

Zeal and Patience

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[0 : 00] My sister, who lives in western New York, is an artist, and at different times after I've been talking to her and visiting with her, I've learned that at times she takes a break from a painting that she's working on, and then after a period of time she comes back to it and gets back into it, adding more paints, and eventually finishes the painting that she's working on.

Well, that somewhat fits what we've been experiencing, and what we've experienced throughout this past year. We started a portrait of a godly man from Thomas Watson's book, and we added some colors to that portrait, and this morning we wanted to come back and add some more colors to that portrait, that character colors of what a godly man looks like, that godly person.

And this morning we want to take a look at that color or those character qualities of zealousness and patience.

So let's start with zealousness. As soon as I mention that word zealous, there's probably things that come to your mind already when you think of someone who is zealous.

Certain things outwardly that you'll see them doing, how they'll be acting in certain situations and what they're pursuing. One who is zealous is one who is eagerly devoted to a person or a thing, from Strong's exhaustive concordance, from Vine's dictionary biblical words, means to seek or desire eagerly, from Thomas Watson's book.

[1 : 52] And he gives a definition here that's more related to a godly zeal. Zeal is a mixed affection, a compound of love and anger. It carries forth our love to God and anger against sin in the most intense manner.

Zeal is the flame of the affections. So someone who is zealous has not just a little desire, but it's an inner, fervent, intense desire for someone, for something or some ideal.

But it also has that connection with the outer man. It's manifested outwardly. If you have that kind of intense, fervent desire, it's not something that is contained within and never expressed.

It will find its way out and express itself in some way, whether through words or actions. And it will show the great devotion that person has for whether it is that person or item or ideal.

So we want to see that connection between the inner and the outer. What's in the heart manifests itself outwardly.

[3 : 10] And that's not just true of a godly zeal that we'll see in the godly man. It's also true of that wrong or ungodly zeal. In fact, Paul describes it, and that's what we'll take a look at first here, that wrong kind of zeal.

Paul describes it as it existed in the lives of unbelieving Israel. And I'll have a lot of these verses on the screen. You would never be able to turn to them as I mention them.

By the time you get to one, we'll be off to the next one. And so I trust that this is beneficial having them on the screen. Romans 10.2, Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved, for I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

For being ignorant, we've been seeing the fault in this wrong zeal, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, the inner aspect, seeking to establish their own outer aspects.

They did not submit to God's righteousness, pushed that away from them, and seeking to establish their own.

[4 : 22] They did not submit to God's righteousness, for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. So they had a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

We understand that the people of Israel, they had that privilege of receiving the law, the commandments. They had awareness of that law of God and its demands, but they lacked that real

discerning, that experiential spiritual awareness of God that comes from accepting the righteousness of God in truth and pursuing that.

And as a result, they pushed away. They would not accept the righteousness of God, but went about seeking to establish their own. We see this also in Galatians 4.17, as Paul was writing to the people there, trying to draw them back to a right understanding of the gospel.

And when he's warning them about those who had come in with another gospel, he says, For those people are zealous, but they're zealous to win you over, but for no good.

What they want is to alienate you from us so that you may be zealous for them. So wrong zeal, man-centered focus.

[5 : 43] They had lost something from the people in Galatia. Paul had come with the truth, the gospel. They believed that gospel. We're in pursuit of Christ and the true gospel.

Paul left and these other people came back and were trying. They were zealous, but not for the righteousness of God and elevating Christ in the gospel.

They wanted these people to come back to them and have a zeal for them. They had lost that when the apostle Paul came in with the message of Jesus Christ. And even Paul says that that was true of him in Acts 22.

When he was in Jerusalem, he had been in the temple and the people saw him there and it caused a great uproar. And as he was about to be carried into the barracks by the soldiers for his own protection, he asked if he could speak to the crowd.

And as he did, this is what he said. I am a Jew born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in the city under Gamaliel. I was thoroughly trained in the law of our fathers and was just as zealous for God as any of you are today.

