

The importance of patient perseverance

2 Peter 1:5-9

Tonight I would like to share a few things with you about the importance of patience and perseverance, and how it impacts us in many areas of our walk as true believers. Both of these words are closely related and sometimes interchangeable. We will look at how patience is linked to forgiveness, fear, obedience, waiting and promise. We are told in 2 Peter chapter 1 verse 7 to ADD patience with all diligence. Diligence is according to Strong's: earnestness in accomplishing, promoting, or striving after anything, to give all diligence, to interest one's self most earnestly. In layman's terms it means hard work and extreme effort. I am sure that we have all experienced how hard it is to be patient from time to time. All the more reason to diligently add it to our faith. The word add, in verse 5 in the first chapter of 2 Peter has a dual meaning first it is to be supplied or furnished and second it means, to supply or minister to. We first receive patience from the Lord and then we must minister or show patience to others. Keeping that in mind let's read our text and look at the importance of patience.

2 Peter 1:5-9

And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that you shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacks these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

1. Peter in these verses gives us some building blocks that will, if we add them, keep us fruitful in our walk. The first of these building blocks is faith. "But without faith it is impossible to please Him".

Faith is the foundation of all the rest of the attributes. He then, once faith is established tells us to add virtue. Virtue is a good moral character. In all that we do we must first and foremost be honest and trustworthy in our everyday dealings. We are to be men and women of our word, we do what is right in the eyes of the Lord not what is right in our own eyes.

2. Knowledge is the next attribute we need to add, this is not worldly knowledge but knowledge that comes by knowing God's word and allowing the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us into truth. Godly knowledge humbles us before the creator of the universe, worldly knowledge puffs us up and makes us think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think. This knowledge renews our mind from worldly things to spiritual things. We have to be a student of His word to add this knowledge.
3. Self-control is the ability to deny the flesh! Strong's – The virtue of one who masters his desires and passion, especially sensual appetites. Having mastery over our flesh is only accomplished with diligence by Divine power.

and to self-control patience;

In the KJV and NIV translation of this passage the word perseverance is used for patience, where in the NKJV the word patience is used. In the NLT patient endurance is used. This is an example of these two words being interchangeable. So what is the definition of the word perseverance or patience from the Greek?

1. According to Strong's it means – “the characteristic of a man who is unswerved from his deliberate purpose and his loyalty to faith and piety by even the greatest trials and sufferings, a patient enduring, sustaining, perseverance”.

This definition lays out for us our path to patience and perseverance. Nothing should be able to misdirect us from our purpose in following Christ and becoming like Him in our walk. No trial or suffering or loss

can be allowed to hinder us in obtaining the things that God has in store for us.

So what is it about patience that we should want it and that God should want us to possess it?

1. First it is a characteristic of God; we want to be like Him so we should want to emulate Him in our walk. Just think about how patient He is with you! Even in our transgressions, when the Lord needs to correct us He never stops having patience with us.

Psalm 89:32,33, “Then I will punish their transgression with the rod, And their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless, My lovingkindness (patience) I will not utterly take from him, nor allow My faithfulness to fail”.

Romans 15:4-6 “For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”. We see in this verse that He is the God of patience. Patience is a prerequisite to many attributes of our walk as true believers. Without it we are ineffective and unstable. Allowing the influence of the enemy to hinder us in our service to Christ. Lack of patience is really a lack of faith.

I mentioned that we were going to look at how forgiveness is linked to patience, in (Mathew 18:21-35) we are given a parable about a servant that owed his master a great debt. When this man begged his master to be patient with him the master took pity and forgave him all of his great debt. Then this man went to a fellow servant who owed him a small debt and when he asked for patience this man threw the fellow servant into prison till the small debt was paid. When the master heard of this he called his servant back before him and threw him in prison till his debt was paid. Both

men asked for patience one was forgiven but did not forgive the other. When patience is asked for we can instead give forgiveness, when we do this it bypasses the need for patience. If there remains no debt, then we don't need to be patient in waiting for repayment. So if you struggle with patience try forgiveness instead. We are called to forgive others as God has forgiven us, if we do not have forgiveness for others the Lord will not forgive us.

