

Patient Endurance

Roger Tointon—January 2, 2016

Happy Sabbath! Good Sabbath! It's always good when God's people can come together no matter how great the group is or how small. As we know in this end-time, most of the time when we do get to be with brethren, it is a small group.

I think of all of you out there in video-land, and I think of all of you that I'd love to just sit down and talk the rest of the day through with. I can't do that, but I'm very thankful for this opportunity to be able to speak to you, hopefully, heart-to-heart.

What are we? *We are brethren!* We're in this thing together. We're on a journey that we did not start. We did not lay out the highway between when God called us and to the end. God laid out that highway. He knows every corner, every crook and along the way. We have to kind of feel our way. That's the way life is. It has its ups and downs and we go through many different things.

Look at us right now. We just finished another so-called year on the calendar, 2015 on the Roman calendar. Look at all the things that we saw and the things that startled us, the things that disturbed us. Another year, and yet, as the old saying goes, 'we' undoubtedly 'have not seen anything, yet.' We don't know what 2016 will bring, but like it or not, if we stay above 'terra firma' we're going to find out. If we have God on our side, we can do that. We may be in the 'stone age,' but we're not ready for the shovel, yet.

I just saw an old western on Encore Channel and this one guy could not stand that sound. They always, it seemed, had a 'boot hill' scene where somebody was being buried. They would do that dropping of the dirt on the casket and that really, really got to him. Well, we're not ready for that.

Brethren, we have a fantastic opportunity, as we know. *Absolutely fantastic!* We cannot fully comprehend it. As we go through the things that God has shown us and revealed to us, and we are faithful in what God has told us in His Word, revealed to us, I think that each year we get a little bit more able to comprehend—just a little bit, maybe—what God is doing in us.

Today, you're not going to hear anything really new, I don't think, but if you want to stick around, we will go through this together. It is a fantastic journey.

You're all very familiar with Rom., and Paul said so many, many critical things in Rom. To start we're going to see what I want to talk about.

Romans 4:1: "What then shall we say *that* our father Abraham has found with respect to *the* flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has a basis for boasting... [That's right, but what does it say?] ...**but not before God**" (vs 1-2). *No!* None of us can boast before God. If we try, then we're being foolish. Our father, Abraham, who we read so much about being faithful, he, too, could not boast before God.

Verse 3: "For what does the Scripture say? 'And **Abraham believed God...**' When you believe somebody, you believe that what they have told you is true—do you not? When God opened our mind and showed us some key precepts in His Word, it hit us, and it hit us as the Truth. After all these year that most of us have been in the Church since, *we are still trying to be faithful*. So, we are then, like Abraham, who 'believed God.'

"...and it was imputed to him for **righteousness**" (v 3)—and the same with us. We can have no righteousness from our own selves. It must come from God. It comes to us through Jesus Christ because God knew that nobody could wipe out that debt of sin but the very Creator God, Who was with God in the beginning. His death is the only thing that could cover that great chasm, that crevasse as it were down the face of the mountain. We cannot get from one side of that to the other where God is without Christ having done all that He did. Think of the things that He went through when He was here in the flesh. None of us have gone through all that He did by any means.

Verse 21: "For he... [Abraham] ...was fully persuaded that what He has promised, He is also able to do." Did not we have to go through that same thing? *We had to absolutely believe no matter what our background was before then!* When God opened our mind, we had to go with it. We had to believe God and go forward where He led us.

Verse 22: "As a result, it was also imputed to him for righteousness. But it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; rather, **it was also written for our sakes, to whom it shall be imputed—to those who believe in Him Who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead**" (vs 22-24).

That is absolutely true! All things that God has started through mankind, then through Abraham, and all that He has worked through Abraham down to this day and the blessings we are able to have. It started with God.

Verse 25: "Who was delivered for our offenses and was raised for our justification." That's how we are able to be justified.

