

The Patience of Christ

By Ginny Larsen

Is there anything greater than the patience of Christ? His patience is like His love. It is part of His love, out of His love, because of His love, and by His love. The patience of Christ endured the world when He left behind His glory in Heaven, came to earth in the form of a man, and took on the weakness of a body of flesh. This patience included living among a sinful people, though He Himself knew no sin and was perfect. It included being rejected, scorned, mistreated, abused, and finally killed by the very ones He created and came to save. It included a longing for His Father's Will and waiting patiently for all to be fulfilled, giving Himself over to His Father's will, until the time was right for Him to be glorified once again. It includes His waiting now for the time His church can be taken up to be with Him where He is – to be with Him and share His glory forever!

Christ's patience is our patience here below. We are to receive and walk in His patience when we walk amidst an evil world that rejects and hates us because we name the name of Christ. We are to love those who hate us, pray for those who persecute us, and bless those who curse us. We are to endure the hardships of this life without complaining and even give thanks to God in the midst of them. Charles Spurgeon, in *The Treasury of David*, writes:

'I waited patiently for the Lord.' Patient waiting upon God was a special characteristic of our Lord Jesus. Impatience never lingered in his heart, much less escaped his lips. All through his agony in the garden, his trial of cruel mockings before Herod and Pilate, and his passion on the tree, he waited in omnipotence of patience. No glance of wrath, no word of murmuring, no deed of vengeance came from God's patient Lamb; he waited and waited on; was patient, and patient to perfection, far excelling all others who have according to their measure glorified God in the fires. Job on the dunghill does not equal Jesus on the cross. The Christ of God wears the imperial crown among the patient. Did the Only Begotten wait, and shall we be petulant and rebellious? *'And he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.'* Neither Jesus the head, nor any one of the members of his body, shall ever wait upon the Lord in vain. Mark the figure of inclining, as though the suppliant cried out of the lowest depression, and condescending love stooped to hear his feeble moans. What a marvel is it that our Lord should have to cry as we do, and wait as we do, and should receive the Father's help after the same process of faith and pleading as must be gone through by ourselves! The Saviour's prayers among the midnight mountains and in Gethsemane expound this verse. The Son of David was brought very low, but he rose to victory; and here he teaches us how to conduct our conflicts so as to succeed after the same glorious pattern of triumph. Let us arm ourselves with the same mind; and panoplied in patience, armed with prayer, and girt with faith, let us maintain the Holy War. (Exposition on verse 1 of Psalm 40)

What do we have to lose with patience? Nothing! What do we have to gain by it? Everything! Because of the joy set before us and that now is living in us, we can be patient in all things. *"Because thou didst keep the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell upon the earth"*

(Revelation 3:10).

The church that is without strength of its own in this world, the church that is keeping His Word, the church that is keeping His patience, waiting for Him—this is the church that He is coming for to remove from the hour of tribulation that will soon come on the whole habitable world, to try those “dwelling on the earth” – “those who are of earth, earthy” (Rev 8:13). ‘Dwell’ implies that their home is earth, not heaven. – *Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown's Commentary On the Whole Bible (Revelation 8:13)*

Can we be patient as He works out His will in our lives? Can we trust Him with all that comes to us and happens to us? Can we trust and be patient when we are being chastised? When we are being led in a direction that is not the direction we would have chosen for ourselves? When we are suffering? When we are waiting? When we are longing? Can we trust that even in the trials, sufferings, hardships, and waiting, that He is accomplishing His will? *“But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it”* (Romans 8:25), *“and the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patience of Christ”* (2 Thessalonians 3:5).

I know I have a hard time being patient. It’s not a strong point in my character! But when I look at the patience of Christ and see the love behind it, it enables me to desire the same patience with love for Him. With our faith in His promises and His love that He has revealed to us, His patience soon gives us hope, endurance, and strength for today and tomorrow. It gives us a rest in our souls as we wait on Him, knowing that His purposes will be fulfilled, and all is in His care. *“Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us”* (Hebrews 12:1), *“knowing that the proving of your faith worketh patience. And let patience have its perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, lacking in nothing”* (James 1:3-4).

Patience comes out of our knowledge and love of Christ. It comes from His love indwelling us. The more we know of Him, truly seeing Him, and the more His love fills us, the more patient we are in our own lives. The more we have faith in Him, His will for our lives, and His goodness and love toward us, the more patient we can be, no matter what we go through. Patience involves suffering. It certainly did for Jesus! It will for us also. But in Christ it involves a hope that will not be disappointed!

“...Looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

(Hebrews 12:2)

“Patience is the fair handmaid and daughter of faith; we cheerfully wait when we are certain that we shall not wait in vain.”

-- Charles Spurgeon