[6 : 54] I persecuted the followers. So we begin seeing the inner and outer connection here. He was zealous just like they were. He had that inner drive, that fervent desire.

But it wasn't according to the true knowledge of God in the person of Jesus Christ. And the outward manifestation of it was I persecuted the followers of this way to their death, arresting both men and women, throwing them into prison.

And on he goes and describes the outworkings of that zeal that he had. But he also referred to his past in Galatians 1, verses 12 through 14.

You've heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it. And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people.

So extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. And then he describes in Philippians 3, 4 through 6, As for zeal, persecuting the church.

[8 : 01] But whatever was to my prophets. So there we begin again to see some of the wrong motivation. It was for his prophet. It was not for the prophet, the glory of God, elevation of Jesus Christ in the gospel.

He was defending what the others had been defending, the traditions from the past. So he had that zeal, but it was wrongly motivated.

And we can see such zeal in people today. If I would open it up to you, you could give me some examples of that. We see religious zeal among people today.

That causes a lot of conflicts in the world, even in our own country at times. Certainly a zeal for political agendas. Boy, we see that more and more today.

We see people that are very zealous for their views politically. And other ideals, certainly. But in other ways, zeal for power, zeal for acceptance.

[9 : 07] We're talking about the various things that people fervently, earnestly desire. And that is eventually manifested outwardly.

But apart from Jesus Christ, the glory of God, the truth of the gospel, true knowledge of God, it's left empty. Just as Paul realized that what was for my profit, I now considered loss.

All of that was loss apart from Jesus Christ, even if it's a pursuit of something that's good in and of itself. When we lose the priority of the exaltation of Jesus Christ, that's when it becomes vain.

It does not lead to the glory of God or really anything good in our own lives. We've been deceived.

And so we need to be drawn back to the right zeal. So that's what we take a look at now.

What would be a right motivation for a godly zeal? Well, it seeks the honor of God. And we see that in Numbers 25 in Phinehas. He was zealous for the honor of the Lord when the Israelites were dishonoring God and taking women from other ungodly nations, worshiping Baal.

[10:22] It was Phinehas who enacted God's judgment and really stopped the judgment of God upon the people of Israel. Numbers 25.10.

The Lord said to Moses, Phinehas has turned my anger away from the Israelites, for he was as zealous as I am for my honor among them, so that in my zeal I did not put an end to them. He was zealous for the honor of his God and made atonement for the Israelites. So there was a man. Zealous for what? Not anything personal, but for the honor of the Lord, honor of God. He was just as zealous for that as God was. I mean, God has to be zealous for his own honor. There's nothing greater than that. And so he's zealous for his own honor, and Phinehas understood that, and he was just as zealous for that and acted really on behalf of the welfare of the people of Israel, not just for the honor of God, but for their very own welfare.

A godly zeal also consistently elevates Christ as Lord, Galatians 4.18. It's fine to be zealous. Here's Paul talking to the people of the church there in Galatia, helping them understand these people are zealous, but we already understood it was for no good.

[11:44] And Paul's saying, nothing wrong with zeal, but it has to be rightly directed, rightly motivated. And he says, fine to be zealous, provided the purpose is good, and so to be so always, and not just when I'm with you.

We can tell our children, you know, it's good for you to obey Mommy and Daddy, but I want you to obey Mommy and Daddy even when I'm not here.

And so the Apostle Paul is helping them understand it, you know, because, hey, when I'm gone, don't get deceived again and have your zeal misdirected, your desires, the flame of your affections be directed to something else, and therefore not exalt Christ and not enjoy the blessings of that. Well, a godly zeal also is fueled by being astonished and amazed with Christ. I like this example here. Mark 7.36.

After Jesus had healed the blind and mute man, he charged them to tell no one. But the more he charged them, the more zealously they proclaimed it.

[12:54] It's like trying to put a fire out. You stay up in here, jumps over here, you know, just keeps spreading. That's what was happening here. The more zealously they proclaimed it. And they were astonished beyond measure.

