

# Wings

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*“Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles.”  
Isaiah 40:31*



September 8, 2013

## The Power of Patience

The world rarely goes the way we would like, and our response is almost always too hasty. Learning patience requires that we appreciate its power to accomplish good in the end.

“Therefore *be patient*, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting *patiently* for it until it receives the early and latter rain. You also *be patient*. . . . My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and *patience*” (Jas. 5:7-10; italics added).

Human beings are an impatient lot. We do not handle frustration well, and when we reach our limit, our anger can do a lot of damage. Even when we are aware of the high cost of losing our cool, we continue to do it anyway.

That’s why patience is considered to be such a rare virtue in civilized society. It’s one of those noble ideals that everyone applauds, but few practice with consistency. That’s also why James and other Bible writers are so insistent that we incorporate patience in our character.

But like most virtues, patience is easy to talk about and hard to implement. We complain that patience is just too hard, or we can’t help it, or if other people would only . . . yada, yada, yada. Well, duh—if patience were easy, it

wouldn’t be patience, would it? Yeah, it’s a challenge. That’s why all of us, even Christians, must be reminded repeatedly to work on becoming more patient people.

The problem we have in developing patience is that we can’t see the end result. The circumstances that trigger our impatience are so immediate, so strong, that trying to exercise patience seems pointless. It can even feel like weakness to hold back our emotions. So we lash out in anger, throw up our hands, storm out, give up—whatever the occasion calls for to express our frustration at the obstacle before us.

What we’re missing here is the power of patience to accomplish some pretty amazing things, if we would just give it a chance to work.

For example, think of the exhausted young mother rocking her fussy infant to sleep at 2 a.m. for the umpteenth night in a row. She is worn to a frazzle, but she never gives up, and keeps on doing it night after night.

Or consider the father of a cocky teenager who patiently keeps on talking

to his son about his poor decision-making, when it’s obvious the kid has no interest in the subject.

Or look at elders who must exercise patience when dealing with a church member who can’t seem to stay on the right course for long before falling back into a life of sin. It would be so much easier just to kick him out and be done with it.

How do these people remain so patient in performing such thankless tasks? Because they know that some day, that little infant will grow up to be a beautiful young mother with a child of her own; the cocky teenager will develop into a solid young citizen; the backsliding church member will finally get his act together and become a committed disciple. And when that day comes, every one of these people will look back on those who were so patient with them and say, “Thank you for not giving up on me.” *The patience paid off.*

Patience always does. That’s why James is adamant about the subject. Our lives would be so much more rewarding if we could learn to be more patient.

– David King