

Lesson 35 - The Character of Patience

1. What is the fourth item listed when one has the fruit of the Spirit? **Galatians 5:22**

EGW: Again the apostle says: "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. . . . For even Christ pleased not Himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached Thee fell on Me. For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning; that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." "I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you." {ST, October 20, 1898 par. 4}

2. What is the synonym to "longsuffering"? **Colossians 1:11**

EGW: Fearing that Timothy's mild, yielding disposition might lead him to shun an essential part of his work, Paul exhorted him to be faithful in reproving sin and even to rebuke with sharpness those who are guilty of gross evils. Yet he was to do this "with all longsuffering and doctrine." He was to reveal the patience and love of Christ, explaining and enforcing his reproofs by the truths of the Word. {YRP 280.3}

3. What does it mean to have patience? **Revelation 2:3**

EGW: The church at Ephesus in her earlier history had been made the dispensator of sacred truth. Rare means and privileges had been bestowed upon her. "I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored, and hast not fainted." {RH, May 31, 1887 par. 2}

Here we see a deep, heart-felt, prolonged struggle; just such a struggle as we might have expected in these last days of conflict. "Thou canst not bear them which are evil." Rigid and impartial discipline was exercised in the case of all unworthy disciples and false teachers who were bringing in

damnable heresies, which were undermining the foundation of the faith. {RH, May 31, 1887 par. 3}

4. Of all of the character traits of the saints in the last days, which one stands out in the end?

Revelation 14:12

EGW: John beheld an angel flying through the midst of heaven, warning men of the final judgments of God. He proclaimed the position of those who heeded his warning, and who would escape the seven last plagues. He announced them as God's people, and called attention to their peculiar character: "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." The time for the fulfillment of this prophecy has come. We hear the sound of this very message calling the attention of men and women to the broken law of God, and demanding repentance and reform. {RH, January 31, 1888 par. 12}

5. What group of saints came before us having great patience? **Revelation 13:10 [Hinted at by the description of the timeframe of the antichrist in the first half of the verse.]**

EGW: "Power was given unto him to continue forty and two months." And, says the prophet, "I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death." And again, "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity; he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword." The forty and two months are the same as the "time and times and the dividing of time," three years and a half, or 1260 days, of Daniel 7,—the time during which the papal power was to oppress God's people. This period, as stated in preceding chapters, began with the establishment of the papacy, A. D. 538, and terminated in 1798. At that time, when the papacy was abolished and the pope made captive by the French army, the papal power received its deadly wound, and the prediction was fulfilled, "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity." {GC88 439.2}

6. Why will the saints need to express such a character? **Isaiah 25:9, Habakkuk 2:3**

EGW: True, there had been a failure as to the expected event, but even this could not shake their faith in the Word of God. When Jonah proclaimed in the streets of Nineveh that within forty days the city would be overthrown, the Lord accepted the humiliation of the Ninevites, and extended their period of probation; yet the message of Jonah was sent of God, and Nineveh was tested according to his will. Adventists believed that in like manner God had led them to give the warning of the Judgment. "It has," they declared, "tested the hearts of all who heard it, and awakened a love for the Lord's appearing; or it has called forth a hatred, more or less perceivable, but known to God,

of his coming. It has drawn a line, so that those who will examine their own hearts, may know on which side of it they would have been found, had the Lord then come; whether they would have exclaimed, 'Lo! this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us;' or whether they would have called for rocks and mountains to fall on them to hide them from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. God thus, as we believe, has tested his people, has tried their faith, has proved them, and seen whether they would shrink, in the hour of trial, from the position in which he might see fit to place them; and whether they would relinquish this world and rely with implicit confidence in the work [word] of God." {GC88 406.1}

7. What needs to happen with our hearts as we wait patiently for the second coming? **James 5:8, 2 Thessalonians 3:5**

EGW: It will not be long till we shall see Him in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered. And in His presence, all the trials and sufferings of this life will be as nothingness. "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Verses 35-37. Look up, look up, and let your faith continually increase. Let this faith guide you along the narrow path that leads through the gates of the city of God into the great beyond, the wide, unbounded future of glory that is for the redeemed. "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." James 5:7, 8. {9T 287.2}