I like that phrase, you know, just the buildup of it. Astonished beyond measure. It gives us a real picture of what was going on there. They could not contain that zeal within them.

They had to express it. They had to get the message out. And what was that message? They said, he's done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.

They had seen the wonders of God in the person of Jesus Christ. Astonished by that. And they had to proclaim that message. Now you can make the application yourselves in our own lives, and we'll get there eventually.

Number four, it's also activated by God's grace. All the God-glorifying actions that we'll read about in this passage.

[13:56] All flow out of the grace of God. The grace of God, his working in our hearts, so that we have new desires, new fervent desires, new affections.

Titus 2, 11 through 14. The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say no to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled and upright godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our great God and the Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness, and to purify for himself a people that are his very own eager or zealous to do what is good, a work of God's grace. While we also see that it has God's will as its highest priority, and we see that certainly in the perfect example of our Lord Jesus Christ. Talk about the flame of his affections.

I have these verses marked in my Bible and John, because over and over again it just presents in a different way what was really moving Jesus Christ as he was living in the world.

What drove him? In John 4, 30 it says, My food, said Jesus, is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. That was what his fervent desire was.

[15:21] John 5, 30, For I seek not to please myself, but him who sent me. In John 6, 38, For I have come down from heaven not to do my will, but to do the will of him who sent me.

That's what drove Jesus Christ. He was zealous about doing the will of the Father. Well, such fervent desires also have right manifestations, and we'll go through some of these quickly because I've already mentioned some of them.

It declares the wonders that Jesus has done. We saw that as the people saw the wonders Jesus did. They were astonished, and they spoke of these things to other people.

It pursues holiness of life and actively does what is good. We saw that in Titus 2, work of God's grace. It will manifest itself. We'll say no to ungodliness because the flame of our affections now is to live for him who died and rose again on our behalf.

We have new desires that will be manifested outwardly in what we don't do and also in what we do. We'll be zealous and eager to do what is good because Ephesians 2, 10 says that we were created to do good works.

[16:36] 2 Timothy 3 says that the word of God was given, breathed out by God, and does this, that, and the other thing, that the man of God might be perfect, complete, ready for every good work that we are ordained to do.

Well, also 1 Peter 3, 13, when the people there were experiencing persecution, they were starting to draw back from doing what is good in the midst of that persecution.

And Peter's encouraging them, who's going to harm you if you're eager, you're zealous to do what is good? Now, certainly, they killed Jesus Christ. He was zealous to do good, so it's going to happen.

But still, that doesn't mean we should draw back and stop doing what is good, stop living out that fervent desire that we have that Jesus Christ would be exalted through our doing what is good on a daily basis, whatever that might look like in the home, at work, wherever, in the church body.

Don't stop doing what is good. The Lord is compassionate to others and seeks their welfare. The apostle Paul in Galatians 2, 10 said, after he had declared his ministry among the Gentiles back there in Jerusalem, they said, okay, we'll keep on going to the Gentiles with the message, but encourage them to keep on doing what is good, to remember the poor.

[18:07] And Paul says in Galatians 2, 10, all they asked was that we should continue to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager or zealous to do. That's a characteristic of the person who is now a follower of Jesus Christ and has his flame of affections, the picture, that portrait of Jesus Christ that he's reflecting in the world in which he's living.

He also is zealous to do what is good, and in this case to remember the poor, to be compassionate to those who are in need. It also acts in faithful service to God and others.

Elijah, while he was in his discouraged state, and saying the woe, woe me, he replied, I've been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty.

And he had been when others, the Israelites, had forsaken the covenants, rejected the covenant, broken down altars, put the prophets to death. Now he concluded that he was the only one, which sometimes we're like that too.

Woe is me, I'm the only one who's being faithful here. I know there were many others that were still faithful. But he still, it was true of him as a prophet, that he was zealous for God, because he had not turned his back.

