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PATIENCE

One of the hardest things for most of us is patience. We live in a country with fast food, quick microwave dinners, instant movies on demand and so many other things that come quickly.

Yet, God wants us to learn how to be patient. In Galatians 5:22 longsuffering is listed as one of the fruit of the Spirit. The definition of longsuffering is ***forbearance, longanimity and patience***. Longanimity, means to bear injuries patiently or with forbearance. Forbearance can mean patience, but it also means refraining from the enforcement of something such as a debt, right, or obligation. In other words, when someone owes us a debt, we are to refrain from enforcing it.

God is very patient with us. He often gives us grace to work things out. Most of the time things happen to us because we make bad choices. Either we speak when we shouldn't speak, or we choose sin over righteousness. When this happens, we live with the results. Even when we repent, it often takes time to turn things around. God wants us to depend upon Him to resolve issues, but it seldom comes quickly.

In Romans 5:1-3 it says, ***“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience.”*** Then again in James 1:4 it says, ***“But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect (mature) and entire, wanting (lacking) nothing.”***

Glorying in tribulations is not what most people think of as a great life, but we are to thank God that He loves us enough to mature us through tribulations. This is how we develop patience. We never ask for patience because tribulation worketh patience (Romans 5:3) but we know that we mature by having our faith tested. When we allow God to work in our lives and develop patience, we become mature, lacking nothing. It is an ongoing process. Even the apostle Paul said the things he wanted to do he didn't do, and the things that he didn't want to do he did. He struggled with it too! Remember, it is a process. It does not happen overnight. Give yourself grace! Let patience have its perfect work!