

THE PATIENCE AND IMPATIENCE OF JOB

INTRO: If I were to ask you, "Who was the most patient person who ever lived?", I'm pretty sure your answer would be, "Job." That answer would be based on the statement of James in 5:11. But that might be putting words in James' mouth.

Job's friend Eliphaz would perhaps differ.

READ JOB 4:1-5, NRSV.

And Job, himself, recognizes his loss of patience, & even defends his right to be impatient: "As for me, is my complaint addressed to mortals? Why should I not be impatient?" (Job 21:4 NRSV).

As we consider the patience--and impatience of Job, let us note the 2 kinds of patience, the value of patience, and how to attain it.

I. THE TWO KINDS OF PATIENCE.

A. Passive patience, the power to suffer & endure unpleasantness & hardship. Patient endurance.

1. At first, Job showed a remarkable degree of patient endurance. READ JOB 1:20-22; 2:10.
2. Even later, Job never turned his back on God & on God's claims on him. He continued to endure the hardships without losing his integrity--but he certainly did not do so without murmuring & complaining.
3. The best example of suffering & enduring is Jesus.
 - a. He had much to accomplish but never rushed into it. With only 33 1/2 years to do what He must do, He spend the first years of his adulthood in the carpenter shop, biding His time till the time was right.
 - b. The men He worked most closely with were slow to believe & slow to understand, yet He showed only the slightest degree of frustration with them. LK 24:25.

- c. As He agonized in Gethsemane, His 3 closest friends nearby. He was disappointed, but He never gave up on them.
- B. Active patience, the power to keep working toward a hoped-for goal. Patient continuance.
 - 1. Not indifference. Sometimes we may seem patient in the face of injustice when we are merely indifferent.
 - 2. The man who sleeps in church may seem to be patiently waiting for the service to end so he can go home, but he is more likely indifferent than patient.
 - 3. As Job's suffering increased, as his righteousness went unrewarded, his hope subsided & his goal was less clear.

READ JOB 6:11-13, NRSV

II. THE VALUE OF PATIENCE.

- A. To ourselves. Serenity, joy, peace.
- B. To those who must live with us.
- C. Patience is essential to success in almost every department of life. READ JAMES 5:7-11

III. HOW DO WE ACQUIRE THIS VIRTUE?

- A. First, we must desire it. Some are not willing to wait. They pride themselves on their impatience. They don't want to be patient. Such souls are in danger.

By your patience possess your souls. (LK 21:19).

- B. Patience is an out-growth of faith.

Therefore thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; whoever believes will

not act hastily. (Isa. 28:16).

READ HEBREWS 11:30-35

- C. Patience is an element of the fruit of the Spirit.
But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, **long-suffering**, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control... (Gal. 5:22-23).
- D. Patience is a by-product of love.
1. Tho his friend accused Job of impatience-- & Job acknowledged, even defended, his impatience, Job did indeed, under the circumstances, display a remarkable amount of patience.
 2. But if there were a prize for the most patient man in the O.T., Job might be edged out by Hosea. The word "patient" is not found in the book of Hosea, but that prophet is the one man chosen by God to portray His mercy & continuing love for the people of Israel. God's patience with man-kind, like that of Hosea for his erring wife Gomer, is a product of the highest form of love.

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