

## Biblical Endurance has a Reward

***"Not in achievement, but in endurance, of the human soul, does it show its divine grandeur and its alliance with the infinite"***

-Rev. Edwin Hubbel Chapin 1814-1880

The Scriptures are clear that there is a reward for enduring hardship for the Lord's sake. *"Behold, we count them happy who endure, ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy"* (James 5:11). We can be assured that our struggles and hardships are not overlooked by the Lord. He rewards our efforts at overcoming temptation with "a crown of life" because it reveals our love for Him (James 1:12).

Like Moses who *"endured as seeing Him who is invisible"* (Hebrews 11:27), we may very well experience a new depth of relationship as we walk in an *"alliance with the infinite"* One (as Rev. Chapin suggested above). Hebrews 10:32-36 gives an amazing insight into the reward of staying focused on heavenly purposes while enduring reproaches and other afflictions during our time on earth. If we maintain our confidence in the Lord during difficult times we will receive His promised blessings.

Paul even remarked that though he endured many persecutions, God delivered him out of them all (2 Timothy 3:11)! So God can bring deliverance and other rewards to those who endure hardships, but our motive should always come from our love for Him.

## Final Thoughts

**"Heroism...is endurance for one more moment"**

-George Kennan U.S. Diplomat 1904-2005

The Apostle Paul exhorted Timothy to *"endure hardship, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ"* (2 Timothy 2:3).



Later in the same letter, Paul predicted that difficult times were coming for believers when they were going to need to stand against a culture of self-centered lustfulness, false teaching and the rejection of sound Biblical truth (2 Timothy 4:3-5). Sound familiar? We must be prepared to endure ever increasing criticism and attacks against our Christian faith. To be ready, we must put down deep roots strengthening our bond of unity with the Lord. Jesus taught that those with shallow roots can endure very little affliction for the Word's sake before *"they are offended"* (Mark 4:17).

***"When man is in love he endures more than at other times; he submits to everything"***

-Friedrich Nietzsche 1844-1900

Although this quote is made about human love relationships, it certainly has meaning to the believer. The more deeply I love my Lord the more I can submit to any hardship for His sake while keeping my eyes on His example.

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# "Endurance"

## How Christianity Works Series

**By Pastor Curt Carter**

## Endurance

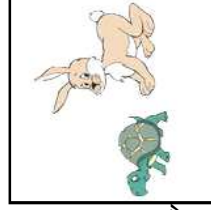
***"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily hinders our progress. And let us run with endurance the race that God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from start to finish. He was willing to die a shameful death on the cross because of the joy he knew would come afterward. Now he is seated in the place of highest honor beside God's throne in heaven. Think about all he endured when sinful people did such terrible things to him, so that you don't become weary and give up.***

-Hebrews 12:1-3 New Living Translation

***"Endurance and to be able to endure is the first lesson a child should learn because it's the one thing they will most need to know"***

-Jean-Jacques Rousseau 1712-1778

As a child I remember being told Aesop's fable of the *"tortoise and the hare"*. We were supposed to learn the moral of the story which was not to underestimate the value of steady endurance in our increasingly fast-paced world. *"Slowly does it every time!"*



the tortoise says to the rabbit at the close of story. But frankly, my friends and I more closely related to the dashing rabbit than to that plodding turtle! Who wants to steadily endure something that you can just run away from? Who, indeed?

## Our God is an Enduring God

King David in various Psalms reminds us that God's mercy, His righteousness, His peace, His truth, His judgments, His holy name and His word endure forever. We want a God that surrounds us like *"the mountains"* that surround Jerusalem (Psalm 125:2) permanently keeping us safe and displaying His divine characteristics on our behalf. We can have absolute confidence knowing that *"the Lord shall endure forever..."* (Psalms 9:7). Regardless of the behavior or words of mankind, God endures unchanged. Our Father values endurance, Jesus modeled endurance, and they want us to be sons and daughters who practice endurance.

### What is endurance?

A dictionary definition of endurance would include **"the ability to bear prolonged hardship; toleration of hardship; and persistence over time."** This is borne out by the New Testament Greek word, *"hupomenō"* which means, "to abide under, to bear up courageously (under suffering or other pressures). The ability to move forward with courage under duress is admired by the writers of the New Testament. The Apostle Paul wrote, *"So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure"* (2 Thessalonians 1:4). Even today the testimonies of Christians around the world facing severe persecutions because of their faith in Christ inspire and challenge us. *"For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully"* (1 Peter 2:19).

## Biblical Endurance has a Goal

Human beings sometimes display amazing endurance under hardship but for the wrong reasons. They can be motivated by selfish desires like getting revenge on someone who did them wrong or humiliating others who once ridiculed them. The Biblical model of endurance is Jesus Christ as taught in our opening verses.



Jesus was able to endure the **s h a m e f u l** experience of Roman crucifixion as a criminal because He was focused on a future "joy". That "joy" was His bride, the church. Ephesians 5:25-27 tells us, *"...even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it...that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."* When we were still enemies of God complicit in the crucifixion of Christ, He was focused on dying for our sins and reconciling us to God (Romans 5:8-11):

Following the example of Christ, the Apostle Paul also made blessing the church the goal of his endurance. *"Therefore, I endure all things for the elect's sake that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory"* (2 Timothy 2:10). So we also should learn that in enduring great hardship it is important to have a goal to bring blessing to others. We face our daily difficulties believing the witness of our endurance will impact others for good.