

# THE VIRTUE OF PATIENCE

Pastor's Desk – February 21, 2021



**James 1:2-3** *"My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience."*

We are able to learn quite a bit about why patience is so essential by comparing what we are going through to an artist sculpting work from a chunk of marble. Chip by chip over time, an artist works a hammer and chisel to form a design from a rock's raw slab until the finished form is revealed.

Likewise, the Lord is doing something very similar to us, except we are living, raw material with a mind, emotions, and the liberty to allow or disallow the Artist to proceed. If we are impatient, not permitting the Creator to finish His artistry by continually yielding to His tools, we will never be whole and complete.

It is easy for us to amplify our burdens. Notice, though, what grumbling did for the Israelites in the wilderness when God finally answered. Would we prefer our trial or grumble and undergo what the Israelites did? We must begin to develop the habit of thinking of life, including all its problems, as being God's plan to mold godly character in us.

The author seems to be making a paradoxical statement in the 2nd verse: "*We should count our various trials as joy.*" Why? Because verse 3 declares that doing such, produces **patience!** We need patience so God can fashion us into His likeness. We are taught that we should not measure life experiences by our ability to gratify our ambition or tastes, but by our capability to be transformed into God's image. If we have vision - and a zealous passion for living as God does - we can welcome our trials as steps in the Lord's creative methods and engage our tests with hope and patience.

Perfection in this lifetime is for us to come to be what God wants us to be. What tops that off? If we recognize that our lives are in God's hands as He forms and shapes us, then the eventual outcome - of happiness and grief - are the same. God purposes the same result whether He takes or gives - and His purpose, His will, is for us to be perfect, just as He is perfect!

At His service,  
Pr. Teddy Santos