



VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

Wednesday Bible Study - 28:01:2009

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STUDY 6: THE REWARD OF ENDURANCE

James: 1:12

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him."

There is blessing in endurance, however most people do not really understand what it means to endure especially in these self gratifying, pleasure seeking, fun-loving and indulgent society. On the other hand, some take endurance to the opposite extreme and interpret it include compromise and silence under abuse, injustice or injury.

Endurance does not mean compromise in standards, doctrines, relationships, occupation, etc. The believer cannot earn divine favour and reward through compromise. Similarly, endurance is not permissiveness and unhealthy tolerance, through weakness of will or fears that paralysis action. Endurance is the capacity to bear or undergo hardship, strain or privation without yielding while one is taking a firm stand for the truth and living for the right (I Peter 2:19; Galatians 6:9).

THE RAMIFICATIONS OF ENDURANCE

There are many facets to endurance. As temptations differ from place to place, and from people to people, so also will the requirements of endurance. The believer ought to constantly pray for divine wisdom on how to endure in his specific circumstances (I Corinthians 10:13; James 1:5). Below are some facets of endurance in times of temptations and trials:

1. Identifying with divine plan and purposes even where it involves suffering and humiliating experiences rather than flirt with sinful pleasures and partnership (Hebrews 11:24-27).
2. Waiting patiently for the manifestation of God's will, favours, guidance and fulfillment of promises at God's own time and way (Habakkuk 2:1; Daniel 10:1-13; Isaiah 8:17,18; Luke 24:49; Psalms 102:6-8; 130:5,6; 42; 43; Isaiah 50:10,11).
3. Refusal to alleviate personal suffering or manipulate circumstances through compromise and carnal / ungodly principles (I Samuel 24:1-22; Isaiah 50:10, 11).
4. Total resignation and loyalty to God while undergoing severe trials of faith (I Samuel 24:1-22; Job 1:20-22).
5. Rejecting discouragement and refusing cheaper alternatives to the divine pathway though it be hedged with hardship (Job 2:9; Matthew 4:1-11).
6. Faithfulness in service, continued consecration / commitment and refusal to backpedal when the going gets tough (Galatians 6:9; I Corinthians 15:58; Judges 11:29-35; II Timothy 4:1-5; Acts 20:22-25; Luke 9:62).

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7. Rejecting the deceitful influences of false prophets, worldly (religious) compromisers and backsliders even when a godly stand would bring trials, shame, hardships and / or earthly loss (Deuteronomy 13:1-5; I Kings 13; I John 4:1; Jude 3; II John 10,11).
8. Shunning the counsel and company of the ungodly and bearing with fortitude any isolation that may arise from a godly stand (Psalms 1:1-3; I Corinthians 15:33; Luke 6:22; Matthew 10:22).
9. Rejecting undue rewards, bribes and tips and refusing the bread of deceit even when one is suffering hunger (Acts 8:18-24; Proverbs 20:17).
10. Accepting chastisement from God as well as Bible based correction / discipline from leadership in good faith without succumbing to the temptation to bolt away in pride (Hebrews 12:7; Job 17:9). Even in cases of excommunication leaving the door open for reconciliation. However, we must be careful not to compromise by succumbing to deliberate abuses and injustices masquerading as discipline / chastisement.
11. Maintaining Christian sobriety and integrity and firmly holding unto the words of life and truth (I Peter 1:13; Revelations 3:10; John 6:67-69).
12. Discipline, diligence and determination to eradicate all weights and besetting sins, and run with perseverance the race set before us (Hebrews 12:1,2; Songs of Solomon 2:15).
13. Standing firm to one's convictions and refusing to copy the bad examples of mediocre half-baked Christians and backsliders (Genesis 39:7-13; I Samuel 2:12-18; Matthew 24:12,13).
14. Earnestly contending for the faith amidst misunderstandings, rejections, persecution and losses.
15. Persistently and sacrificially labouring for eternity and not deterred by personal setbacks in career, family, education, etc.

THE REWARD OF ENDURANCE

Indescribable reward awaits the faithful who endure temptations and trials including:

1. deliverance (II Peter 2:9; James 5:11; Job 42:10-17);
2. preservation (Revelation 3:10);
3. reigning with Christ (II Timothy 2:11-13);
4. Salvation (Matthew 10:22);
5. earning the overcomers reward (Revelation 2:7,17,26; 3:5,12,21; 21:7);
6. increased strength (Job 17:9),
7. winning incorruptible crown (I Corinthians 9:25)
8. a crown of glory and of righteousness (II Timothy 4:8; I Peter 5:4).

Cheer up weary pilgrim, if we suffer with Christ, we shall also reign with Him.