8. What takes a lot of patience to express in this disrespectful world? **1 Corinthians 13:4**

EGW: One of the chief characteristics of true love is humility. The apostle says: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." The man who has true zeal for God will be distrustful of self, and little in his own eyes. Love teaches us to be meek as well as lowly. Sanctified love will enable us to exhibit the grace of patience; it will help us to restrain impetuosity and fretfulness, so that we shall repine at nothing. Love to God and our neighbor will melt away all hatred, bitterness, wrath, malice, prejudice, envy, and evil surmising. {ST, February 24, 1890 par. 7}

9. When we endure suffering with patience because of being falsely accused of something, what is that act considered in the eyes of God? **1 Peter 2:20**

EGW: We should not allow our feelings to be easily wounded. We are to live, not to guard our feelings or our reputation, but to save souls. As we become interested in the salvation of souls, we cease to mind the little differences that so often arise in our association with one another. Whatever others may think of us, it need not disturb our oneness with Christ, the fellowship of the Spirit. "What glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." [1 Peter 2:20.] {GW 475.2}

10. What are we considered part of when we exercise patience? **Revelation 1:9**

EGW: When John was banished from those he loved to lonely Patmos, Christ knew where to find His faithful witness. John said: "I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet." The Lord's day is the seventh day, the Sabbath of creation. On the day that God sanctified and blessed, Christ signified "by His angel unto His servant John" things which must come to pass before the close of the world's history, and He means that we should become intelligent with regard to them. It is not in vain that He declares: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." Revelation 1:9, 10, 1-3. This is the education that is to be patiently given. Let our lessons be appropriate for the day in which we live, and let our religious instruction be given in accordance with the messages God sends. {6T 128.2}

11. What helps with developing patience so as to have a godly character? **2 Peter 1:6**

EGW: Shall we not break off our sins by righteousness, and have our conversation in heaven, whence we look for our Saviour? Shall we not talk of our Saviour until it becomes natural for us to do so? If we do not order our conversation aright, we shall not see the salvation of God. Satan will take possession of the heart, and we shall become low and sensual. Let us elevate the thoughts, and take hold upon things that are of real value, gaining an education here that will be of value in the world to come. Shall we not seek the Lord with earnestness, repent of our backslidings, mourn that we have neglected his word, that we do not know the truth better, and turn to him with all the heart, that he may heal us, and love us freely? Today let us take a step toward heaven. Christian character is not achieved in an instant, but day after day we are to add to our faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience

brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity. It is in this way that we are to be made ready for the coming of Christ. If we do not advance in the light, we shall be among that company who sit in darkness, for whom no place is found in heaven. {RH, April 21, 1891 par. 9}

Are you "rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer"? You cannot do that unless you have a good, sweet stomach. With a sour stomach you are thinking all the time, "Oh, dear, how my stomach hurts me! What is the matter with me?" If you had thought just a little earlier, and eaten the right things, you would have avoided the difficulty. Let us all be temperate. It is our duty to be cheerful. We are not to be like a band that is marching along in a slow and mournful tread. That is not our place. What we want is to rejoice in hope. {RH, January 7, 1902 par. 10}

12. What needs to be set aside if we are serious about developing patience? **Hebrews 12:1**

EGW: In the epistle to the Hebrews is pointed out the single-hearted purpose that should characterize the Christian's race for eternal life: "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." Hebrews 12:1, 2. Envy, malice, evil thinking, evilspeaking, covetousness--these are weights that the Christian must lay aside if he would run successfully the race for immortality. Every habit or practice that leads into sin and brings dishonor upon Christ must be put away, whatever the sacrifice. The blessing of heaven cannot attend any man in violating the eternal principles of right. One sin cherished is sufficient to work degradation of character and to mislead others. {AA 312.1}

13. What ought we turn towards to develop patience? **Romans 15:4**

EGW: Where shall we find laws more noble, pure, and just, than are exhibited on the statute-books wherein is recorded instruction given to Moses for the children of Israel? Through all time these laws are to be perpetuated, that the character of God's people may be formed after the divine similitude. The law is a wall of protection to those who are obedient to God's precepts. From what other source can we gather such strength, or learn such noble science? What other book will teach men to love, fear, and obey God as does the Bible? What other book presents to students more ennobling science, more wonderful history? It clearly portrays righteousness, and foretells the consequence of disloyalty to the law of Jehovah. No one is left in darkness as to that which God approves or disapproves. In studying the Scriptures we become acquainted with God, and are led to understand our relation to Christ, who is the sin-bearer, the surety, the substitute, for our fallen race. These truths concern our present and eternal interests. The Bible stands the highest among books, and its study is valuable above the study of other literature in giving strength and expansion

to the mind. Paul says: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." {RH, February 25, 1896 par. 4}

