets the example for others and encourages them to continue trusting God in the midst of difficulties."
2. Lastly, explain that a strong believer will not only be patient with God but patient with others. Read *2 Peter 3:8-9* But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day *is* as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. <sup>9</sup>The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us,<sup>[a]</sup> not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" and explain that this passage is specifically about being patient for Christ's return. Ask, "Why is God patient with us (because he doesn't want anyone to perish)? We should be patient with others because God is patient with us and because we want everyone we know to have a relationship with Jesus Christ." Then read *James 5:19-20* Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, <sup>20</sup>let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul<sup>[a]</sup> from death and cover a multitude of sins. and ask for a volunteer to explain the main idea (patience with others is worth the struggle because helping others turn away from sin saves them from death). Explain a time when God asked you to be patient with someone so you could help them turn from sin. Say, "Having patience is hard work, but it is always worth it! Being patient with God and others gives us increasing strength as believers."

## Conclusion

RECAP: Patience gives us a stronger relationship with Jesus Christ. Through this lesson series on the Book of James, we have also learned that being wise, active, kindly spoken, and humble are all a part of maturing in the faith.

CLOSING PRAYER: "God, give us patience, wisdom, servant-like actions, kind words, and humble hearts. Help us become stronger believers as we trust your unique plan for each of our lives. Amen."