

Personal Patience

We, particularly in the Western World, live in what we may call “an instant age.”

The attitude of mind that most people value is “*must have it now*” from coffee to cough cures.

We are encouraged to “*buy now and pay later*” by being offered instant credit.

There is a scroll in our kitchen that says, “*Lord grant me patience, but hurry!*”

Surrounded as we are with such an impatient society, in this article I am going to show you how you can develop a patient attitude of mind.

We will see that patience is part of the very character of the Creator God, and is essential for our own peace of mind now and our eternal future.

Definition of patience –

“Patience is a quality that does not surrender to circumstances or succumb under trial. It is the opposite of despondency and is associated with hope. Longsuffering is an attitude of patience that is attributed to part of the character of the Creator God.

Longsuffering is that quality of self-restraint in the face of provocation which does not hastily retaliate or promptly punish. It is the opposite of anger, and is associated with mercy.”

Guidelines in God’s Word, the Christian Bible, to developing patience –

Realise that the Creator God is in charge –

The society we live in is **not** God’s society, **it is ruled by a powerful spirit being who has a “*must have it now*” mind.**

1 John 5:19 [NIV] “*We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one.*”

This “*evil one*” is Satan, [**2 Corinthians 4:4**].

Ezekiel 28:14-15 [NIV] “*You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you.*”

This is a description of the great angel who was originally named Lucifer, the light bringer.

Lucifer was perfect until wickedness filled his mind.

The Hebrew word translated **wickedness** is “*âvôn*” meaning **perverseness, obstinate in wrong, untractable, intolerant.**

These are all the qualities of an impatient person.

Isaiah 14:12-14 [King James] “*How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of*

the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.”

Lucifer, now renamed Satan, was not satisfied with what the Creator God had given him, he was impatient for more, right then, not waiting to qualify.

Pride and impatience go hand in hand –

Ecclesiastes 7:8 [NIV] *“The end of a matter is better than its beginning, and patience is better than pride.”*

The worked for and waited for end is far better than an impatient “want it now” attitude of mind.

But the Creator God, being in charge, is using the influence of this impatient spirit being to help us learn patience.

Romans 5:3 [King James] *“And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: **knowing that tribulation worketh patience;**”*

Tribulation, often prompted by Satan when accepted in a right way produces patience, the Greek word “*hupōmōnē*” meaning a cheerful or hopeful endurance, which is a very positive attitude of mind.

James 1:2-4 [King James] *“My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let **patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.**”*

The developing of patience is part of the training programme that the Creator God is putting us through in preparation for our future job in the Kingdom of God, the created family of God.

James 1:19-21 [New King James] *“Qualities Needed in Trials: So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God. Doers, Not Hearers Only: Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with **meekness** the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.”*

Meekness is a key to developing patience because it is the very opposite of pride.

Romans 8:28 [King James] *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”*

All of what you have read above is only true because the Creator God is in charge and is working out His purpose in our lives.

Romans 2:4 [New King James] *“Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and **longsuffering**, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?”*

Longsuffering is part of the Creator God’s goodness towards us.

The Greek word translated “*longsuffering*” is “*makrōthumia*” meaning forbearance, **a long-lasting temper, the characteristic of a person who has the power to avenge himself and who deliberately does not use it.**

My daily prayer includes being thankful to this part of the Creator God’s character, He extends mercy towards me, **not** justice.

Paul in his letter to the Church in Rome is reminding us that just because the Creator God does **not** punish us for our misconduct right away is **not** proof of His weakness but is proof of His longsuffering nature.

Isaiah 5:1-4 [NIV] *“I will sing for the one I love a song about his vineyard: My loved one had a vineyard on a fertile hillside. He dug it up and cleared it of stones and planted it with the choicest vines. He built a watchtower in it and cut out a winepress as well. Then he looked for a crop of good grapes, but it yielded only bad fruit. ‘Now you dwellers in Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. What more could have been done for my vineyard than I have done for it? When I looked for good grapes, why did it yield only bad?’”*

The Creator God is doing all that He can to help us to produce good “fruits”, [Galatians 5:22-23] in our lives.