[19:27] Rightly motivated, the one who was zealous for God, continues to pursue and follow after the counsel of God. But it also zealous for others, as we see in those who were serving along with the Apostle Paul.

I need to keep going here. Let me just briefly go through some of these last ones. The fifth one, it perseveres in spite of obstacles. The Apostle Paul, when he was with the believers in Ephesus, and he was going to go to Jerusalem, the warning came, listen, if you go to Jerusalem, you're going to be bound.

And he said, let it be so. Let it happen. I'm willing even to die. That's a fervent, earnest desire to do what God had committed him to do at the highest cost.

Persevering in spite of obstacles. It finishes the course, the work that God has assigned. We saw that in Jesus Christ. I brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do.

So the godly man is zealous, and out of a true, that true knowledge of God by faith in Jesus Christ, working of the Holy Spirit, he gives himself daily to living out that zeal that he has in a variety of ways, in a variety of different places.

[20:53] So this morning, I expect all who are believers here today have some of that color of zealousness on our portrait. But if you're like me, which we're probably more alike than different, you could say, you know, I probably need a bit more color of zealousness on my portrait.

And that wouldn't be uncharacteristic, even of the people that the Apostle Paul wrote. In Romans 12, he said, never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.

So we're not so much different from the people back then. There were always other people, issues, whatever it is in life, that the enemy will use to try and get our attention, to draw us away, to set our affections on something else, something else that might be good, but not the priority that would keep us from the priority of the elevation of Jesus Christ.

And so that's why it's good for us to take this time aside. And of course, the question is, as Paul tells these people, keep your spiritual fervor. Okay, how do I do that?

What am I going to do this week so that more of that color is on my portrait? Well, we certainly can pray. We learn that it's a work of God's grace, so we pray to the God of grace that he'll continue his work in us, which he's promised to do.

[22 : 27] So God, continue to build within me that fervent desire for the exaltation of Christ and living Christ out. seek to know God in his word.

The more we know him and are amazed at him, remember the people, they saw the wonders that he had done, they were astounded, astonished beyond measure. Where are we going to see Jesus?

See him in the word. If we're not in the word, we won't be astounded. We won't be astonished. So we need to be in the word looking at Jesus.

So take that time. Exhort and encourage one another. Here we are. The Apostle Paul exhorting the Galatians, people in Rome, continue to be fervent in your desire for the exaltation of Christ.

He's encouraging others. We've got to encourage one another. I need your voice in my life.

Reminded me. There might be those times that, yep, this week I got sidetracked and something else became priority.

[23 : 36] So I need another voice, whether it's from Carol or you or you know what I'm saying. We need to be actively doing that. And then obey. Faith in action.

Be actively serving the Lord at home, work, school, church. And I think that will really nurture that zeal that is there. Anytime you know the experience, you walk in obedience to the Lord and whatever it is afterward, it feels good, doesn't it?

There's a blessing in that and it nurtures that zeal to continue on. And what God has done even beyond these things, look upon Jesus.

look upon the wonders that he's done in his word, but look upon him on the cross and be ultimately astonished with what he has done on the cross on our behalf, that he might rescue us from good things, but that aren't priority.

And we might know that flame of affection of being in right relationship with God and Jesus Christ. So the godly man's picture has a zealousness about it on that portrait.

[24 : 52] Well, let's keep going. Let's move on because we've got another quality, character, that needs to be on our portrait, and that's that portrait, that character quality of patience.

There's got to be some sort of English rule or grammar rule that when you say a word, it sounds like what it actually accomplishes.

I don't know of you that are teachers here, like patience. I mean, zealousness. Okay, it kind of pictures what zeal is all about. Patience.

Maybe it's the inflection I'm giving it, but I suppose I could say zealousness, but it just wouldn't fit. You know, we understand that. So, and that kind of communicates what we're talking about when we say this word, patience.

There's different words used in the Bible for this, patient, long-suffering, forbearance, forbearance, but a definition could be to remain or abide under difficult circumstances peacefully with self-controlled waiting.

