



Inner Growth - Patience

In your patience possess ye your souls.

Luke 21:19

But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it?

Romans 8:25

For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. *Hebrew 10:36*

Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. *James 1:3*

Pressure - 1 Corinthians 10:13

Actions - James 2:18

Time - Ecclesiastes 3:1

ideas - Acts 3:19 Sarah's idea to Abram

Eyes - Matthew 7:3

Negativity - Titus 3:10

Complain - 1 Timothy 6:6

Ears - Mark 4:9

What jeopardizes patience? Impatience. Jesus said to the disciples, in patience, while doing so, possess your souls. The opportunity to take control of our environment and what is happening around us is a challenge in life. There are only two surroundings a person may be involved with: the light of God or the powers of darkness.

If salvation were something that a believer could see, something they could grasp by sight, then there would be no room for hope. A faithful follower of Christ is that they do *not* see it but hopes for it. Therefore, patiently enduring the sufferings that lie upon the road to it, all human beings have to deal with that comes

our way, must be done with patience. Every day all of us live and do not know what lies ahead. However, we believe that when a new day dawns, we expect to live through and enjoy it.

When a believer, pastors, or leaders are doing the will of God, there will be a need for patience. There will be obstacles to overcome, and through trials and, at times suffering, we require patience. We need it because there is within ourselves there is so much disposition to complain and repine: because our nature is liable to sink under suffering and because our trials are often protracted. All that Christians can do in such cases is be patient. Examples of the Old Testament are Adam and Eve suffering for being beguiled losing out of the Garden of Eden and the slaying of Abel by his brother Cain for his faithful offerings to God, just a few.

However, the people of God receive their reward accordingly and differently: Particularly believers who have done His will by overcoming adversity. They follow His Word by being a doer according to scripture. Still, without patience during the hard times, the chances of surviving the situation alone are slim. Having patience and a close relationship with God go hand in hand.

The old phrase, "patience is a virtue," is popular among society, but what does it mean? The ability to wait for something without frustration is a valuable skill and a positive aspect of one's personality. A faith to stay on course, whether in a difficult marriage, a tedious job, an annoying neighbor, or an uncooperative relative, are a few of where patience is needed. Believers looking forward to something they have prayed about to God will require patience until it comes to fruition: That is if it is God's will.

People exercising patience will experience some form of pressure one way or another. Job, who was an upright man, faced a lot of difficulties in a short period. He lost his sheep when the Sabeans fell upon them, carried them away, and smote the servants with the sword. Job's sheep and servants experience a strange, terrible, and widely-spreading flame or fire from the air. He lost his camels and servants to the Chaldeans and, unfortunately,

his sons and daughters to a high wind that destroyed the house, losing his family. All of the misfortune happen to Job, and he expects a visit from three friends who come to sympathize and comfort him during this time. Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him. Each of them gives their response in Job chapters four, eight, and eleven, respectively. However, Job's wife, in chapter two, verse nine, tells her husband to curse God and die. The pressure Job was facing from his family and friends became unbearable.

"Actions speak louder than words" is a requirement for patience. However, the phrase is more common for people doing something about it rather than saying about doing it. Genuine believers living in faith result in participating in good works. While in our patience, we must trust God and be content until the appointed time for change to come in Christ Jesus.

An example is in Second Kings six, verse five, which involves the Prophet Elisha and the axe head that fell into the water.

As they were working and chopping wood, one of the men swung and lost the axe head. The sharp-heavy piece of metal went straight into the water. As it landed, the man said he borrowed the axe from someone else. Elisha asks him where it fell, and the man shows him where in verse six, same chapter. Elisha then cuts and throws a stick into the water and makes the iron float. Elisha tells the man to lift it out, and this man picks it up.

The lesson is the activity of the Prophet Elisha from the start. There was no lingering or contemplating, only working on the situation immediately. Prophet Elisha did not dwell on where the axe came from but instructed how to get it out of the water. The coordination of making a plan to retrieve what was lost requires patience. Sometimes being content in certain situations is showing patience: they go hand in hand.

