

## Patience of Hope

- Nikki Deaton

How many of you were told to be patient when you were little? Has anyone told you recently to be patient? Well, I know patience is not one of the most exciting topics to hear about because we all already know it and we all already don't do it. I hope with the Holy Spirit's help to give you a new perspective on patience.

In 1 Thessalonians 1:3, Paul is telling the Thessalonians, "*Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope...*" Perhaps in the past, you have disregarded this phrase – patience of hope. Let's dissect this phrase. The word "patience" means endurance. We know that. It is the endurance of hope, which means a constancy of hope, a continuance of hope, a bearing up of hope, a holding out of hope. Now, I like those last two. Bearing up or holding out is more like action words. I mean I am okay with constancy and continuance, but give me something to do. I can relate to bearing up or holding out. There are going to be times that we need to bear up for God and times we need to hold out for God.

Sometimes, to me, patience sounds like "oh, I just have to be patient". But when I hear the Bible tell me it is a holding out, I can grab hold of that because I feel like I am doing something. It's a holding out – telling yourself you can make it. I don't know if you've ever played sports, but sometimes athletes have to go through two-a-days or conditioning. And I remember wall-sits. A wall-sit is when you sit against the wall like you are in a chair. Knees bent and legs at a ninety degree angle. And you sit there until you just can't anymore. Oh, my legs would shake. But you had to last longer than so-and-so, so you just sat there. You were holding out. Patience is a holding out. "I'm going to hold out for what God has for me!"

Now, when you put patience and hope together, you get "*the capacity to continue to bear up under difficult circumstances not with passive complacency but with a hopeful fortitude that actively resists weariness and defeat*". This is patience of hope. When I look at patience in that way, I feel like I can do that, like I *want* to do that. It is almost a challenge to you – a proving of yourself.

See, God does not ask you just to sit and wait. No, you are actively resisting becoming weary or feeling defeated. It is active, not just sitting around. Often, when we were children, patience meant to sit down and be quiet and wait. The hope part came in the form of hoping the adults would get done before we got into serious trouble. Now that we are older, we may have retained that mindset. Sit down, be quiet, and wait. That is *not* God's definition of patience. Patience of hope is getting up in the morning and saying, "Today is my day. Today, You are going to make good things happen. God, whatever it is today that I need, You will make it happen. You will come through for me." That is patience of hope.

Hebrews 10:35 says, "*Do not cast away your confidence which has great reward. For you have need of patience, that, after you have done the will of God, you might receive the promise...Now the just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, My soul shall*

*have no pleasure in him. But we are not of those who draw back unto destruction; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.*” Say that out loud. “I am not of those who draw back!” First of all, God says that He has no pleasure in someone who draws back – someone who stands and stands and then says or thinks, “Forget it. Never mind. I don’t need it”. That is drawing back. “Well, I really, really wanted a better job, and I really thought God said I would get a better job. But it just hasn’t happened, so I’ve decided I’m fine where I am.” That is drawing back. That is casting away your confidence because the confidence that was once there is gone. God takes no pleasure in that. God says that the just shall live by faith. He says that we don’t draw back but believe to the saving of the soul.

Now, I was reading that and it occurred to me that we don’t really see that until we die. We don’t actually see the saving of our soul until we die. We don’t have a proof of purchase from Jesus. We don’t have a get-out-of-hell free card. We do have an inner confirmation of it, but no real tangible proof. Yet, we are assured of it. We don’t see it until we get to heaven, but we are assured of it. So, why aren’t we so assured of God in other areas of our lives?

Why, when it comes to healing for example, are we not so sure that the same God that gave us salvation will give us healing the moment we ask? Salvation isn’t proven until we die, but healing manifests in this life. Why do we think like this? Where is the hope that He will heal us just as He saves us?

Read Romans 5:1-5. First, I want to point out that starting with tribulations ends with hope. Shouldn’t it be that hope comes before tribulations come? No. Why? If you never had tribulations, how would you know hope in a God who saves and delivers. When tribulations come, you are victorious because of your perseverance. You persevere through, which adjusts your character. And hope comes why? Because you’ve already made it through and you’ve seen yourself come through. So you can look back like David did and say, “I killed the lion. I killed the bear. Now, I’ll kill Goliath.” You have seen God move with you, and you know He will do the same again. Tribulations will cause hope to arise. But, you have to go through the tribulations the right way – perseverance and character. And when you do that, hope will arise.