[26 : 04] It continues a long time. It's long-tempered, not quick, to strike out or strike back. Thomas Watson says, it's a cheerful submission of our will to God.

You could put other words in there, a trustful submission, a reassured submission, because all of those words describe what enables us to be patient and peaceful and wait.

So, and as with zealousness, patience also has those inner and outer dimensions to it that we'll take a look at here. Well, when do we need to be patient?

Oh, this is the time that I wish we had more time that I ask you. When do we need to be patient? Or, when do you see others need to be patient? You know, not you personally that you would struggle

with not being patient.

It would be great. But I don't have time to give you time to reflect. Maybe in your small groups you can get a little bit more personal and open up about when do you struggle being patient?

[27 : 16] Well, we have, Watson's provided a few and have come up with some others. Well, we certainly need to be patient when we have to wait. When God made Hebrews, I mean, Hebrews 6, when God made his promise to Abraham since there was no one greater for him to swear by, he swore by himself, saying, I will surely bless you and give you many descendants.

And so, after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised. Now, we understand he wasn't perfect in his waiting, but the overall characteristic over 25 years was that he waited patiently.

Now, would you have that color of waiting patiently if you had to wait for something for 25 years, a promise that was made to you?

I'd probably struggle with that beyond what Abraham, or at least what's revealed about Abraham's struggle. Watson says, deliverance may delay beyond our time, but it will not delay beyond God's time.

God's never late, so it's more of an adjustment on ourselves, in ourselves, of adjusting to God's timing and understanding that, well, if I haven't got it, received what I think I need at this point, then obviously, I need to wait.

[28 : 36] God, in his wisdom, knows far better than I do, and it will come in God's perfect time. Well, we need to be patient when evil seems to succeed.

Psalm 37, 7, be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him. Don't fret when men succeed in their ways when they carry out their wicked schemes, so we see some of that inner and outer, you know, if we're not patient, we will be fretting.

You know what fretting looks like. We know some of the inner aspects of fretting, that agitation, that unsettledness of mind, can't concentrate and focus, and then outwardly manifested, you know, your wife's going around, your husband's going around the house, you know, putting this over here, putting it down with a little bit more force, or withdrawing, not talking quite so much, and there's different responses and reactions we can have when we're struggling with being patient, and such was the case here.

The psalmist encouraging the people, wait patiently, don't fret when they succeed in their ways. There are going to be times when the ways of those who disregard God succeed, and their plans are carried out, but we're not to fret, but wait patiently before God, and we'll take a look at maybe what that looks like later on.

Well, we also need to be patient when we're experiencing trials. 2 Thessalonians 1, 4, Therefore, among God's churches, we boast about your perseverance, or you could put it in there, patience and faith, in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring.

[30 : 21] So that word perseverance is that same Greek word translated patience and other verses, endurance, steadfastness, that patient waiting, that cheerful endurance, that constancy.

And here they were doing it amidst the persecutions, and great trials. So patience carries on, not just when in the good times, but really patience is required when the going gets tough, when we have to wait.

Letter D, when we're dealing with difficult people, be completely humble and gentle, be patient, bearing with one another in love.

Now, I'm one of those people that have not reached my final perfection in Christ. And so my helpmate at home at times needs to be patient with me, and she does that.

So at times I think, oh, how nice it is that I can be a tool of God in her life to help her learn patience. And so I can still be rejoicing, and it's for her good that I'm being so obstinate, whatever it might be.

[31 : 35] But dealing with difficult people, you know, pretty easy to deal with someone who's nice to you, gives you what you want, talks and acts, whatever, just the way you want.

But when they don't, we're going to have to be patient and understand God is not done with them yet. God is not done with me yet either. Or he wouldn't have brought that person into my life in those circumstances.

So, dealing with difficult people. When we're experiencing suffering under unjust treatment, certainly James 5, 7 through 11, when those employees were being cheated by their masters, James says, be patient then, brothers, until the Lord's coming.

