

Leader's Guide to

LESSON 6

WHEN GOD WANTS TO BUILD A MAN

NOTE TO NEW LEADERS

You can download the Leader's Guide from the website www.EveryManAWarrior.com to make it easier to follow while leading the lesson. It is important to follow the Leader's Guide in leading the lesson. While some items are the same each week, others are special, one-time instructions that will negatively impact the study if missed. These items are marked with a star. ★

WHEN GOD WANTS TO BUILD A MAN

- ✓ Break into pairs and recite your verses to each other.
- ✓ Sign off on the *Completion Record*.
- ★✓ Ask the men to count and report how many recorded Quiet Times they have had since the beginning of the course. You should have fifteen recorded Quiet Times. You will need to average three recorded Quiet Times per week to complete thirty by the end of the course.
- ✓ Open the session with prayer.
- ✓ Go around the room, asking each man to share one Quiet Time.
- ✓ Begin reading the lesson paragraph by paragraph.
- ✓ Pages 58–67: Ask each of the questions on these pages. Depending on time, have two to four people give their answer. Try to include everyone.
- ★✓ Page 66: Have each man read his *Points to Remember*.
- ✓ Page 67: Read the *Assignment*.
- ✓ Page 67: Place James 1:2-4 in the front window of your *EMAW Verse Pack* and memorize it this week. (*1 Peter 4:19 is an optional memory verse.*)



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- ✓ Page 67: End the session using the WAR method of prayer.

GOING THROUGH HARD TIMES

- ✓ Read the poem at the right.

Every man will face some form of adversity, trials, testing or suffering in life. In fact, it is promised. "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

In Book 1 of this course we signed a commitment to *"become the men God wants us to be."* The Scripture teaches that suffering, trials, and hard times are necessary to bring about real change in our character, our values, and how we live.

There is an old saying: "Money doesn't make a man but reveals a man." But it's not the same with hard times. *Trials, suffering, and hard times do make a man and do reveal the core convictions and values of that man.*

In the next few chapters we will discover:

- God's purpose in trials.
- How He would have us respond to suffering.
- How God relates to us when we are hurting.
- How we should treat people facing their own challenges in suffering.

When God Wants to Build a Man

*When God wants to build a man
And to skill a man
When God wants to mold a man
To create so great and bold a man
That all the world will be amazed*

*Watch His methods, watch His ways
How He hammers him and hurts him
With mighty blows converts him
And with trials shapes him*

*Only God understands
When his tortured heart is crying
And every breath is trying*

*How God bends but never breaks him
And with good intentions makes him
He uses whom He chooses*

*Then God shows His splendor through
him*

Author Unknown

✓ Jot down your thoughts on the statement: *Trials, suffering, and hard times do make a man and do reveal the core convictions and values of that man.*

WHEN GOD WANTS TO BUILD A MAN



Bob was not raised in a Christian home. When his parents separated at an early age, he lived part-time with his grandparents. They took him to church, and his grandmother read him stories from the Bible.

During the turmoil of the Vietnam era, Bob was in high school and seeking answers to the purpose of life. A friend took him to hear a Christian speaker and he accepted Christ. In that moment, Bob was saved from a life of waste and purposelessness.

The next year Bob went to college and joined a campus ministry. He continued to grow in his faith, led a Bible study on campus, and wanted to live for that which was eternal. Bob's parents kept in touch but found his faith in Christ annoying. He was majoring in construction science which made his dad proud, since he too was a builder.

After graduation Bob started his own construction company. Having never received his dad's approval, Bob felt the need to prove his worth. He worked hard and his business grew. Within a decade he was the most successful builder in his town. Other contractors feared his competition. He enjoyed the success but was dissatisfied with the small projects of his local area. So Bob was excited when given a chance to build a much larger project in another state. He was headed to the next level in his career.

Bob moved his business and family 200 miles and started the largest project he had ever built, a \$6 million shopping mall on the edge of a major metropolitan city. Within another five years, Bob's business had grown to 300 employees with multimillion dollar projects going on in four states.