2 Peter 3:8-9 [NIV] *“But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”*

Always remember each of us is part of the Creator God’s plan for all humanity, and He has the power to bring about the fruition of that plan.

There is one thing that we have to do, because the Creator God will not force us to be part of that plan.

Romans 12:1-2 [NIV] *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

We have to surrender our lives totally to the Creator God out of gratitude for what He has done for us through His Son Jesus Christ.

Only then will the Creator God re-educate our minds to be in harmony with His. Part of that re-education is to develop patience and longsuffering in our lives.

Philippians 4:11-13 [NIV] *“I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength.”*

Contentment with our physical life is something we have to learn and is part of being patient.

Humility and patience go hand in hand –

1 Peter 5:6 [King James] *“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you **in due time**:”*

Our future reward in the Kingdom of God is linked to our patience, “*in due time*.”

Psalms 37:7 [NIV] *“Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; do not fret when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes.”*

Satan knows that if he causes people to prosper without the character to handle such wealth will destroy a person.

1 Timothy 6:10 [NIV] *“For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.”*

Satan destroys a person when their love is directed towards wealth instead of towards the Creator God, because they will do anything, even sinful things, to increase their wealth.

Ephesians 4:2-3 [NIV] *“Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”*

Unity is the hallmark of God’s Kingdom and this is the result of humility, patience and love.

Philippians 2:14-15 [King James] *“Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be **blameless and harmless**, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;”*

Blameless and harmless are characteristics of a patient way of life, so that we may be lights to other human beings that we come in contact with, [Matthew 5:14-16].

Galatians 6:1-2 [King James] *“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one **in the spirit of meekness**; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”*

Note we have to deal with such a situation with a “*spirit of meekness*” and a humble and compassionate attitude towards the weaknesses of other people. **Such a situation needs patience on our part.**

Patience comes from the Holy Spirit in us –

Galatians 5:22-23 [NIV] *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, **patience**, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”*

One of the “*fruits*” of the active Holy Spirit in us is patience.

These “*fruits*” are the result of our yielding to the Holy Spirit and allowing Him to guide us into understanding all truth, [**John 16:13**].

This must **not** be confused with the “*gifts*” of the Holy Spirit which are given to us by God to perform certain tasks for Him towards other human beings, [**1 Corinthians 12:4-11**].

Colossians 1:10-11 [Revised Standard Version] *“To lead a life worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. May you be strengthened with all power [the Holy Spirit], according to His glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy.”*

Patience is a direct result of an active Holy Spirit in us –

Colossians 3:12 [NIV] *“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.”*

To “*clothe ourselves with*” indicates that **patience is not a natural part of our human nature.**

God lives in eternity, the more of the Holy Spirit we have in us the more patient we will become, things don’t have to be now, for we also will begin to live in eternity.

A true Christian in many ways is a person who has given up the present for the future.

A patient mind must have vision of the future –

Romans 8:24-25 [King James] *“For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.”*

We don't see this future with our physical eyes.

John 16:13 [NIV] *“But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and **he will tell you what is yet to come.**”*

The Holy Spirit is the source of that vision *“tell you of what is yet to come”* and **it is the will of God that we patiently await the reality of what is yet only a vision.**

Romans 8:28 [King James] *“And **we know** that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.”*

“We know” as a result of living out in our lives the verses we have just read.

Romans 8:29-31 [King James] *“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?”*

Understanding and accepting God's plan for each of us as human beings, gives us this needed vision and patience confidence to await its fruition at the return of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

Job 19:25-27 [NIV] *“I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes, I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!”*

Job's conviction was based on his vision of the future.

Hebrews 10:35-39 [NIV] *“So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. For in just a very little while, ‘He who is coming will come and will not delay. But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him.’ But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.”*

“Shrinks back” indicates a loss of patience.

Patience is a key to our inheriting the future that the Creator God has prepared for us which we at this time only see in vision.