I want to touch a little bit on the beginning of Rom. 5 because it gets to what I briefly want to cover; Romans 5:1: “Therefore, having been **justified by faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Whom we also have **access by faith into this grace in which we stand**, and **we ourselves boast in the hope of the glory of God**” (vs 1-2)—*faith!*

You cannot have faith, very long at least, without also having hope, because faith comes from God. It comes to us through Jesus Christ. Then we are able to truly believe what God tells us. That is the key; it must start with God. Then when it comes to us we definitely have our part to do. We can live, even in this time—2015, we did it, 2016, we don’t know—but we’re going to give it our best shot, I hope. We’re going to do that how? *We have to walk in faith!*

Verse 3: “And not only *this*, but **we also boast in tribulations...**” Is that true? *We do in a sense!* We don’t in the way somebody who doesn’t understand this would think. They think, ‘Oh, no. You’re not going to have joy in tribulations.’ Well, it is difficult in tribulations. *You bet it is!* Yet, we know where it leads.

“...realizing that tribulation brings forth **endurance**” (v 3). That’s #5281 in *Strong’s Concordance* by James Strong, and that’s generally rendered *patience* and it means the *bearing up under*. So, it is *patient endurance*, is what it is. We realize that tribulation brings that out in us.

Verse 4: “And **endurance brings forth character...**” How much in our Christian life that we have lived so far have we heard about building character? Righteous character? The righteousness, as we have just covered must come from God, but we definitely have our part in it. If we endure, then we will have better righteous character.

“...and **character brings forth hope**” (v 4). You see how it goes. It’s in a constant circle between God, Christ and us and back to God. He looks at our progress. He looks at how we are doing. Christ is right there to help us and to intervene for us because He was here below in the flesh, He knows. He knows how hard it is to be in the flesh so—as Paul points out in another place—He will intervene for us with the Father. So, then, we have hope.

Verse 5: “And the **hope of God** never makes us ashamed... [*Absolutely not!*] ...because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us. For even when we were without strength, at the appointed time Christ died for *the* ungodly. For rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, although perhaps someone might have the courage even to die for a

good man. But God commends His own love to us **because, when we were still sinners, Christ died for us**” (vs 5-8). We must have *patient endurance*.

This thing of patience—basically what I want to get into a little bit—you can only get into so much. In Matt. 18, the word *patience* is #3114 in *Strong’s Concordance*, not #5281; the word in Matt. 18 is a little different. This is the other side of this issue of *patience*. This is more on the *forbearing*.

Matthew 18:26: “Because of this... [in the parable of the sowers] ...the servant fell down and worshiped him, saying, ‘Lord, **have patience** with me, and I will pay you all.’” What is he asking? *He’s asking for his master to give him some long-suffering, forbearance!* That is another whole subject, in a sense, but it is definitely related to the part that I want to cover more.

We will see what we’re really talking about now. This is the *parable of the sower*, we’re talking about the ‘good seed,’ the Word of God and the different places that it lands:

Luke 8:15: “And those that *fell* on the good ground are the ones who, in a right and good heart, **hear the Word and keep it, and bring forth fruit with [patient] endurance.**”

That is our assignment. We have heard. God opened our minds and He drew and gave us to Christ to work with. What’s our job? *We have to have patience in order for the Word to do it’s good work and bring forth fruit* that God can say, ‘Okay. I now know that I can trust you in the Kingdom of God!’ That’s where we are, but where does this start?

James 1:1: “James, a servant of God and of *the* Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes, which *are* in the dispersion: Greetings! **Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you are beset by various trials...** [we’ve covered part of why we should do that] ...knowing that the **testing of your faith produces endurance**” (vs 1-3). That’s true.

Verse 17: “Every good act of giving and **every perfect gift is from above...**” It *does not* start with us! This whole thing of having the endurance to be faithful to the end, it does not start with us. It starts with God and Christ working in us. That’s why we have to continually day after day go to God the Father on our knees to stay in close contact with Him so that we can be led. You cannot be led unless you’re in a right mind and attitude. There’s only one way to do that.

