

# **Construction in Progress**

## **Lesson 6: Building Patience**

### **Introduction:**

- What are some things you encounter in everyday life that test your patience?
  - Difficult co-workers, rude customers, obnoxious family members, etc.
  - How do we typically respond to these people?
- Samaritans were a cultural offshoot of the Israelite nation, commonly known for worshipping God when “convenient”, but more commonly rejecting Him.
  - Jews commonly held animosity towards them (i.e. the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4), and James and John carried so much resentment for them that they at one time ask Jesus if they should, “command fire to come down from heaven to consume them.” (Luke 9: 54)
    - Jesus does not condone their behavior but instead rebukes them.
  - Jesus saw reason to not strike down the Samaritan people, but instead to be Patient with them. Isn't it a blessing that Jesus is in charge of Grace and not us?

### **Where we Start:**

- As we grow older we all have to learn how to deal with disappointment.
  - An infant cries until they are picked up or fed, a teenager is heartbroken after losing their “first love” until the next comes along.
    - When was the last time you were impatient for a fix/result?
    - When we are young, immediate issues demand immediate relief, but as we grow older we are taught to understand disappointments of life, the values of trials, and the opportunities of growth through adversity.
- Spiritual Children are the same way.
  - We see people doing wrong and when we don't see a quick change, we assume they either cannot or will not change. Sometimes, this is interpreted as intolerance and self-righteousness, but sometimes it is our fault for not learning to be patient.

- *“The end of something is better than its beginning. \_\_\_\_\_ is better than arrogance.”* (Ecclesiastes 7:8)
- This impatience doesn't focus solely on unbelievers, but can easily be reflected on ourselves. Our baptism into Christ doesn't wash away the years of effect from the world, but instead is something we must fight and die to daily. (1 John 1:8)
  - This of course is separate from the act of deliberate sin that can separate us from God (Hebrews 10:26).
  - What is the solution to this impatience?
- The solution to this root issue is for us to remember that patience is of God.
  - *“The Lord is...patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to \_\_\_\_\_.”* (2 Peter 3:9)
    - God shows us patience by allowing us to come to Jesus in the first place, and continues to show patience even when we stray away (1 John 1:7)
    - Once again this does not excuse sin, but acknowledges God's grace and that He will not punish us unforgivably for every offense.
      - *“All unrighteousness is sin, and there is sin not \_\_\_\_\_ to death.”* (1 John 5: 17)
    - As God is patient with us and not quick to condemn, we must also be the same towards others.

## How we Grow:

- Why is it dangerous to pray for patience? Because as we often joke, patience is “earned” and not given, which is seldom what we have in mind.
  - As funny as the old joke is, it holds a lot of truth. Patience is formed through adversity, and seldom comes easily.
  - Jesus even warns us as believers that despite our devotion, hard times will await us.
    - Matthew 5:10-12
      - Which people are blessed? \_\_\_\_\_
      - How are we to respond to insults and persecution? \_\_\_\_\_
      - What are we promised for enduring this? \_\_\_\_\_

- Unfair treatment is the rule and not the exception for believers as Paul promises in 2 Timothy 3:12.
  - Since we are promised to face hardships, we must find ways to make our faith about more.
- As devout Christians, it can be difficult to be patient or wait on believers who don't have the same commitment or enthusiasm for the Lord.
  - We don't make excuses for the lackadaisical behavior of others, but instead accept our role to "*reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great \_\_\_\_\_ and instruction.*" (2 Timothy 4:2)
  - Whether a person is currently lost in the world or struggling with compliance in the Kingdom of Christ, Paul has encouragement that we can use. (2 Timothy 2: 24-26)
    - What characteristics/behaviors are we to carry towards these people?  
\_\_\_\_\_
    - To what purpose does this patience pay off? \_\_\_\_\_
  - Though it hurts us to see people lost, losing patience with them does nothing but build resentment and cause harm.
- Waiting for others to come to Christ can be a long process, but we must remember that love is patient (1 Corinthians 13:4) and must be willing to endure this process if it means giving someone a pathway to Christ.

**The “Finished” Product:**

- We will not become the believers we are called to be without facing adversity (James 1:2-4).
  - Much like metal in the hand of blacksmith, we sometimes must face fires and working in order to become what God wants us to be.
- Malachi 3:1-3 describes the coming of John the Baptist and Jesus, and the impact it would have on Israel, comparing it to a smelter purifying silver.
  - Because the adversity and “purifying” are necessary, we should not view them as a hardship, but instead as an opportunity to prove ourselves to the Lord.
  - And after all of these things, our patience will ultimately be rewarded in eternity.