



Patience Please

BECKY COMBEE

In the early years of our marriage, Wayne and I worked with the children's choir of our church. One of the songs I remember from that era encourages us to have patience, saying, "Have patience, have patience. Don't be in such a hurry. When you get impatient, you only start to worry. Remember, remember that God is patient, too. And think of all the times when others have to wait for you."¹ This song would be a great introduction to a study on worry, but I want us to focus on patience.

Patience is very important because it is an essential arm of victory. In the book of Hebrews, we read, "Do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward."² Our confidence is in God, who watches over His Word to perform it in our lives. We trust Him! Sometimes, however, the challenges and struggles of life chip away at our confident trust. While the Scripture says, "Having done all to stand,"³ we find ourselves seated, slumped in our chairs and bowed over in despair. The pressure, the antagonism, the delay has stolen the upright and active position of faith.

Faith in God is the vehicle of victory! But, what can we do when faith has been compromised? What is the answer when our faith has been strangled by circumstances and battered by

despair? If our faith is drowning in a tsunami of doubt, can we recover?

Oh, what God news we have in the Scripture! God never fails! The Word of God is true! His counsel is immutable, enduring forever, and every word that He has spoken will accomplish His purpose.⁴

So, what is our first step to recovery? Go back to the Word. Read, read, and re-read until doubt surrenders to God's magnificent truth. Speak the Word of God over and over again until your spirit

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boldly declares its power. Do not talk about your fear! Refuse to rehearse the details of your trauma with every person who will listen. Life and death are in the power of the tongue! Speak life! Speak Jesus! Speak His Word!

Then, what's next? PATIENCE! According to the New Strong's Concordance, patience is cheerful or hopeful endurance. Bible translations frequently use the word "endurance" instead of patience, although some say "persevere." I personally love the New Century Version which simply writes, "Hold on." This means we don't quit, give up, or surrender. The Bible enlarges this concept when it

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speaks of “patient continuance” and “patient waiting.”⁵

In our instant society, we are not skilled at waiting. Yet, if God’s Word is true and He always performs His Word, “patient waiting” is the way to victory. It should be obvious that when we quit, loss is inevitable. When we give up, it’s over. **If we wait on the Lord, though, He will answer.**

Waiting becomes easier when we understand Isaiah 40:31. “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.” The word “wait” is quite unique. It means to “bind together (perhaps by twisting).” This reminds me of a child’s braided hair. Years ago, I was in a department store when I found myself staring at a lady with very long braided hair. I asked her about her braids, and she said it took almost 24-hours to braid, but it did not have to be braided again for 30 days. I am still impressed with her having a 30-day hairdo.

We must bind or unite our hearts with God,

abiding in Him and leaning fully on His promise. When we look continually to Him, we partake of His strength. With His strength, we will not be weary or faint. He will strengthen us with His might, so that we do not give up.

The apostle Paul prayed for the churches of Ephesus and Colosse, asking God to strengthen them with His might. His anointed words declare that God’s might or power will enable them to walk in patience and longsuffering with joyfulness.⁶

It’s strange isn’t it? Patience with joyfulness! Yet, this is the promise of God’s Word. Through prayer, we can be strengthened to live patiently with joy.

Therefore, patience is not drudgery. It is filled with joy because **Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, fulfills His Word.**⁷ Patience rejoices in new strength – the strength to run and not be weary. Confidently it waits, praising the Lord, because He who began a good work will complete it.⁸ This is the way of victory. It is our way!

¹Patience (Herbert the Snail),” Written by Frank Hernandez & Sherry Saunders Powell ©Copyright 1977 Sparrow Song (a div. of EMI Christian Music Publishing

²Heb 10:35 NAS ³Eph 6:13 ⁴Heb 6:17; 1Pe 1:25; Is 55:11 ⁵Rm 2:7; 2Th 3:5 ⁶Col 1:11; Eph 3:16 ⁷Heb 12:2 ⁸Php 1:6

Faith and Patience

SUZANNE D. WILLIAMS

I brought home a new dachshund puppy last Christmas, thinking I knew everything there was to know about training dogs. In my twenties, I raised several different breeds. I’ve been there from birth to old age. I’ve housebroken so many I can’t count them all. This one, I just knew would be a piece of cake.

She was the result of a specific prayer. I asked for a particular kind of breeder, who’d sell for a specific price, and even said how far I’d drive. God answered all of that and even other little things I didn’t ask for. This gave me even more confidence. If God would provide like that, then this was meant to be! I had the name picked out, the crate purchased, toys, dog bowls ... you name it.

However, a week in, a month, five months, six ... and I was at the end of my rope. She was *nothing*

like any other dog I’ve had. All the experience I’d gained, all the advice people gave, nothing worked. Now, she’s a sweet dog, and we’ve since figured out how to live together. I wouldn’t trade her for the world. But it’s taken an excessive amount of patience to get that far.

She’s difficult. She doesn’t respond to loud voices or frustration. When you get onto her for misbehaving, she wags her tail. I had to ditch the crate and trust her to stay in her bed. I had to decide if I wanted to give up or hang in there.

It’s funny really. I asked for the right dog for me, **but what I thought I needed wasn’t at all what God had planned.** He used an animal to teach me patience, gentleness, and kindness, and I’m a better person for it.

We have many great years together in our future, and I’m sure she’ll teach me something else. My biggest lesson, though, is to trust God, who “blesses us with everything we need to enjoy life.” ^(1Ti 6:17) Even when we don’t recognize it.