

It Takes Time

by K.P. Yohannan

The journey to spiritual maturity requires patience and trust in God's timing and work in our lives.

Scripture: Psalm 37:5, Philippians 1:6, Philippians 2:13, Hebrews 5:8, Revelation 12:10

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Patience in Faith"

Description

K.P. Yohannan emphasizes the importance of patience in our spiritual journey, reminding us that becoming like Christ is a gradual process that requires time and perseverance. He warns against the Enemy's accusations that lead to despair and urges believers to focus on Christ instead, who offers hope and encouragement. Yohannan highlights that attempts to achieve godliness through quick fixes or self-reliance only lead to frustration and hypocrisy. Instead, we should trust in God's promise to complete His work in us, just as Jesus exemplified through His own journey of obedience. Ultimately, we are called to commit our ways to the Lord and trust in His timing and process.

Transcript

One of the struggles we sometimes face as followers of Christ is seeing where we want to be in our walk with God in contrast with where we currently find ourselves. There are all kinds of reminders around us to tell us of our fallen nature and the spiritual maturity we have not yet attained. The Enemy is an accuser of the brethren, and he actively takes every opportunity he can to accuse us (see Revelation 12:10). His accusations leave us despairing and hopeless. Sometimes we just don't want to try anymore, and we are ready to give up.

If we turn to Christ in those times instead of lingering on the Enemy's words to us, we'll hear another story. Christ causes us to look up and to stop thinking of ourselves. He draws us to repentance and encourages us to believe Him for a greater work through our lives. With Him, there is hope and a brighter tomorrow. When we are confronted with our failures, it's important that we realize the process of becoming like Christ takes time. There is no microwave for godliness. It takes years upon years of patient, hopeful perseverance.

As we let Him live through us--one day, one moment, one choice at a time--we are becoming more like Christ, a little more today than we were yesterday. What happens to us when we don't realize that this is a long-term journey? The first obvious implication is that we are impatient and frustrated with ourselves. And then if we don't realize the foolishness of our "instant Christianity," we'll try our own quick fix. We'll simply try to "act" our way to the godliness we want. Or we'll make a "plan of achievement."

Often people think that knowledge is what they lack. If they only "knew" more, they would perform better. But all these attempts of the flesh play right into the Enemy's hands. Others sense our hypocrisy, as we do ourselves, and we can't help but loathe it. "Our plans" to be better, if initiated in our flesh, either end in failure and more discouragement or in success and pride. And knowledge itself will not produce godliness. It can actually puff up or discourage us if it's not what God has for us in our current season.

The fact is that none of these responses draws us any closer to our original goal of becoming more like Jesus. They all lead us into the Enemy's trap--thinking about ourselves continually. There is no faster way to sink into the pit of despair than to spend all our time thinking about ourselves and how we're not measuring up. We'll end up at a buffet of self-pity, condemnation and an equally critical spirit toward others. So what's our answer? Believe that the Lord will complete us.

We must cling to the reality that God is doing His work in our lives (see Philippians 2:13) and stand on His promise that "He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6). Jesus embodied this for us in His life on earth. He lived for 30 years under the authority of His parents before beginning His ministry. The Bible tells us that "though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered" (Hebrews 5:8).

Day by day, Christ chose to die to Himself, to say no to His own will and yes to His Father's will. He needed that length of time to grow in obedience and come to the point at which He would choose absolute surrender--surrender to the point of death on the cross. Let us also have patience--with ourselves as well as with others. God is much more concerned about our honesty before Him and our attitude of grace and mercy toward others than He is about us doing everything correctly.

So let us remember: It takes time for God to do His work. We do not have to lose heart because of any spiritual lack we discover in ourselves. "Commit your way to the Lord," Psalm 37:5 encourages us. "Trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass." The Almighty God is at work in our lives. We can certainly trust Him for the journey He has set for us! He is completing His work in you. Believe Him!

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