See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop. How patient he is for the autumn and spring rains. You too, be patient, stand firm. Don't give up.

You know, yes, there's going to be some unjust treatment toward you, but that's not the time to turn away. Don't give up your rest. And the things that you know to be true.

[32 : 42] Continue, carry on, be patient, wait. And we'll think too a little bit as we go on, what does that look like? Well, need to be patient when God disciplines his children, Hebrews 12.

Therefore, since we're surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let's throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles and let us run with perseverance or patience, the race marked out for us.

And it does take some perseverance, some patience, enduring, enduring, when the race gets hard. And it's only again like then at those times that we need that.

Watson writes the Greek word for patient as a metaphor and alludes to one who stands invincibly under a burden. He says a good man will not only do God's will, but will bear God's will.

We like God's will when it leads us down those nice paths, but when it gets a little bit more difficult, uphill, obstacles, which are essential for us, that's when patience and perseverance is needed.

[33 : 51] We bear God's will, understanding that our God is good. We're following a good shepherd even up the hill that has our good in mind. Watson also says the test of a pilot is seen in a storm.

So the test of a Christian is seen in affliction. That man has the right art of navigation who, when the boisterous winds blow from heaven, steers the ship of his soul wisely and does not dash upon the rock of impatience.

We're going to have a lot to work on, aren't we, this week, as God picks up that brush and begins to paint on our portrait of our lives a little bit more of that color of patience and helps us to grow in that likeness of Jesus Christ.

Well, let's keep going on here. And here's another section I wish I could open it up to. I ask the question, well, what makes it hard to be patient? Well, if you had a kid like mine, or if you had to work with somebody like I do, or if you had to deal with this paperwork that I have to deal with, what are all those?

Those are all outer things. We like to throw the blame on the outer. Those outer things are just the catalysts to reveal what is hidden in the heart in the good times.

[35 : 16] things are so what's in the heart will only be revealed as those outer influences come into our lives. And that's good that we can see what normally would lie hidden.

so we have to really examine what's going on in my heart right now that I'm beginning to see these early warning signs of impatience.

What is it that I really want right now that's leading me down this path of being impatient or angry?

Well, it could be any number of things.

We want life to go according to my plans. We don't like difficulties and trials. I want my life to be comfortable. Who doesn't? We don't wake up in the morning and say, boy, I hope this is the hardest day of my life.

No, we want, I hope everything just goes well today. The kids behave. The boss is good and whatever else. The car runs well. On and on.

[36 : 17] We want justice to prevail in our time. We want people to do what is right in our time and in my way. I want that person to drive like me.

Can he drive better than that? Why does they have to get in my line at the counter? You see what I'm talking about here.

We don't want to wait for God's timing or God's plan in our lives. I don't want to grow through trials. All that's hidden in our hearts. that's where we need to take a look.

We're impatient because what's going on in our hearts. That's to say that the things going on outwardly aren't hard things. They are hard things.

We can't put the blame there on those things. How can we be patient? We can repent of our independent spirit from God and confess Jesus Christ as Lord and sovereign in your life.

[37 : 22] Don't be like those who were zealous for God without knowledge, without that real relationship with Jesus Christ. You've got to have a new heart, something new driving us, the spirit of God within our hearts that's moving us in that direction of the flame of our affections being for Jesus Christ and his glory.

We can walk in the spirit, keep in step with the spirit. Patience is a part, the fruit is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. So I say live by the spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature, but the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience.

Keep in step with the spirit means you're in the word of God. You're meditating on God's word and the Holy Spirit in those times where you're tempted to be impatient.

The spirit of God is there taking up his sword, God's word reminding you of what is true and right. Maybe even picturing before you the person of Jesus Christ.

Look at what he endured. Can you endure this for, can you wait, can you persevere through this time, even as your Lord persevered, even as other saints persevered?

