

The Godly Man's Portion & Sanctuary

Lesson 12: Exhortations for the Godly, Part 3

- I. *Patience is* a submitting, sedate, and calm frame of spirit, whereby a Christian, upon gospel truths and promises, is borne up under all his troubles and borne through all his duties because it recognizes, believes, and embraces all the supports found in the gospel.
The call to be patient is a call to a great duty with great consequences. In fact, there's much more in it than men observe, for patience is no less than *the whole* of Christianity and *the height* of Christianity.
 - A. *Patience is the whole of Christianity.*
 1. To be truly patient is as much as to be truly Christian because you *cannot* be patient unless you're holy, humble, meek, mortified, self-denying, crucified to the world, and heavenly-minded. Are not the incongruities obvious?
 - a) Patient and proud, Ps 10.4; Js 4.6.
 - b) Patient and irritable, Jonah 4.8-9.
 - c) Patient and unmortified, Col 3.7-8.
 - d) Patient and earthly-minded, Phil 3.18-19.
 - e) Patient and a self-seeker, Mk 8.35.
 2. If ever you would be possessors of the grace of patience, you must be partakers of all grace. If you want to be truly patient, then:
 - a) You must get a believing, broken, self-denying heart, Gal 6.24; 1Jn 5.4-5.
 - b) You must get your affections furnished with the love of Christ, the hope of the gospel, and the contempt of the world, Rom 5.1-5; Gal 6.14; Phil 1.21.
 - c) You must live above, in the other world, where Christ is seated and you in Him, Col 3.1-8.
 - d) You must let Christ, glory, honor, and immortality be the portion of your soul and the pleasure of your life, Ps 73.25-28.
 - B. *Patience is the height of Christianity.*
 1. In being pressed to patience, we're being pressed to get assurance, because without assurance of salvation, our patience will be difficult and imperfect.
 - a) True patience, as a "submitting, sedate, and calm frame of spirit" is impossible when we're questioning whether or not our sins are forgiven, whether or not we're reconciled to God, and whether or not God's dealing with us an enemy.
 - b) True patience is impossible when we're thinking our afflictions might be the portion and testimony of an illegitimate child rather than the blessed portion of a son of God.
 - c) True patience is impossible when we're thinking our present sufferings might be sent to carry us down to eternal suffering.
 - d) If we could be sure that it'd be well in the end, we could be patient. But without assurance, for all we know, the furnace we're in might be the very mouth of hell.
 - e) But if we can be assured of our reconciliation with God and our home in heaven, then we can set our hearts at rest and easily exercise our patience in suffering.
 2. Therefore if we would be patient, we must be diligent to make our calling and election sure, 2Pet 1.10; diligent to be faithful in duty, Jn 14.15; and diligent to mortify sin, Col 3.5.
 - a) Particularly, we must be impatient with sin so we can be patient with sorrow. For if we live a life of mortifying our sins then we'll have nothing to battle with in the day of affliction but the affliction itself. The cross of affliction is heavy enough on its own that we don't need to add a cross of guilt and shame to it.

- b) Until we do this, we'll find suffering to be a hard service. We'll boast great things about our patience and our ability to endure suffering, Mk 14.29; Lk 22.33, but "*when* the Lord touches us where we're most tender, brings those trials upon us that are most contrary to us, strips us of those comforts that are most dear to us, takes all from us and leaves us with nothing; *when* we feel the smart of the rod, every stroke draws blood, our feet are hurt in the stocks, and the iron breaks the spirit; *when* the vinegar and the gall come and the thorns and nails of the cross are driven in; *when* shame and reproach, scorn and contempt, hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness, bodily torment and pain, are all measured to you for your portion, and mingled in your cup; *and if ever* God should call you to take your part with the cloud of witnesses in Heb 11, who were tortured, tried by cruel mocking and scourging, bonds and imprisonment, who were stoned, sawn in two, tempted, slain with the sword, wandered about in sheepskins and goat skins, being destitute, afflicted, and tormented, wandering in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth, *then* you'll know how much fortitude and endurance there is in Christian patience and how necessary self-denial, mortification, and living in the faith, assurance, and fellowship of His love are to your patient possessing of your souls in suffering." Until then, hold your peace and pray for the grace to suffer well.
3. Believe it, dear Christians, the gospel has not furnished us with such large provisions of graces, comforts, promises, and hopes, for nothing. You'll find need enough for them all.
- a) You have no reason not to fully expect that you'll soon be called to trials so amazing and so astonishing that nothing less than the richest stock of promises, the highest measure of spiritual graces, the fullest influences of God's power, and the clearest sense of God's love will be necessary to enable you to be patient.
- b) Therefore see that you make sure of God's love, make sure of your right to the promises, live in daily conflict with sin and contempt of the world, and in the daily exercise of all graces, *and then* you'll be ready for the enemy. Let your sufferings be what they will and come when they will, your souls will be at anchor and you'll have a continual calm within, Isa 40.25-31.