

In Much Patience

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2 Corinthians 6:3-10 Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed: But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

- I. “Giving no offence” is to provide no reason for anyone to reject or despise God and his truth.
 - A. On the contrary, everything we do and say should be a positive influence on others to embrace the truth of the word of God.
 - B. The main focus of what he is saying here has to do with our behavior and not so much what we say.
 - C. It is easy to preach to others about what we have or how we ought to live, but it is another matter to live it consistently and without wavering when it is tried.
 - D. “Giving no offense” is easy when everything is comfortable and circumstances cooperate with us, but it is another matter when everything turns against us.

- II. In much patience ...
 - A. This is the issue which Paul is focusing in on here in these verses.
 - B. This is the virtue that is probably the most tried in all Christians.
 - C. This is the thing that is first tested in all Christians.
 - D. Patience here means cheerful, patient endurance of afflictions of all kinds.

PATIENCE,

1. The suffering of afflictions, pain, toil, calamity, provocation or other evil, with a calm, unruffled temper; endurance without murmuring or fretfulness. Patience may spring from constitutional fortitude, from a kind of heroic pride, or from Christian submission to the divine will.

- 2. A calm temper which bears evils without murmuring or discontent.
- 3. The act or quality of waiting long for justice or expected good without discontent.
- 4. Perseverance; constancy in labor or exertion.
- 5. The quality of bearing offenses and injuries without anger or revenge.

- E. Patience is the quality that precedes and accompanies holiness and godliness just like lust precedes and accompanies sin.
 - 1. Patience is “waiting,” while lust says, “I must have it NOW!”
- F. Patience is directly connected to faith.
 - 1. Faith in God requires patience.
 - 2. Faith in God produces patience.
 - 3. Lack of patience therefore, is evidence of lack of faith.

III. Patience is tried by many things, some of which Paul mentioned here.

- A. Afflictions (troubles, obstacles, opposition)
- B. Necessities (responsibilities and burdens)
- C. Distresses (calamities, being closed in with no way to turn)
- D. In stripes (provocations)
- E. In imprisonments (oppression)
- F. In tumults (contentions, strife, fights)
- G. In labors (drudgery, heaviness)
- H. In watchings (weariness, sleeplessness)
- I. In fastings (lack of food, or other basic needs)

Now jump down to verse 8:

- J. By honor and dishonor (when we are honored and when we are dishonored)
- K. By evil report and good report (when we are spoken well of and when we are lied about and slandered)
- L. As deceivers and yet true (when all the world seems to think we are a liar even though we are telling the truth)
- M. As unknown, and yet well known (whether we are known by many or left out on the backside of nowhere and no one even knows we are alive)
- N. As dying, and, behold, we live (when it seems our life is surely over or in continual danger of being ended, but we somehow keep on living)
- O. As chastened, and not killed (when the pain makes life unbearable, but it continues anyway)
- P. As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing (our patience is proven when we have every reason to be sorrowful, but we still find reason to rejoice)
- Q. As poor, yet making many rich (“Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee.” Peter in Acts 3:6)
- R. As having nothing, and yet possessing all things. (by realizing our present poverty concerning worldly possessions is only temporary and that we will inherit all things)

IV. Patience is exercised and proven by many things, some of which Paul has listed for us.

- A. By pureness (cleanness, blamelessness)
- B. By knowledge (by knowing what you are talking about; being able to answer; not ignorant and just repeating and mimicking others)
- C. By longsuffering (forbearance; waiting on others)
- D. By kindness (gentleness, goodness toward others)
- E. By the Holy Ghost (that divine presence in your life that distinguishes you from normal, carnal people)
- F. By love unfeigned (showing that you truly care about others and are not just putting on a show to make people think you care)
 - 1. How can we expect to do any good if we do not truly love others?
- G. By the word of truth (living by the Word of truth – the word of God; not just preaching it, but living it)
- H. By the power of God (it is not of your own fortitude or determination, but by the help of God that you are able to be patient)
- I. By the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left (always doing what is right)