

PATIENCE: WAITING ON THE TIME OF GOD

Luke 21:19 *In your patience possess ye your souls.*

The Authorized Standard version of the Bible states, “In your patience ye shall win your souls” (Luke 21:19). The opposite would be: “In impatience ye shall lose your souls”. A simple way to define Christian patience is “waiting on the time of God”. Every child of God has to learn to put on the “wristwatch” of God, so to speak. God’s clock is quite different to the clock of this world. The great stories of the Bible are stories about individuals who through great patience inherited the promises of God. Abraham waited for 25 years to witness the birth of Isaac, Joseph waited 22 years to see Jacob, Moses languished in the desert of Midian for 40 years before God delivered his people, Daniel had to endure 70 years in Babylon and Persia before his people could return and, even now, the Church has been waiting for 2000 years for the lord Jesus Christ to return.

Titus 2:11 *For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,*

Titus 2:12 *Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;*

Titus 2:13 *Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;*

Indeed, we will win our salvation through patience. The tribe of Issachar had a unique gift among the twelve tribes of Israel: they knew the time of God. “And of the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do; the heads of them were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their commandment” (I Chronicles 12:32). The chapter was about making David the King of Israel. “All these men of war, that could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Israel: and all the rest also of Israel were of one heart to make David king” (I Chronicles 12:38). Thank God for the children of Issachar who understood it was the time of God to crown David King of Israel. Christian patience is going about the daily business of life while being constantly aware of the return of the Lord.

Whenever I travel, I always ensure that I am very early at the airport. This gives me ample time to get some exercise walking around the massive airport. Whether I grab a coffee from Starbucks, spend some time looking at the airport book bestsellers or walk into the Hugo Boss men’s boutique where I pretend the prices do not shock me, I am always keeping

an eye on the time and the screen which tells me when to go to my gate. In my patience, I want to catch my flight, and in my journey in life, I want to make to heaven.

Remember King Saul? Saul was the first king of Israel, chosen by God, and he faced pressure from the Philistines, who were preparing for battle against Israel. Samuel, the prophet, had instructed Saul to wait for him to offer sacrifices before going into battle. Samuel told Saul that he would arrive to offer sacrifices and give him further instructions. However, as the days passed and Samuel did not appear as expected, Saul became anxious. The Philistine army was gathering, and his men started to lose heart. In his impatience and fear of losing his men and facing the enemy, Saul decided to offer the burnt offering himself, even though this was a role reserved for the prophet. His action was a direct violation of God's command, as he took on a priestly role that he was not authorized to perform.

***1Sam 15:22** And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.*

***1Sam 15:23** For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.*

Just as Saul finished making the sacrifice, Samuel arrived. Samuel confronted Saul about his actions and revealed that Saul's kingdom would not endure. God had sought a man after His own heart to be the next king of Israel, indicating that Saul's disobedience had permanently altered his status as king. Saul's impatience cost him the blessing of continued reign over Israel. His inability to wait for God's timing and follow divine instructions led to a significant shift in leadership and ultimately contributed to his downfall as king. This story illustrates the principle that impatience can lead to grave consequences, especially when it involves disobedience to God.

Our Brother Victor has turned 60 years. We congratulate him and thank the lord Jesus for this wonderful occasion because we know it took great patience and endurance for him to reach this far in his walk with the Lord. When he left Ghana as a young man and arrived in Europe, he did not come to Europe to find Jesus, but the Lord was waiting for him here. Once he found the Lord, he renounced the world, as Moses did. "Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward" (Hebrews 11:26). We will keep cheering Brother Victor every step of the way until

he enters into the promises of the Lord. “And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved” (Matthew 10:22).