

The Key to Perfect Patience That Overcomes Satan's Schemes

I don't know anyone who gets excited about going through hardship, and yet it's unavoidable in everyone's life at some time or other. When trouble comes, a natural response is "Why is this happening?" or "I can't believe this is happening to *me!*"

But the Bible tells us that hard times are actually good for us. James 1:2-3 (AMP) says, "Consider it nothing but joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you fall into various trials. Be assured that the testing of your faith [through experience] produces endurance [leading to spiritual maturity, and inner peace]."

These verses are saying that we can learn to go through trials with joy and hope, knowing God will use them to make us better in the end.

Resist the Urge to Run

When things get tough, our initial reaction is to want to run from the pain and escape the situation, but what we need to do is take a firm stand in our faith and face it. Jesus promises us in John 16:33 that if we will trust Him in the midst of the struggle, we can have His perfect peace and joyful confidence that we will overcome it because He is on our side!

Now, we don't just overcome the problem, but in the process of going through it, God uses the very thing that is causing our pain to develop endurance, patience and perseverance in our soul. Trials and suffering don't come from God, but He will use them to build our faith in Him and help us grow up spiritually.

The Value of Patience and Endurance

The Greek dictionary says patience is a fruit of the Spirit that grows only under trial. In fact, the word patience comes from the root word *hupone*, which means “to remain under.”

Patience has to do with being steadfast, disciplined and committed—not running from difficult things, but sticking with them all the way through. It’s about having a good attitude while you’re waiting for your breakthrough or your turn or the fulfillment of something you desire.

Patience has a lot to do with endurance. I’ve come up with my own definition of endurance: “to outlast the enemy.” It reminds me not to give up when I’m weary because I never want to give in to the temptations Satan brings my way or let him win the battle.

We all get weary at times and wonder if we’ll ever get our breakthrough when we’ve been fighting the same battles for a long time. But the ones who refuse to give are the ones who will have a testimony in the end!

The Test of My Quality

In 1 Peter 4:12, we see that painful experiences test the quality of our faith. When our quality is tested, we learn things about ourselves, because we don’t really know what we would do in a tough situation until we’re in it. That’s why God allows us to go through hard times—to reveal what’s in our hearts.

I remember a season in my life when I was praying for God to change me and make me more patient, sweet, merciful and loving. And He answered my prayer at the grocery store.

I used to be tremendously impatient when it was time to check out at the supermarket, and I somehow managed to pick the slow line every time. I can vividly remember one day when there was

a new clerk being trained, and everything was taking longer than usual. I was frustrated, and I made sure they knew it! I sighed loudly and mumbled under my breath.

These times at the grocery store were tests meant to develop patience and endurance in my soul. Over time, as I continued to grow in my relationship with God, I began to pass these tests more often. I came to the point where I could wait in the slow line with a good attitude—without opening my mouth or making a sound!

The Reward Always Outweighs the Pain

My example of developing patience at the grocery store may seem trivial compared to the trial you're facing today. But I want to encourage you to find comfort in the truth that God is with you, and He knows exactly what you're going through. He loves you more than you know, and He has the answers you desperately need.

There have been many times when I've walked through devastating pain, and Galatians 6:9 (AMP) has been an encouragement to me. It says, "Let us not grow weary or become discouraged in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap, if we do not give in."

This is an amazing promise from God that if we will trust Him and keep doing what is right in each situation, He will work it all out for our good (Rom. 8:28). He will take every moment of pain and use it to develop priceless fruit, such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control in us (Gal. 5:22-23).

That's more than enough reason to keep going, one day at a time, and to never give up!