“...coming down from the Father of lights, with Whom there is no variation, nor shadow of turning. **According to His own will...**”(v 17-18). This whole thing, again, is not of us. We didn’t decide, ‘I need God. I’m going to find God, and then I’ll kind of tell God what I want to do.’ That would

be the human way of looking at it. *NO!* It starts with God drawing us. Sometimes He has to draw some of us screaming and kicking as it were. We're so involved in whatever it was out there in the world, it's like, 'I don't have time for this.' God knows when to grab hold of you and say, 'I don't care. I have this for you to do.'

"...He begat us by *the* Word of Truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all His created beings" (v 18). *Phenomenal! I mean, phenomenal!* Think about it. It starts with God.

1-Thessalonians 1:2—Paul says 2: "We give thanks to God always concerning all of you...[to the people he's writing to in Thessalonica] ...making mention of you in our prayers." I hope that somebody could say that of us. 'Hey! We like what we see happening.'

Verse 3: "Without fail, we remember your work of faith... [Isn't that what God wants to see in us? *Absolutely!*] ...and *your* labor of love, and *your* [patient] **endurance**... [#5281 in *Strong's Concordance*; it keeps coming up] ...**in the hope of our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father.**" Patient endurance in the hope of Christ?

What it's really talking about, more and more as we get closer to the end, is our assignment now. We don't know God's timetable. That is, I think, one of the most frustrating things about our life in God's Church now. We've been through a lot, and I know some of you have. Some of you out there, you're going through a lot right now and you're really, sometimes, near the breaking point, but you have to turn to God. You have to get down on your knees to get the strength to start another day. We all need to do that. Some of you really, really know that. It's a hard thing,

What are we? *We know that we are not spirit!* We know that vividly. Yet, we read what our hope is. Our hope is to become firstfruits, to stand before God and Christ on the Sea of Glass and to **know**, finally, face-to-face. That we cannot comprehend because we are so physical. Yet, that is our hope and we can have that more and more as we draw closer to God. That we must do, but we have to be *diligent*. When we are diligent we will draw closer to God, then we will then receive more of God's grace. When we receive more of God's grace, we will be able to give more grace toward our brethren whom we can see. Through Christ and through the apostles, why did they say often and direct what they were talking about right back to our need to love each other? We have each other, brethren; we are in this together.

I think about so many of you out there that I would love to be with more. I think of the times we've had in the past. They're good things, because

if we're pulling for each other, we're learning more of what God's love toward us really is. God's love is what this is all about. We read how it is His will. *Absolutely, it's His will!* He had mankind created because it was His will. Why? *Because that personifies what the term love really means!* It's God's love. We have to be able to love each other in spite of differences; that's one thing. When we let differences become agitation and division that's something else. That should not be!

Will I always think the same as you? *No!* We see things differently. God created us as *individuals* and He very, very definitely intended to do that. Just look, from our DNA to our fingerprints to you name it. In our personalities we have our differences because God does not want to just be King over a bunch of robots. He doesn't want that. He has eternity out there and He wants us to be what we can be, **after He has remade us in His Own image by the Spirit of God!** We have to keep that in mind.

Romans 15:1: "Now, we who **are strong in the faith...**" Brethren, can you put your name there? I hope so; I hope we all can. We have been given so much and some of us have been given much time to get it through our thick heads. We should be able to say that we are strong in the faith.

"...are obligated to support the ones who are weak..." (v 1). There are always some stronger and some weaker. So, the opportunity is always there to help someone else.

Verse 2: "Accordingly, let each one of us please *his* neighbor for good, unto edification; for even Christ did not please Himself; rather, as it is written, 'The reproaches of those who are reproaching You have fallen upon Me'" (vs 2-3).

Verse 13: "May the **God of hope** fill you now with all joy and peace in believing that you may **abound in hope and in the power of the Holy Spirit.**" More and more, as we draw closer to the end, we must have more of the Spirit if we are going to face and get through some of the things coming. There's no doubt about that.

