

Patience and Perseverance

We're in new territory, or perhaps it's more accurate to say we are shut-in, in the very familiar territory of our homes. We could focus on terms like, "stir-crazy," "cabin fever" and "boredom," but I think it's far wiser to center our thoughts on, "patience" and "perseverance."

These terms are actually biblical terms that call us to mature responses rather than seeing ourselves as simply victims of circumstance.

We would do well to remember that God has never called us to, nor commanded anything of us, that He has not empowered us to do. In Psalm 37:7 David shares a precious approach to daily life, "Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him..." When too much rest becomes boring or even frustrating, God is calling us to patience. And in the actual doing of that patience, we should realize that we are not simply waiting for earthly circumstances to change, but indeed, we are waiting for God and His will to bring about the changes needed to resume normal life.

Let's recognize that patience, when strained over time, must become *perseverance!* We might frame the approach like this: we start by being patient and over time that patience must become perseverance. One of my favorite lines from the movie, *Josey Wales*, is spoken by Lone Watie (played by Chief Dan George), "Endeavor to persevere!" He is quoting the US government's advice to native Americans, "Endeavor to persevere." Good advice, indeed (regardless of the political setting in the movie).

When boring, shut-in days drone on into weeks we recognize the need for patience. Now that those weeks drip like molasses into months we must use our self-control (Ephesians 5:23) to force that patience into perseverance! Patience, called "long-suffering" in the King James translation, certainly calls us to stay faithful when suffering long. Perseverance means most simply, "keeping on keeping on."

We are not waiting merely for men of science to signal an "all clear." We are waiting for the Lord! Absorb the message of Psalm 27:14:

**Wait for the Lord;
Be strong and let your heart take courage;
Yes, wait for the Lord."**

King David is telling us in no uncertain terms that patience and perseverance in waiting for God's timing takes *courage!* It may seem surprising that waiting at home as a Covid 19 shut-in takes courage, but when things stretch out this long, I believe that it certainly does!

Be strong take courage, wait patiently and through self-discipline, *persevere!* God is on our side (Romans 8:28-39).

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