14. What are we to be patient during? **Romans 12:12, Romans 5:3**

EGW: God desires us to be patient in tribulation and affliction, content to rest in His great arms of infinite love, believing that He is working for us all the time. It is our privilege to be joyful in the Lord. Let us praise Him more. By our joyfulness we reveal that our life is hid with Christ in God, that in Him we find the most blessed companionship, and that through His grace we have a living connection with heaven. {HP 246.6}

15. During times of trial, we can look towards God for strength as He often revealed His patience and longsuffering with the human race, but who else can be our example? **James 5:11**

EGW: According to his faith, so was it unto Job. "When He hath tried me," he said, "I shall come forth as gold." Job 23:10. So it came to pass. By his patient endurance he vindicated his own character, and thus the character of Him whose representative he was. And "the Lord turned the captivity of Job: . . . also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before. . . . So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning." Job 42:10-12. {Ed 156.1}

16. What shall strengthen us to endure the greatest periods of patience? **End of James 5:7**

EGW: "The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain." James 5:7. So the Christian is to wait with patience for the fruition in his life of the word of God. Often when we pray for the graces of the Spirit, God works to answer our prayers by placing us in circumstances to develop these fruits; but we do not understand His purpose, and wonder, and are dismayed. Yet none can develop these graces except through the process of growth and fruit bearing. Our part is to receive God's word and to hold it fast, yielding

ourselves fully to its control, and its purpose in us will be accomplished. {COL 61.2}

17. What develops patience? **James 1:3-4**

EGW: But our sea will not always be smooth. We shall have storm and tempest. But we are not to look upon these as something strange. Meeting difficulties is a part of our education, and is necessary to the formation of a strong, symmetrical character. And through trials we are to be purified and our faith strengthened. So James says, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." We do not always understand the meaning of our trials and difficulties; but in the future life we shall understand things that here greatly perplex us. We shall also realize how strong a helper we had, and how angels were commissioned to guard us as we followed the counsel of the Word of God. {SW, April 28, 1908 par. 9}

18. What activity takes lots of patience? **2 Timothy 2:24**

EGW: Glorify the Master by witnessing in your character to the work of the Holy Spirit upon your soul. Let Christ arise in the soul as a wellspring of life. Christian cheerfulness is the very beauty of holiness. Those who are rich in faith will make manifest the grace of Christ. Paul charges Timothy, saying: "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: if we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself. Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. . . . Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work. Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will." {YI, July 11, 1895 par. 3}

19. What do we need to exercise patience in developing that may take significant time? **Luke 8:15**

EGW: What does it mean to receive into the heart the good seed?--It means to receive the words of Christ. This is a remedy for sin. Some give the truth a partial reception, a half-sympathy, wishing at the same time they had never heard it. In such soil Satan sows his seed, and soon there is a growth of thorns, which chokes the good seed. But when the gospel seed is sown in soil that welcomes it, when it is incorporated with the life, direct and glorious results are seen,--results that testify to the infinite love of God and the transforming power of the gospel. {YI, August 16, 1900 par. 10}

It means much to receive the good seed. In Luke we read, "That on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience." An honest heart is a heart, which, when the light shines into it, acknowledges that sin is the transgression of the law. "Take heed how ye hear," said the Great Teacher. What will it avail to spend the life in self-deception? When truth is received into the heart, the tares growing there are uprooted. The appeals of God to the conscience are no longer turned aside as of no consequence. {YI, August 16, 1900 par. 11}

All who receive the word into good and honest hearts will bring forth fruit. In their hearts will spring up the precious fruits of the Spirit,--love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. {YI, August 16, 1900 par. 12}

20. What is "patient in spirit" better than? **Ecclesiastes 7:8**

EGW: Nothing is more essential to communion with God than the most profound humility. "I dwell," says the High and Holy One, "with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." While you are so eagerly striving to be first, remember that you will be last in the favor of God if you fail to cherish a meek and lowly spirit. Pride of heart will cause many to fail where they might have made a success. "Before honor is humility," and "the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit." "When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel; but when he offended in Baal, he died." "Many are called, but few are chosen." Many hear the invitation of mercy, are tested and proved; but few are sealed with the seal of the living God. Few will humble themselves as a little child, that they may enter the kingdom of heaven. {5T 50.2}