2-Peter 1:2: "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in *the* knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, according as His Divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and Godliness, through the knowledge of Him Who called us by *His own* glory and virtue; through which **He has given to us the greatest and most precious promises...**" (vs 2-4).

As I have alluded to all along here, we have been given great promises and we, therefore, have hope. We have hope that we, too, can become

partakers of the Divine Nature. It's not blasphemy. God says it here.

“...that through these you may become **partakers of the Divine nature**... [that's God's will; so we embrace that] ...And for this very reason also, **having applied all diligence** besides, add to your faith... [a must.] ...virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control... [How're we doing on that one?] ...and to self-control, **endurance**... [patient endurance] ...and to endurance, Godliness” (vs 4-6).

We are in the stage, many of us, who have lived through a good deal of life and we are on the downward slope. We're standing up there on the cornice, we look down and it is a steep slope. Are we afraid to jump off that cornice and go over, as God shows us? *I hope not!* We have to have the endurance that we can be faithful when Christ returns. Remember: He asked, 'Will I find faith when I return?' *The answer is, yes!* We still believe and there have been a good many others before us who also were faithful to their end. So, whether we live to the end or we die, somewhere down there in the trees, we need to be able to say: *'I was faithful,'* just as Paul did near the end of his life.

Romans 13:10_[transcriber's correction]: “Love does not do any wrong to *its* neighbor; therefore, love *is* the full expression of *God's Law*.... [we are coming to understand that better as we have more time] ...Now *consider* this, knowing the time...” (vs 10-11). That's right, the time. We keep talking about the time. We keep talking about the end-time. We say, 'When, Father, are You going to send Your Son?'

“...that *it is* already *the* hour *that* we should be roused out of sleep; because our salvation *is* nearer now than when we first believed.... [boy, oh boy, is that true] ...The night is almost over, and the day is drawing near; therefore, let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us walk decently...” (vs 11-13). Walking, I could add, in faith that Christ will fulfill His will in us.

Romans 12:1: “I exhort you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies a living sacrifice**...” Yes, we have to sacrifice now. As we endure, we have to sacrifice. We are swimming upstream as we all know. Isn't it worth it? *Think of the promises; it is worth it!*

“...Holy *and* well pleasing to God, **which is your spiritual service**” (v 1). It is simply our duty, brethren. God says that's our duty. I don't care how strong the current is that we're swimming against, He says it's our duty to do those things.

I love to read this because it is so true, Romans 8:18: “For I reckon that **the sufferings of the present time**...” There are some. Some of you

suffer more than others and I pray for you, because I just hope that I don't have to go through the same thing sometimes. God knows what each of us has to go through.

“...are not worthy *to be compared* with **the glory that shall be revealed in us**” (v 18). All of us as brethren, called by God. *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 22: “**For we know that all the creation is groaning together and travailing together until now**. And not only *that*, but even we ourselves, **who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, also groan within ourselves, awaiting the sonship**... [sonship with God] ...the redemption of our bodies. For by hope we were saved; but hope that is seen is not hope; for why would anyone still be hoping for what he sees?... [we're not there, yet] ...But if we hope for what we do not see, **we ourselves wait for it with patience**” (vs 22-25).

God does expect that of us, brethren. *He is going to reward those that He finds so doing!* All of the little problems and trials of your life are things that you have to overcome *with endurance before God can say that and before I can say that. Keep up the good fight of faith!*

Scriptures References:

- 1) Romans 4:1-3, 21-25
- 2) Romans 5:1-8
- 3) Matthew 18:26
- 4) Luke 8:15
- 5) James 1:1-3, 17-18
- 6) 1-Thessolonians 1:2-3
- 7) Romans 15:1-3, 13
- 8) 2-Peter 1:2-6
- 9) Romans 13:10-13
- 10) Romans 12:1
- 11) Romans 8:18, 22-25

Also referenced: Book: *Strong's Concordance*

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