



A Victory of Faith

Becky Combee

I often study the Scripture by putting similar words together. These word groups enlarge my understanding of a concept and give greater focus to a biblical truth. One of these groups – patience, forbearance, and longsuffering – is a longtime favorite. Each of these words leans on the other, giving depth to this necessary ingredient of faith. After all, the scripture says, *“Ye have need of patience, that, after you have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.”*¹ It also declares that we must walk in our God-given vocation with *“longsuffering, forbearing one another in love.”*² It encourages us, saying that we can be strengthened *“unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness.”*³ These words stand together and are essential ingredients to victory.

One quartet of words I especially like is victory, conquer, overcome, and triumph. They build a bridge from death to life, darkness to light and loss to success. They are magnificent biblical words, each of them saying, “You win.” This means there is an enemy to defeat, a challenge to rebuff, or a difficulty to master. Also, it brings to the forefront our trio of friends, patience, longsuffering and forbearance. We cannot win without them.

The good news is that we can pray for patience and longsuffering. We cannot pray for faith, however. Faith comes by hearing – not praying. But in the apostle Paul’s prayer for the

church at Colosse, he asked God for the strength of patience and longsuffering. He prayed. I love that because I know that our great God answers prayer.

Jesus said, *“Ask, and it shall be given you.”*⁴ He did not say, “It might be, it could be, or I hope it will be.” He said, “It shall be.” So, if we ask according to the will of God, we will receive. God will fulfill His will.

In the inspired writings of the apostle Paul, we read, *“Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ.”*⁵ It is our relationship with Christ that assures us of victory. **We triumph because we know Him**, and we are united with Him by faith in His death and Resurrection. Did you note the word “always.” Always is a big, big word. It means that every time we walk with Christ, every time we come before His throne for mercy and grace, every time we heed His word, we will triumph. Every time! Always!

This verse has a great context that we need to mention. The apostle Paul had no rest in his spirit because he could not find Titus. He left Troas, traveling to Macedonia, to seek him and he is assured of victory because he believes in God’s triumphant help. When we go boldly before God’s throne of grace, he will help us. We will triumph!

Does it take patience to triumph? Of course! Patience is necessary for every God-given assignment. It is characteristic of God’s people. In 2 Corinthians 6:4, we read that God’s servants are patient. In the parable of the sower, the seed on good ground bears fruit with patience. The apostle

Paul compliments the church at Thessalonica for their patience, and in Revelation, the Lord Jesus notes the patience of the Ephesian church.⁶ Patience wins!

Patience leads us to victory. The apostle John writes, *"This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."*⁷ There are two great words here – victory and overcome. When we experience victory, we win. We overcome because the mountain moves, and the crooked road becomes a straight path for our feet.⁸ I often say, we can come over, come through, come past, come around, but the end is always victory or triumph. It is a victory of faith – faith and confidence in our God and His Word. Yet, according to Hebrews 6:12, it is through faith and patience that we inherit the promises. Patience is an essential arm of faith.

The last tremendously encouraging word is written in Romans 8:37. *"We are more than conquerors through him that loved us."* It doesn't matter if you triumph, overcome, or conqueror, each is an expression of the victory we have in Christ. We are victorious – we conqueror – through Christ who loved us. We are His body, saved by His blood, and as we live in Him, we win.

Will our life be without trials, trouble, temptation, or difficulties? NO! But we will overcome! How is that possible? It is possible because we will not cast away our confidence in God. We will always seek His will and patiently continue in His Word.

James, the brother of our Lord, writes, *"You have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."*⁹ Although most of us have looked closely at Job's overwhelming loss, we have not noticed the New Testament emphasis on Job's patience. Job's repentance and his patience paved the way for his victory. And what a glorious victory! The Word of God declares, *"And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before."*¹⁰

There is a reward in obedience to God's Word. Patience continuance is the road to triumph! Let's do it! The Lord is our helper! AMEN!

¹Heb 10:36 ²Eph 4:1-2 ³Col 1:11 ⁴Mt 7:7 ⁵2Co 2:14 ⁶Rev 2:2 ⁷1Jn 5:4 ⁸Lk 3:5; Heb 12:12-13 ⁹Jas 5:11 ¹⁰Job 42:10



So Rich, So Free

Suzanne D. Williams

I had an unexpected revelation of the love of God recently. God and I talk in the wee hours, and twice, He revealed His love to me. I cannot begin to put it into words except to say it is the purest, most transparent, and powerful thing I've ever known.

Now, God's love saved me from a dark and horrible place, so I thought I knew the scope of it. I thought I knew the depth and the size of His grace. I didn't because, you see, our human minds have no comparison.

Your parents may love you. Your spouse may be your best friend, and of course, you love your children. But even at their highest, those come with strings. Our idea of love always has expectations. We want to repay it to the one who loves us. We feel the need to measure up. We see it as earnable, as reciprocal, as our duty. We paint it with apologies and with sacrifice. We love in spite of that last argument.

The love of God, though, is free of all that. It is consistent and of equal measure to all. It's as tall, as grand, as full, as clean for the most screwed up individual as it is for the nicest or most talented.

There's no judgment on it. None. Not even a hint of disappointment or "I wish she'd try harder." You really can't earn it. It's "free, free-free-free." If we could truly know how incredible it is, how unhindered, how much our lives would change.

Instead, we paint the love of God with doubt. We give it shadows that hide personality quirks we're sure He has. We're wrong. God IS love, and as long as we're trying to be good enough, as long as we're measuring it out, "a little for you" but "more for them," then we're WAY off base.

God's love is the most open, most available spring. It never runs out, never becomes less, never alters in its delivery. The shortcomings we find are just that, OURS. We press God into the box that fits into our need for explanation when its best description is that you can't explain it at all.

It just IS. He loves. Everyone. All the time.