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What Does The Bible Say About Patience & Perfection?

James 1:2 : My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3. knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. 4. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

²*My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;*

³*Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.*

⁴*But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.*

Patience is a work of perfection. Without patience, we cannot inherit the promise. It is a requirement to seeing our faith fulfilled. It is the enabler to our faith, the ability to hold on to our faith when all seems lost. It allows our faith to endure. In other words, we will not give up our faith in the face of whatever comes our way, no matter how long it takes.

Strong's Bible Dictionary says that *patience is cheerful (or hopeful) endurance, constancy:*

Hopeful endurance, I like that.

I train bonsai as a hobby, and sometimes it takes many years or even decades to get a desired result. You have to look ahead in time and imagine the outcome of your work.

I've had people tell me many times that I just don't have the patience to do that kind of thing. I think we can honestly say that patience is one of those things that many Christians don't have the patience to wait for. In all seriousness however, the truth is we don't have to.

If you are in Christ, you have patience. The ability to walk in it is greatly up to us. The ability to stand and keep on standing is on the inside of you. You have to yield to it. Some people don't like to hear things like that, but God's Word is God's Word, and it is the truth. The truth is what will set us free and cause us to have assurance in the midst of turmoil. As we just read, "But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing." So how could patience have its perfect work if we don't have it. If we don't have it then God would be unjust in telling us to let it have its perfect work wouldn't He? God is not unjust, and He has provided all that we need to do whatever He has called us to do.

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We have it, and we need to understand that if we won't yield to it then we have no one to blame but ourselves. God wants us to succeed, that's why He is telling us to LET patience have its perfect work. If WE won't let it, IT won't have its perfect work. This is not because God doesn't want the best for us, but because we are too stubborn many times to yield to Him. This is really a form of rebellion on our part, and can thwart the plan of God in our lives.

It takes our cooperation with God to bring His will to pass in our lives, for He will not over ride our will. If He could, don't you know we wouldn't find ourselves in many of the messes we end up in. Many times, it is only through His divine mercy that we end up not being totally sunk in life's situations. I can say that is true in my own life, and I am grateful that He has preserved me. What an awesome God we serve.

He has a better way for us to go through life than tripping, and stumbling, and messing up just hoping He will be there to pick up the pieces when we get through the completion of OUR will. Thank God, He is there, but how much better it is to stand fast in His promises and see the end result of HIS will. This is where the patience comes into play.

The book of Hebrews says this... Hebrews 6:11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, 12. that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

If you are not a person that has allowed patience to have its work in you, you must know that it is not too late. You can start right where you are, just as so many of us have had to do and begin the process. As I've already said, this takes our cooperation. He has not left us hanging, He is always there to help and show us the way.

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Let's start by looking at where patience comes from and why it is so vitally necessary to fulfill God's purpose and inherit the promise. There is a payoff for God's people, who through faith and patience stand fast in His promises. If He didn't want us to receive it He wouldn't have told us to let it have its perfect work in us. He has invested an incredible amount to redeem us and see us restored to His perfect creation, so let's cooperate with Him; we can't do it on our own.

For those who don't think they have patience, let's look, and see what the Word of God has to say. Let's go back to our opening Scripture...

James 1:2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3. knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. 4. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

Paul said a similar thing in the book of Romans.

Romans 5:3 - *And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;*

Other translations say endurance, perseverance, steadfastness, and fortitude.

James is saying that the trying of our faith is what produces patience, yet in Galatians we see that it is a fruit of the spirit. It is something God has given us, yet it also has to be developed. As in all things we don't start out as a perfect and mature Christian, we develop into one. We could say we are complete in Christ, but we also have to learn how to walk in the fullness of our legal inheritance. This requires patience on our part.

The Word of God says in the book of **Galatians 5:22** - *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23. gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.*

The same word for longsuffering here is also translated patience in other translations.

Fruit is a product of God being in us and us in God through Christ, however we have a large part to play in whether we bear fruit or not. It is a potential in every born again child of God. Refuse to say that you don't have it! Put yourself in agreement with the Word of God and allow this fruit to develop in your life overriding your own will. Begin to realize we have what God says we have, as He is no respecter of persons. If we continue reading in Galatians we see the part we have to play.

Galatians 5:24. *And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and*

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desires. **25.** *If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.*

In order for this development to take place in our lives, we have two main things we have to do. We have to crucify the flesh, and it goes on to say, let us also walk in the Spirit.

You can't have patience produce in your life or any other fruit for that matter if you are unwilling to put down the flesh. You can't walk in the spirit if you are allowing your flesh to dominate you. In essence, patience will not have her perfect work because you will not allow it to. This is a serious thing. As I said before, this is a form of rebellion. If we back up a few verses in Galatians we see this.

Galatians 5:19. *Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness, 20. - idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21.- envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

There is a work God wants to do in us, and we have an obligation to let it happen. The problem many Christians have is that they do not want it to happen. They may not say it in so many words, however it is just easier doing the status quo. That requires nothing on our part. Patience will not work in us if we refuse to allow it to work.

Matthew 5:48 *"Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.*

This is an attitude of heart, and attitudes can be adjusted. No one can force a bad attitude on you. You allow it by constantly thinking on and yielding to negative things. We live in a negative society, it would be so much easier to just give in and give up in the day of adversity. Don't do it. It takes patience to inherit the promise. This promise is for you, and its God's will for you to have it, but God will not override our will.

One of the aspects of patience is to endure the test with confidence, not to just endure, but knowing full well the outcome. Many endure simply because they feel like they have no other course to take. Where's the reward in that. When God gives direction, there is only one way to complete the journey, and that is His way. We have to follow Him. If we are following Him, then we can know we are on the right path, and we can know we will not fail regardless of the weapons formed against us.

Weapons are guaranteed to be formed against us when we are on this path. You can know your faith is going to be tried. However, we will not contemplate the weapons formed against us, we will look to the author and finisher of our faith, the Lord Jesus Christ, and declare boldly,

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greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world. **Isaiah 54:17** - *No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.*

God has a purpose and a destiny for each one of us and if we want to see His will and purpose fulfilled in our lives then it takes the power of patience. It is an awesome thing to see God's will fulfilled. Bringing His will to pass requires not only our cooperation but a high level of persistence, and complete trust in Him as well.

Consider these three things.

1. God told us to stand, and in order to complete His purpose we have to do just that.
2. He has given us the ability to stand in the day of adversity.
3. He will not fail us; we can have complete assurance that He will back us when we step out into His will.

That is the whole purpose of patience. Let it have her perfect work, and see the completions of God's work in your life. I would like to remind you of these Scriptures in finishing.

Hebrews 6:11 - And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, **12.** - that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

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