Mark 11:25,26

“And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. “But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.

This is a part of being the New Man (or woman), we have become in Christ. We must add patience which means that when we receive it from the Lord we must also minister it to others. Just as we must forgive others as we ourselves have been forgiven.

What part does worry or fear play in patience?

2 Timothy 1:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

Philippians 4:6-7, Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Mathew 6:27 “Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?

If we are fearful or anxious or full of worry, we are not practicing patience. This can lead to stress and stress can lead to illness in our life.

Mathew 6:34 “Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble”.

Jesus teaches us in this 6th chapter of Mathew that there is nothing in this life that we need to worry or be anxious about. He will provide all that we need, in fact in 2 Peter 1:3, we are told that He has already given us everything we need for life and godliness. The question then becomes are we satisfied with what the Lord has supplied or do our desires want more? The Israelites grew tired of God’s supply of food in the form of manna and wanted more, how often do we fall into the same attitude? Many times we are in a state of worry or fear because of our wants and desires, not because of need. God has provided and will provide all that we need.

How do we get patience? Patience is linked with hope, if we are sure of a coming event we can wait patiently for the event. Our event of hope is the return of Christ! So hope of His return works patience in us, we can never get weary of the anticipation of His coming but with excited patience look forward with anticipation to that wonderful day.

Romans 8:25: But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.

James 5:7: 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. You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

We can see in these verses how waiting is connected with patience. This waiting is however not a passive waiting but a waiting with purpose. It requires us to be busy in our waiting doing the works of the Lord. If we just sit and wait we become like the servant that hid the master’s coins in the ground because of fear. We need to be obediently waiting for His return.

Obedience. Luke 8:15: “But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience”.

Doing what the Lord tells us to do will bring forth the fruit of patience as one of the many fruits that comes with obedience. Obedience is one aspect of how we add patience to our faith. Obedience is doing the work that we have been called to do. Adding patience is one of those works, following all the commandments of the Lord assists us in adding it. It is not a onetime thing that happens and then is always there, but a continual diligent work until the Lord returns and we are changed in the twinkling of an eye.

Tribulation. The other thing that works patience in us is tribulation. This kind of patience comes with a higher price. It requires us to endure and persevere, it gives us a taste of what Jesus experienced for us in suffering for our sin. It produces in us an assurance that we truly are followers of Christ. If we can endure tribulation for His sake it can only be done by His divine power, and if His divine power is at work in us then we can truly know that we belong to Him.

Colossians 1:11-12: For this reason, we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy;

2 Thessalonians 1:4-5: so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure, which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer;

James 1:3,4: knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing

Rev 13:10 NLT: Anyone who is destined for prison will be taken to prison. Anyone destined to die by the sword will die by the sword. This means that God's holy people must endure persecution patiently and remain faithful.

The perfecting of our faith, the depth of our love, our true commitment to Jesus is all revealed in how we hold up under tribulation. If we stand firm in the midst of the storm we know we are truly His, for why else would we endure except for our love for Him.

With patience comes great reward! Giving all diligence add to your faith patience! There is a great reward for those that work hard to add patience to their walk. Health, contentment, security, purpose, a light yoke and of course the best reward is the Lord telling us "Well done good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord." When we receive what the Lord has prepared for us in heaven all that we have patiently endured for Him here on earth will seem like a small thing. The things that seem to overwhelm us now we will look back at and wonder why we were overwhelmed by them. When we realize the extent of the provision of God for us to do all that He has asked and realize how much we tried to do it on our own, we will just shake our heads at our foolishness.

1 Timothy 6:11,12: But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

Hebrews 6:12: For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Hebrews 10:36: For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise:

In closing let me just say this; Faith, Virtue, Knowledge and Self-control are the building blocks of Patience. Each one contributes to the adding of patience. All require diligent effort but the result is that we will be fruitful in our walk and knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord.

2 Peter 1:10-11: Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Let's pray