[38 : 40] the spirit of God. And so as he reminds you of that, okay, you keep in step with the Holy Spirit. You follow the way in which he's laying out for you to go in the midst of this difficulty, which is for the glory of God and elevation of Jesus Christ and your own good welfare in handling those circumstances.

Finish up here. We can call on God for help. We saw that in the scriptures. Hebrews 4, 14 through 16, you're familiar with the verse, let's approach the throne of grace with confidence so we can receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

David said in Psalm 40, I waited patiently for the Lord and he turned to me and he heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, the slimy pit of impatience, rebellion, anger, set our feet upon a solid rock, making our footsteps firm.

There we go. Calling upon God for help. He will hear, he will answer. Align your desires and thinking to God's greater purposes, certainly God's glory.

1 Peter 1, 7, I combine that with your sanctification. It says, these have come so that your faith of greater worth than gold which perishes even though refined by fire might be proved genuine.

[40 : 05] And result in praise, glory, and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. There we have those two purposes, those goals in life. And you're in those times of difficulty and tempted to a way of impatience.

Remember, now listen, when you're asking, why does this happen to me? Spirit of God reminds you, these have come that the trine of your faith. So we're faced with that challenge of, okay, what is really most important to me?

My sanctification, trying in my faith, the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ, or my comfort, having my way and my time. Good challenges for us.

So my need to align my desires, my thinking, to God's greater purposes. Even the salvation and sanctification of other people, certainly. God, there was the apostle Paul in prison, people in Philippi, concerned for him, oh no, things have broken apart here, his ministry is done.

Paul says, now wait a minute, I want you to understand that these happened for the furtherance of the gospel. It was enduring, not missing out on God's purposes at that time.

[41 : 25] Excuse me. a quote from a pastor up in Lafayette. When God's word does not match our present experience, we assume he is the one at fault.

We'd be wise to establish a habit of thinking and saying the fact that God is not acting yet may be because Jesus can be glorified in a greater way in the days ahead. If that's the case, I can and will patiently wait because his glory is my greatest aim and he undoubtedly understands.

more about this situation than me. Practical understanding of what I'm going through. Let's see. Live out the right desires and thinking.

Thomas Watson says the end of affliction is glorious. Well, let's see. I have to draw things to a close here. Let me just mention a couple more.

Think about and plan a godly response to the difficult circumstances and the people involved and act on the plan. Philippians 4. 8. The apostle Paul told the people there, think on all these things what is good and whatever you learned and heard and seen in me, do and the God of peaceful will be with you.

[42 : 41] So in your time of waiting, you're not just sitting there as a bump on a log. You're aligning your thoughts, your desires with those of God. You're thinking, okay, God, how would you want me to respond?

And making a plan, okay, the problem still exists, you're still in the circumstances, but now you're aligning yourself with God's purposes in it, and your response is your outer manifestations to the circumstances to honor and glorify God.

And so you're making a plan for, okay, how am I going to respond to that boss or whatever else, this problem I'm facing? And then you act upon it.

And then, of course, as with zealotry, we encourage one another to be patient as we see that in the scriptures. And so the godly man's picture, yeah, the godly man is zealous in his patience.

We look forward to how God is going to continue that portrait in our lives this week. And as you get together, I guess, next Sunday night will be small groups.

[43 : 49] You'll be able to share with your small group. This is what God's been doing in painting my picture this week. Keep praying for me, that God, that I would be in what, in union with him, what he's trying to do.

Let's close in prayer. Father, this morning we thank you that you are such a wise God, and that you've chosen us out of of this massive humanity, to have the privilege of knowing you and Jesus Christ, and that you are all about the work of conforming us to the likeness of Jesus Christ, which is the best thing for us.

And so I thank you for that, and for how you're doing that. Continue to help us to live under, and to be patiently waiting in cooperation, in concert with you and what you're doing in our lives.

And as we see you and your faithfulness doing it, may it just be building within us a greater zeal to declare the wonders that you have done in the past and in the present.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.