*“Now, hope does not disappoint because the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts.”* (Rom 5:5) Hope does not disappoint because you know that Love will come through for you. We were filled with the love that God has for us, and with this in us, hope abounds. Because when you know that you know that you know that God loves you, then you know that you know that you know that He wants good for you. So, you will hope all the time. You will only expect good.

The only time your hope will wither is when you let the enemy convince you that God does not love you. It will only waver when you let the enemy cause you to doubt God’s love for you. Think about it. Think about the times that your hope hasn’t been where it should be. If we were really honest with ourselves, we doubted God’s love for us. Because we see man-love all the time (and God’s love is so much bigger and better than

we can even imagine), we tend to judge God based on us. We must not do that. That is why the Bible says that we have to renew our minds. You have to renew your mind. You have to know that God is love. And you have to know what that love means. It is unconditional.

Love never, ever gives up on you. No matter what you do. It will never give up on you. Therefore, when you hear “I don’t know if He loves you like that” or “You sinned, so love is on holiday for awhile”, you need to know that is the enemy speaking. That voice is contrary to the Holy Spirit in you. Remember, love was shed abroad in you by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit knows love and what is not love. That voice is contrary to the Holy Spirit, so when you listen to the enemy’s voice, then pressure, anxiety, and inner conflict ensue. Your mind is warring with your spirit. So renew your mind. What should you believe? What can you believe? You have to remember that “while you were yet a sinner, Christ died for you.” You will never be as bad as you were when you were a godless sinner. No matter what you do now, unless you entirely walk away from God (then you wouldn’t be reading this article), you are no worse than you were before Jesus came into your life. And it was then that He died for you! So, how much more, then, now that we are saved (Rom 5:9).

God is love. He doesn’t do bad things to you. Love doesn’t do that. He wants your good. He wants your welfare. He wants about all things for you to prosper and be in health even as your soul prospers (3 John 3). So, we have to understand love to have hope. So a foundation in love has to be laid before you can hope in love.

When the church began to teach the theory that whatever happens is God, they were close but way off. That is a complete lie – which is just like the devil to come close but completely twist it. The truth is that God can turn anything around. There is a devil in the land. Jesus said the enemy comes to kill, steal, and destroy. You can not find it in your Bible where Jesus says that this is God’s job. Jesus also said that if you have seen Me, you have seen the Father. I can not find one scripture where Jesus murdered someone. In fact, if Jesus killed someone for any reason – wanted them in heaven, punishment, whatever – wouldn’t that be violating the Ten Commandments. Sometimes, religious things sound so good, but when you get down to the bones they just don’t line up with scripture. So, the church began teaching the lie that everything is God instead of the truth that God could turn anything around. So, people started having patience with the attacks of the enemy. This was evidenced by sayings like, “Sickness may destroy my life, but it’s all for Jesus.” That is a lie. The truth is that if you are sick, God can turn anything around. Jesus died to manifest healing for you. God is a healer; He doesn’t make you sick. Instead of having patience in being sick, you are to have patience of hope that God can and will heal you. A fortitude that actively resists weariness and defeat. That is what hope is. That is the truth – that no matter what, God can work and will work. That is hope.

You have to realize who God is. He is Love. Then you can have patience of hope because you won’t worry. Your hope is in the fact that God will come through for you. He is the God of the Come-Through. He is.

Listen to this true story. Moses is leading a whole hoard of Israelites out of Egypt then they get to the Red Sea. Moses thinks, “okay, I guess we turn around.” Oh, Egyptians. The Israelites say, “uh, Moses.” What did Moses do? He got them to the Red Sea and **knew** that Love did not deliver them from bondage just to kill them – just to watch them be killed by the Red Sea. God didn’t just want them out of Egypt to die; He wanted them to live in the Promised Land. So, Moses turns and tells all the Israelites “to stand and see the deliverance of God”. Now that is hope because he had no idea what God was going to do. Next, he turns to God and says “okay, what now, God?” And you know the rest.

Now, that is hope. Knowing God is going to move when you have no idea how and He hasn’t even spoken to you yet. That is hope and believing. Moses didn’t lie down and cry, “We’re gonna die!” just because he couldn’t see anything or because God hadn’t spoken yet. No, he had hope. The first thing he said was “wait and see what God is going to do”. And God came through. He is the God of the Come-Through. He will always come through for you. Always. When you do things His way, He will not bring shame to you. He will come through.

