

Active and Growing...Passionate Patience!

Revelation 3:7-11

February 3, 2019

Passionate Patience!

I don't know about you but for me that sounds like an oxymoron.

Patience that is passionate? Right!

I definitely need to be active and growing in patience!

Now, if you were to put the letters "im" in front of the word patience I would be good to go. Passionate Impatience!

I'm pretty sure a lot of you know what I'm getting at here.

I am much better at expressing, in a passionate way, my impatience than I am patience.

Just ask my wife when we are working on projects around the house and I mess up or a baseboard corner cut just doesn't line up. I express some passionate impatience with myself!

How about you? Or maybe someone you know...what causes expressions of passionate impatience to flow freely from you or someone you know?

Make a phone call to some company and get put on hold for 5 minutes or more! And of course they make you endure their elevator music while on hold!

Traffic jams, delays, detours or getting cut off in traffic!

More than a two people wait at the check out line at the grocery store?

Slow service at a restaurant.

As a sports fan I am getting more and more passionately impatient with "the play is under further review" calls!

Waiting on blood lab results...diagnosis...chemo treatments...

Someone who has such a vocal difference of opinion than yours walking your way with that look of a 30 minute monologue!

How are you doing? Passionately patient or passionately impatient?

Are you more of a crock pot meal cooking person or a microwave (gotta have it now) person?

As followers of Jesus we are called to be crock pot Christians...not cracked pots but passionately patient people!

The bible speaks often of this kind of patience we are to activate and grow in our daily lives as we seek to follow Jesus...passionate patience!

What does this passionate patience look like? The bible describes for us a patience that is more than simply waiting in line, traffic or a phone call or even an apology.

The word often used for patience carries a meaning of steadfastness...consistency...endurance.

It is used to describe a person who is not swerved from their deliberate purpose and their loyalty to faith...even when they are up against great trials and personal suffering.

Patience becomes the ability of the faithful to remain faithful regardless of the circumstances. We are called upon to add patience in our faith. (Hebrews 6:12)

So what happens when we take this understanding of patience and partner it with "passionate?" Passionate patience!

There are areas in each of our lives where we are challenged to incorporate passionate patience. We are going to take a glance at three of them. Two are more challenging than one of them.

We are going to take a quick look at these areas of: God's passionate patience with us...our passionate patience with God and finally our passionate patience with others.

Of the three which do you think is easier for us?

Exactly, God's passionate patience with us! That's all on Him and not us! The other two...well be patient, we will get to them.

Throughout the bible we find God being so passionately patient with the people of God. In the Old Testament we find God over and over guiding, providing and being passionately patient with His people.

One example was during the time of Nehemiah when the people of God returned to a devastated Jerusalem to rebuild the walls and the city. Israel, the people of God, were devastated by times of rebellion and sin...definitively patient producers!

The people of God were described as "arrogant and stiff-necked, and didn't obey God's commands. They refused to listen and failed to remember all God's miracles He did for them." (Nehemiah 9:16,17)

Know anyone that fits that description? What did God do? He passionately was patient with the people and showed compassion and mercy. He didn't desert them. He expressed passionate patience!

The miracle of God's grace is available to any and all who come to Him and seek it. No matter how arrogant or stiff-necked they may be. This passionate patience of God should draw us to Him with praise. This grace should infuse in our faith the desire, no matter how impatient we may get, to know God is there and will get us through it.

If you want a passionate patient picture story you can go to Luke 15 and read about the father who waited passionately for his free willed son to return from his search for himself and the wild side of life. The prodigal son of a passionately patient father.

God, our Heavenly Father, passionately waits for each of us to quit our search for our true life in society and return to the Father who gave us His passionate love in Jesus. God is passionately patient with each of us.

You have been patient to this point...time to get personal in our patience quota. Patience with God and patience with others!

Passionate patience with God!

I would imagine that we all understand this quite clearly... especially those of us who are of the microwave, gotta have it in 3 minutes or less, people. We ask God to help us and He takes longer than our time clock says it should take.

The other night my wife, Loreen, was making some cornbread. She mixed it up and asked me to put it in the oven. I read the directions and asked Alexa to set a timer for 18 minutes. About 10 minutes later my wife is opening the oven door. I impatiently asked her, "What are you doing? I set the timer like the directions said." She then made a great statement that demonstrated God's patience with us and how we need to be patient with Him. She simply stated, "I know this oven." What she meant you bakers know. Some ovens heat quicker than most directions call for. She looked and saw the cornbread was browning on the edge and was ready to come out. If it had been up to me the cornbread would have burned around the edges... and I would have expressed some passionate impatience!!!

God knows us individually. We are not all the same. He knows us! We need to trust His knowledge and will. His timing is perfect! We need to be patient, in fact passionately patient, with His timing and will.

Ask Abraham about being patient with God's timing. God promised Abraham he would have a son and his family tree would be more like a universe of stars.

How many of us, if we were promised this, would be willing to wait for 25 years before the child was born and you would be 100 years old!!!!

I don't know about you but I would not have been passionately patient...passionately impatient would have been my choice. God's timing may be a crock-pot timing and not a microwave. But remember, He knows us better than we know ourselves. Trust His will, word and timing to be perfect for us. Even when we can't see what we hoped for we hang on to hope with passionate patience in God to deliver what He promised.

Because our trials and temptations are often so intense, they may seem to last for eternity or at least a week or two! Both God's Word and mature passionate patient Christians encourage us to wait for God to act...to have a passionate patience.

How many of you have ever prayed for patience? I want you to know how hazardous that can be to your desire for holiness! How do you increase your patience quotient? What causes or creates the patience mode to kick in? Trials, struggles, confusion...life's testings!

Here, I believe, is the most difficult passionate patient battle or testing. Passionate patience with others in life's testings. When we pray for patience we find ourselves placed in situations where our patience will be tested.

In the letter to the church of Philadelphia, John reminded them to not quit on a bad day. Don't give up or become passionately impatient. But rather hold on with hope to what you have in your relationship with Jesus. Look to God. (Revelation 3:11)

Passionate patience was described by John, who by the way had been isolated to the island of Patmos because of his bold faith in Jesus, as keeping the word of God active in your day to day life and not denying your love for Jesus. (Rev. 3:8)

There may be times where we feel isolated from the world around us. We are impatient and are tempted to give up because of the tests and trials life is bringing our way.

Passionate impatience will lash out at those around us. It will cause us to lose our grip on the hope of Jesus and listen to society's lies and temptations.

Passionate patience will remind us that as the tests and trials, people who aggravate, situations that stress us, come along we will hold tight to the truth of God's word and stay true to our love for Jesus.

Don't quit your passionate patience when the world around you caves in on you. God is patient with you. He is there with His grace and love to see you through it.

Be passionately patient with His timing. See His passionate patience with you in the struggles. Allow His Holy Spirit to grow that passionate patience in you.

We have that reminder before us today. God was so passionately patient that He sent Jesus to live and die and be resurrected for us. We are reminded of His forgiving, saving love...His passionate patient love.

It is a given that we have more patience for what we are passionate about.

As you prepare to come to the altar, prayerfully search your patience. Prayerfully praise God for His passionate patience with you. Seek your passionate patience with God's word and timing to grow. As you pray for patience trust His Spirit to guide you when trials come to grow that passionate patience in you each new day.