Patience will require time. Exodus thirty-two, verse one, the people of Israel were waiting to receive God's laws. After all of the miracles, including the ten plagues on the Egyptians, the Israelites came out of Egypt with a renewed

belief in the God of their fathers. They passed through the Red Sea on dry land while the Egyptian army drowned in it and was brought to the mountain of God to receive His laws. However, the Israelites seem impatient to wonder why Moses did not come down from the mount.

Moses, before his departure, had left directions that the people should, in case of any difficulty, take the advice of Aaron. It is not surprising, however, that when the complication arose, they consulted Aaron. Aaron had been a joint leader with Moses from the first in Exodus four, twenty-nine through thirty, chapter five, verses one, four, and twenty, respectively. However, the religious condition of the Israelites during their bondage in Egypt made them accustomed to that lifestyle. They grew impatient while waiting for Moses to come from the mount, and they persuaded Aaron to default into making a molten calf, as in Exodus thirty-two, verse four. A lack of patience can propel someone into carnal ideas contrary to the Word of God. In Genesis sixteen, verse one, Sarai had no children, and she was around seventy-five years old, while Abram, at eighty-five about that time. Apparently, at this point in her life, she thought about not having children anymore, so the idea of her handmaid Hagar came to mind. Sarai did not consult with God but with her judgment. However, the decision created other problems for her and Abram later in life due to a lack of patience and trusting God.

Patience can help us see through the eyes of God when we naturally do not know what lies ahead. In First Kings fourteen verse four, Jeroboam sends his wife on a mission. At that time, Abijah, the son of Jeroboam, became sick. And Jeroboam said to his wife, "Please arise, and disguise yourself, that they may not recognize you as the wife of Jeroboam, and go to Shiloh. Jeroboam did not tell his wife to pray for their son or to ask the Prophet to pray: He wanted to use Ahijah the Prophet as a fortuneteller instead of seeking him as a man of God.

On the other hand, Abijah depends on God and not himself despite not having a vision. Abijah could not see, but his relationship with God helped him know through His eyes who is

coming to visit. The Lord tells Abijah, the wife of Jeroboam, coming to ask you something about her son, for he is sick. There was no reason for the wife of Jeroboam to wear a disguise since Ahijah could not see due to old age.

Not having patience can cause a person to respond in a disobedient manner. In Number twenty, verses one through thirteen, God's servant Moses experiences adversity with the children of Israel. There was no water, and the criticism begins in verses three through four.

"And the people chode with Moses, and spake, saying, Would God that we had died when our brethren died before the LORD! And why have ye brought up the congregation of the LORD into this wilderness, that we and our cattle should die there?"

The comments and constant bickering can make a person impatient and less tolerant of such verbal attacks. Moses and Aaron fell to their faces before the Lord after receiving negative feedback from the congregation. God responds by giving His servants instructions regarding the need for water to drink for the people. Moses responds by calling them rebels which may indicate disappointment by God's servant, which probably contributed to him not following instructions properly.

A lack of patience can create murmuring. Numbers eleven, verse one, signifies how much God does not like complainers. "And when the people complained, it displeased the LORD: and the LORD heard it; and his anger kindled, and the fire of the LORD burnt among them and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp." The response made the people cry to Moses, who prayed to God to quench the fire. If God's servant did not address the Lord, who would survive?

A lack of patience can make people give blessings to the wrong person. Genesis twenty-seven, where Isaac no longer had a twenty-twenty vision, told his eldest son to make some savory meat and bring it to him so he could pronounce a blessing upon Him. However, Rebekah overhears and sends Jacob to fetch it so she can prepare the meal before Esau. Isaac, whose eyes were dim, relied upon his hearing. Jacob comes to Isaac ahead of time and asks for the blessing.

Isaac depends upon his ears to communicate with others who can see him. Jacob lies to his father, saying he is Esau, the firstborn. "And Isaac said unto his son, How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son? And he said Because the LORD thy God brought it to me." And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not.

And Jacob went near unto Isaac, his father; and he felt him, and said, 'the voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau. And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands: so he blessed him." Isaac did not patiently identify that Jacob was not Esau. Instead, the decision to go alone on his terms was a setback for him and his family. If Isaac had the patience to investigate further, maybe the situation would be different for him and the direction of his family.

What causes impatience? The reaction of those who exercise patience. We hear the common phrase, "why can't you just wait for a minute? What's the rush?" The problem with society is everything is turning towards being instant.