We have a Bible full of accounts of how God comes through for His people. So why do we doubt it? Well, why did Adam and Eve? An unreal fear of God developed when they sinned in the garden. This doubt of God started in the garden with the fall. They first doubted God because the enemy came and caused them to doubt His love for them by telling them He was holding back. And they believed it. And when they sinned, what did they do? They hid. Their first reaction was to hide. They had fear over Who God was and how He would treat them. They had known Love all this time. They had walked with Him. All of a sudden, they have no idea what God is going to do – we’d better hide. This same mentality grips us when we continue in sin-consciousness. When we don’t repent or we repent but keep remembering it, it will keep us from God. It will keep you hiding and misunderstanding who God is. You won’t allow yourself to see God; all you can see is your sin. This whole doubting about God came with sin consciousness and the fallen mind. And all of it is misunderstanding and deceit. Deceit is one of the devil’s greatest weapons. He is a deceiver, a liar, the Father of lies the Bible calls him. He is going to lie to you and deceive you. And deception is what fear is, especially fear of God. They hid because the fallen mind was twisted over who God was. Fear became effective to the fallen mind. But we don’t have that mind. We have the mind of Christ!

We are to renew our mind everyday, because although we have been given the mind of Christ, we live in this fallen world. We live in this world, and things go on in this world that are not God. And there are theories, principles, even so-called morals set forth that are not the mind of Christ. We have to renew our minds daily to the Word of God. To what He really said, not what someone thinks He said. We have to know who He is, based on His Word. Based on what He’s done before. When I know that, I can know who He is. I can know He is love. And I can patience of hope that He is going to come through on my behalf. Everytime. He is the God of the Come-Through. But we have to do our part. To quote one of our youth, “He can’t bring everything back to my

remembrance if I don't know what He already said." Our part is to live a holy life, set apart by Him and for Him and knowing Him as our God.

Romans 8:32, "*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to His purpose.*" I want a life that is good. According to scripture, all I have to do is love God and work His plan for me. God can take whatever the devil means for harm that comes my way and make it good. That doesn't mean that no harm is ever going to come your way; it just means that He will take it and make it good. The more we grow and the more we understand love and become who God want us to be, the less harm and the fewer tactics of the devil will work in our lives.

Look what God did with Jesus. He gave Him the ultimate victory. Just when the devil thought he'd won – defeated the Son of God, defeated God Himself – Jesus shows up in hell, tears open the doors, and steals the keys! Isn't God awesome?! Just when the devil thinks he's won, over Jesus or you, God turns it all around. Everytime. That is who He is. He enjoys doing that for you. You just have to make sure you are doing His thing and not your own thing. You can't do your own thing and expect faith, hope, and love to be operating in you. I can't really place a whole lot of hope in my own efforts. I'm good, but I'm not that good. God, on the other hand, is perfect. If I'm doing God's thing, I know it is going to work. He's God.

You can not get caught up in doing your own thing. God doesn't promise to make that work. For example, you can't quit your job and then say, "Okay, God, You're the God of the come-through, come through." You can't stop taking your medications and say, "Okay, God, come through for me." No. Did He say to quit your job? Did He say to stop your medication? Because it comes down to, what did He say to do? The last time I checked, Satan tried to convince Jesus to jump off a roof because, hey, the angels take charge over you. Jesus responded with "Don't test God." See, if you are doing your own thing and then asking God to come through then you are testing God. If you stop taking your medications and tell God to work, then you are in essence saying, "Okay, let's see if He'll work or not." That is testing God. The Bible says not to do it, and Jesus showed us specifically not to do it. That was one of the great temptations. Don't do it.

Of course, if you have done your own thing and are waiting for God to come through, repent and ask for His direction then "patience of hope". Apply this message. If you have repented and are asking for direction but haven't heard yet, don't cry out, "I'm gonna die!" Patience of hope. He is the God of the Come-Through. He will come through for you. When you get on board with His plan, He will come through for you. When you choose to do things His way, you can have patience of hope because His plans are perfect and He will bring them to pass. He always causes you to triumph – always. If you are doing His thing and are still waiting for manifestation, *continue to bear up under difficult circumstances not with passive complacency but with a hopeful fortitude that actively resists weariness and defeat.* Now, go on, show them your patience of hope.