

## The Gracious Life, Part 6 | be enduring

**I. Endurance is required to live a gracious life.**

- **Endurance is required to be gracious to perpetually difficult people.**
  - We all have to be patient with our family members, coworkers, and peers. But sometimes that patience is measured less by the minutes or hours and more in days, months, and years.
  - Those of us who pride ourselves on being able to overlook the milieu of inconvenient interruptions throughout the average day often break under the sustained stress of one individual who—despite our consistent patience and grace—continues to be a burden.
- **Endurance is required to be gracious to people while we're in difficult situations.**
  - Sometimes we attack them because they may have proverbially stepped on our toes—a simple, otherwise innocuous accident had we not recently broken our metaphorical foot.
  - And sometimes the person has done nothing wrong at all. We merely pour onto them the angst we're experiencing in our trial because we're not faithfully acknowledging what God is trying to do.
  - But sometimes we even lash out at people who are actually trying to *help* us—the people who have seen our struggle and want to be a blessing—and yet we punish them for their good deed. All of that is unacceptable and inexcusable for the Christian.

**II. Endurance is impossible in our own strength.**

- If you are not enduring, it's because you're trying to do it in your own power. Period. You're not casting your cares on Christ, you're not leaning on His understanding, you're not being filled with the Holy Spirit, you're trying to manage the situation with your own muscle and for your own comfort.
- Disillusion yourself right now—you, in your own power, simply cannot be who God wants you to be when people are refusing to be decent and when the constant pressure of the fiery crucible is unrelenting. You need God, and you will not rely on Him subconsciously.
- You must intentionally and premeditatedly pursue His providential help to be gracious to people when they are perpetually taxing and when the walls of our lives feel like they are closing in.

**III. God gets to set the expectations for our endurance.**

- This Greek word refers to remaining under or abiding under something. Impatience never fixes anything. Refusing to persevere doesn't make the pressure go away, it only makes it more unbearable. Remember, sin *multiplies* difficulty.
- **Endurance is the very foundation of Sanctification.**
  - Luke 8:15, 21:19; Matthew 10:22, 24:13; Romans 2:6-8; Hebrews 10:36
  - We cannot be Christians without endurance because to be a child of God is to persevere in maturity.
  - Is your sanctification steadfast and persevering? When you buckle under difficult people and circumstances, you are rejecting one of the most foundational realities of your relationship with God.
- **Endurance results in maturity.**
  - Romans 5:3-4; II Peter 1:5-7; I Timothy 6:11; Titus 2:2; James 1:2-4, 5:11; Revelation 2:19; II Thessalonians 1:4; Romans 12:9-13; Luke 16:10
  - God allows hardship to enter your life so that you will be sanctified into the image of Christ.

- The process of maturing in Christ is the blessing in which we rejoice!
- Are you maturing in Christ? If you are, then you will also be growing in your ability to persevere through trial.
- **Endurance is motivated by exultation in Christ.**
  - Romans 5:3-4, 8:24-25, 15:4-5; II Corinthians 1:6-7; Colossians 1:11-12; I Thessalonians 1:3; II Thessalonians 3:5; Hebrews 12:1-3; Romans 13:12; Hebrews 10:32-39
  - The word translated “exult” wasn’t merely a cry of excitement or joy. It has to do with boasting or taking pride in something. Paul is saying that he gloried, he took pride, he boasted in his tribulation.
  - Our ability to be gracious, humble, kind, compassionate, gentle, patient, and enduring is directly tied to what we know, understand, and believe about God.
  - Praise God that we are experiencing this momentary affliction for a far greater, eternal purpose.
  - In order to endure in trial, we need to lay aside the sin that encumbers us. And not only are we to set aside our sin we need to fix our eyes on Jesus who is the goal toward which we run, the model for how we are to run, and the enabler to run as He does.
- **Endurance is the epitome of love.**
  - I Corinthians 13:7 — This whole verse speaks to the persevering nature of love. It bears up under the weight, it gives the benefit of the doubt, and it waits around no matter what is thrown at it.
  - Love is not love when it alters, bends, removes, is shaken, and gives up.
- **Endurance is redemptive.**
  - II Timothy 2:10-13
  - Of course we will endure when we recognize that the eternal destiny of unbelievers is on the line. Of course we will endure when we recognize that the believer in front of us needs to be better conformed to the image of his Savior.
- **Endurance will be rewarded.**
  - James 1:12

#### IV. God commands us to not lose heart and grow weary.

- Luke 18:1; II Corinthians 4:1, 16-18; Galatians 6:9; Ephesians 3:13; II Thessalonians 3:13
- **God commands us not to lose heart.**
  - This means that we are not the victims. We are in control of whether or not we grow weary and faint.
- **God gives us everything we need to endure.**
  - If we are not enduring, we must not blame the circumstances. It’s our fault. We’re not utilizing the multitudinous resources God has given us.
- **God says that endurance is the result of right thinking.**
  - Focus on God in prayer and don’t lose heart! Look at the things which are not seen, the eternal things and be renewed! Revel in God’s mercy; don’t lose heart! Remember that you will reap blessings if you don’t grow weary!