Bob still taught an adult Sunday school class each week, sat on the church board, and gave generously. He openly shared that the secret to his success was the business being dedicated to God. Outwardly, things were great.

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But Bob knew in his heart something was wrong. He loved his business, but he always felt a slight pang in his heart when he told others his business was dedicated to God. He knew he was neglecting his family, and Jesus was not really the center of his life. The business was!

In 1994, which began as the best year ever, a \$13 million office complex and a \$9 million mall renovation promised significant profits for his company. But Bob felt a strange development in his walk with the Lord. He wasn't hearing from God like he used to. His Quiet Times were hurried and inconsistent. No matter, he mused—he was giving huge sums to his church, and he still taught an adult Sunday school class.

One day God did speak. Bob was standing on the balcony of his business office, overlooking the construction machinery being prepped for the next job. God spoke to Bob's heart and in a still, small voice asked, *"You love this more than Me, don't you?"* The words felt like a knife in Bob's side.

A few months later on a Monday morning, Bob's secretary came in unexpectedly and said his bank's vice-president was on the line. Great, we should play golf, Bob thought. But they did not discuss a golf date, and the news was not good. The mall renovation account that had \$350,000 was now empty. The job foreman was nowhere to be found. He had cleaned out the bank account and skipped town before several major subcontractors had been paid. Work on the project with more than 100 employees came to a halt.

A few weeks later, a second catastrophe exploded. The multimillion-dollar office complex had its funds shut off and the work stopped cold. The development owner and his wife were getting a divorce. Later it was discovered that Bob's construction manager and the owner's wife were secretly having an affair—and now the developer wanted nothing more to do with Bob's company.

In the first fifteen years of business, Bob's company had maintained an excellent reputation, had never been in a lawsuit, and had always paid their subcontractors on time. Now Bob's company could not pay its construction bills. Within a month, eighteen lawsuits from subcontractors were filed against the company and against Bob personally. Another project manager, smelling blood, stole company records and attempted to take over a third project himself, working directly with the owner behind the scenes.

One vendor was interviewed on TV claiming that Bob's company had extorted funds from subcontractors and did not complete projects. Filled with falsehoods, the interview ran three nights in a row. Bob was devastated,

had trouble sleeping, and over and over in his mind kept asking, *Why, God, did You let this happen?*

Within a few months Bob's construction company spiraled down from a multimillion-dollar, multi-state company with 300 employees to just three employees, with no work and few prospects. Bob's company owned every bulldozer model Caterpillar made, plus trucks, tools, and countless other equipment. One by one the pieces of equipment were sold to pay off bills and settle the lawsuits. Bob and his family moved from living in a mansion into renovated government housing.

Most of the Christians around Bob and his wife seemed to disappear. Some asked what sin they had committed and were counseled to figure it out so that things would get better. A few church leaders decided it was best if Bob didn't teach his adult Sunday school class any longer.

Interestingly, it was during this time that Bob again began to hear God's voice. His voice was kind, full of grace, and without condemnation. While visiting with a Christian leader he was encouraged to *"turn worry into worship!"* It was this new focus that rekindled Bob's passion to spend time with God. It was during these times he spent in the Word, prayer, and worship that the Lord taught Bob some of His greatest spiritual truths and life lessons.

More than a decade has passed since Bob's time of testing. At the end of the ordeal, all the lawsuits were settled and bills paid. Bob moved to another city with his family, a pickup, and one small construction skid loader. And so he began to build his business again. Today, Bob and his wife have four children and six grandchildren. His business has fifty employees, and he has built churches, schools, college dorms, banks, and other kinds of commercial real estate in an eight-state area. Bob continues to be a leader in his church, supports a number of ministries, and is often asked to share his testimony of how God took him through the fire of testing.

In his testimony Bob shares how he had been spiritually bound up in trying to obtain his personal value from his business success or the income it produced. Bob often concludes his testimony with this statement: *"When you walk with God through the fires of testing, the only things that get burned off are the ties that bind you."*

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- ✓ Write down at least three observations about Bob's ordeal. How do you think you would have responded to this trial?

Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

—James 1:2-4

Ask Questions

Is there:

A command to obey

A promise to claim

A sin to avoid

An application to make

Something new about God

Ask: Who, What, When, Where, Why

Emphasize:

Different words

Rewrite:

In your own words

- ✓ Spend some time doing the *Ask Questions* method of meditation on James 1:2-4. Jot down your observations.

- ✓ Rewrite James 1:2-4 in your own words. Be prepared to share your rewrite with the group.

When God allows suffering or hard times to come into our lives, His purpose is to mature us, to help us grow up. However, this process can only happen if we respond to the crises by going to God with our pain and choosing to do what's right. Fighting with God by making bad choices when we are in pain, resolves nothing, extends the trial, and many times hurts those around us causing even more pain.

So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator [go to God] and continue to do good [what's right].

—1 Peter 4:19

✓ Spend some time doing the *Ask Questions* method of meditation on 1 Peter 4:19. Jot down your observations. (Some translations use “good”; others use “right.” The Greek word means “a course of right action.”)

✓ Use the *Emphasize Different Words* method of meditation on 1 Peter 4:19. Meditate on the words or phrases listed below. Jot down how these phrases impact the meaning of the verse.

suffer according to God's will

commit themselves

faithful Creator

continue to do good

✓ James 1:2-4 tells us what God is doing when we are suffering. What is it?

Ask Questions

Is there:

A command to obey

A promise to claim

A sin to avoid

An application to make

Something new about God

Ask: Who, What, When, Where, Why

Emphasize:

Different words

Rewrite:

In your own words



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- ✓ 1 Peter 4:19 tells us what we should do when suffering. What is it?

Note from the author for those who went from Book 1 to Book 3:

1 Peter 4:19 is in your verse pack. It was used in Book 2. I encourage you to pull it out and memorize it along with James 1:2-4 this week. It is my favorite verse on how a real man should respond to suffering: "Go to God and do what's right!"

- ✓ Look up 1 Peter 4:1-2. Jot down how suffering purifies our purpose in life.

- ✓ Look up the following verses and answer the question below.

Matthew 16:27

2 Corinthians 5:10

Revelation 22:12

How does the promise of rewards when you face trials affect your motivation to *"go to God and do what's right"*?

- ✓ Answer the next three questions after reading the Letter from God.



Letter from God

My son,

When you are suffering, trust me. Trust me to do what's best for you. I measure things differently than you. I want what's best for your soul, what will give you spiritual rewards in heaven. Men measure what is easiest, what is free from pain, what gives them pleasure. I measure what will bring you the greatest joy, joy that will last, joy that is based on an eternal reward, joy that comes from knowing me.

God

- ✓ Record three to four observations on what God wants when you are suffering.

- ✓ What do men want when they are suffering?

- ✓ Why are they different?



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Points to Remember

✓ Review the lesson, organize your thoughts, and jot down the most important points to remember from this lesson. Be prepared to share what you wrote.

1.

2.

3.

4.

Points that others shared that I want to remember:





ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK

1. Have your Quiet Times in the following passages: Isaiah 61:1-3; Luke 4:16-21; 2 Corinthians 1:1-11; Galatians 6:1-9; John 8:1-11. As you meditate, these Scripture passages will help you grasp some key biblical principles for the next lesson.
2. ✓ Place James 1:2-4 in the front pocket of your *EMAW Verse Pack* and memorize it this week. 1 Peter 4:19 is also in your verse pack. It is optional but I encourage you to memorize it as well.
3. Each of you will write your own *Points to Remember*. This exercise will help you review the lesson and grasp more deeply the key thoughts that need to take root in you. Use a highlighter or underline key parts to facilitate writing your own *Points to Remember*.
4. End the session practicing the *WAR* method of prayer. Pray about any difficult issues occurring in your lives.



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