

The Godly Man's Portion & Sanctuary

Lesson 11: Exhortations for the Godly, Part 2

- I. See that the whole course of your life is suitable and answerable to the gospel you profess, Eph 4.1-3; Phil 1.22-2.5. Let your life answer the *purpose*, the *dignities and honors*, the *names*, and the *riches, reward, crown, and Kingdom*, which are all set before you in the gospel. And furthermore:
 - A. Let your life answer the *supports* of the gospel that you profess by *being patient*, Js 5.7. Patience is a grace perfectly suited to our present gospel estate. It's a friend born for adversity. If you're a Christian you need patience, and if you have the grace of patience, then you need nothing more, Js 1.4.
 - B. **Patience is* a submitting, sedate, and calm frame of spirit, whereby a Christian, upon gospel truths and promises, is borne up under all his troubles and borne through all his duties.
 1. The difference between patience and contentment is this: *contentment* is the quiet of the heart, being satisfied with the smallest portion of good things, while *patience* is the quiet of the heart under the greatest pressure of evil things.
 2. A patient spirit is a submitting spirit. It's a spirit heartily content that God should have His will, Mt 6.10. A patient spirit won't be displeased with whatever pleases God, 1Sam 3.18.
 3. A patient spirit is a calm and quiet spirit. It won't strive or cry or lift up its voice in the streets. It can mourn, but it doesn't murmur against God; it can feel, but it won't fret at the hand of God. A patient person always has the command and government of his spirit, keeps it sober and in due order, and doesn't rage against God.
 - a) Impatience is a frenzy that puts a man beside himself. It causes a man to lose the government, the peace, and the use of his soul.
 - (1) An impatient man is beside himself as a man. It turns his reason out of doors, puts his affections all in an uproar, and his will knows no commander.
 - (2) An impatient man is beside himself as a Christian. His duties, comforts, experiences, and hopes are all laid aside.
 4. Patience, on the other hand, *bears a man up under his troubles* because patience has fortitude in it. It neither frets nor faints under all its burdens. Patient Christians can bear whatever comes upon them because patience is enduring.
 5. Patience *bears a man through his duties*. His passions don't hinder his actions. Instead, he holds on in his course and keeps his way, no matter what burden he carries. Because Christian patience isn't a bare, forced quiet of soul in which fretting is kept from venting itself. Rather, patience maintains such calmness of spirit under all suffering that one can still enjoy and serve the Lord in suffering. He is a patient Christian who is as much a Christian in a storm as in a calm, and who can pray, believe, love, bless God, follow God, and stay his course when He smites as well as when He smiles.
 6. Patience *upholds and carries a man upon gospel realities*. In other words, his endurance is not a natural perseverance or apathy. Instead, he's upheld by and stands upon the truths of the gospel. In particular, there are three gospel realities that bear a Christian up.
 - a) The hand of the Lord.
 - (1) The Christian sees the hand of the Lord in all that befalls him, and this enables him to be patient, Dt 32.39; Amos 3.6; Ps 39.9; 1Sam 3.18; Job 1.21. Though the Lord humble him, break him, undo him, leave him with nothing, yet the godly man possesses his soul in patience and blesses the Lord, Job 1.20-21.
 - b) The end of the Lord.

- (1) The Christian sees that God intends his good by all that He brings upon him and can therefore be patient in every particular suffering, Jer 32.40; Ps 84.11; Rom 8.28-29; 1Cor 15.55-56.
- c) The help of the Lord.
 - (1) The Christian sees that if the hand of the Lord is with him in his suffering, then it's also underneath him carrying him through it, Dt 33.27.
- d) Thus just as the gospel allots the Christian many tribulations, Acts 14.22, so it allots him many supports.
 - (1) A mighty God, who is the Rock of Ages, Isa 26.3-4.
 - (2) A merciful High Priest, who being tempted Himself, is able to have mercy on those who are tempted, Heb 2.18.
 - (3) Precious promises by which the believer can become a partaker of God's holiness, 2Pet 1.3-4.
 - (4) A matured character, tested, strengthened, and matured by patience under trial, Rom 5.4; Js 1.3. This matured character is a great blessing indeed because a man who's gained this character has seen all things for what they really are. He's seen the world, what it is and what's the worst it can do to him. He's seen the Word, and what there is in it to uphold the soul in the hour of trial. And he's seen what God, Christ, grace, peace, and a good conscience are and that nothing else matters in suffering but to make sure of and hold on to these.
 - (a) Our religion never shows so much what's in it as when it's most put to the test in suffering. It's then we learn what kind of a God we have, what kind of a High Priest we have, what kind of support the Word of God and prayer are, what grace is, what peace is, and what a good conscience is.
 - (b) When the devil does his worst against us in an hour of trial, it's then that we learn what the weapons of our warfare are and what the true comforts and supports of our religion are. Stephen never got a sight of heaven as he did through a storm of stones, because Christ is never so sweet as in a bitter prison.
 - (c) And a patient Christian has come to possess this kind of character, so that he's supported in his suffering, keeps quiet under all his suffering, and carries on with courage until the Lord lifts him up.
- C. Therefore be patient until the coming of the Lord, Js 5.7.
 - 1. You have need of patience, and no excuse for your impatience, because the sufferings of the gospel call for your patience, and the supports of the gospel condemn your impatience.
 - 2. If you would be godly, then you can count upon having a great number of afflictions to endure, Acts 14.22; Jn 16.33; 1Tim 3.12. But an impatient Christian is an unarmed soldier. So don't go into the battle without your armor. Arm yourself with patience and you'll save yourself from much harm because patience is a grace that guards your heart, Js 1.3; Pr 4.23.
- D. The call to be patient is a call to a great duty with great consequences. Indeed, there's much more in it than men observe, for patience is no less than *the whole* of Christianity and *the height* of Christianity.