

June 25, 2017
Patience is Hard
Read Romans 8: 24-30

Roots
Reboot

Have you ever been told to just be patient? Of course you have. We all have, because we've all been two years old waiting on anything, and we've all been sixteen waiting on a car. Some of us have waited on a promotion. Some of us have waited on a baby to come. Some of us have waited on a vacation. In any case, at some point or another, we have all been told to be patient. But, that is so hard.

Take a moment to think how a tree grows. You plant it, go to bed, and the next day you have a giant oak in your yard waiting to shade you, hold a swing for your kids or grandkids and provide some nuts for the local squirrels right? No, of course not. The tree grows a little at a time while it is properly cared for. After years of tender care, hard work and vigilance you might have a tree ready to do the things for which you want it.

It is the same with most everything in life. You want a fancy car (unless your family is independently wealthy), you have to work and toil for it. If you want a nice job with lots of promotions, it takes time and a lot of hard work. You want to be very skilled at something? You have to practice that skill *ad nauseam*. Things take time and often times when we're in the middle of this patience and work game we come to a point where we ask, "Is this really worth it? Am I even going to get what I want?" Well the same is true in our Christian lives.

Consider today's *Roots* reading. There we are told what hope really is. It's not seeing the salvation you're getting or what exactly it is that you're working for, but it's still trusting that it's coming, knowing that it's coming because of the promise of the Spirit. And

when the weakness hits, as it will, waiting patiently takes on the form of giving up that weakness to the Spirit who is helping you.

Thanks to Paul and the other Scripture writers we know what's coming, just like we know that when that tree we plant gets big, it's going to be an oak. So then, we know that those of us who are being conformed to the image of Christ, those of us who have been justified, those of us who have been called (these all apply to all of you; if you're not sure come see me) are going to be glorified. This is the promise we have in Christ sealed by the Spirit.

Now take a moment to think, when your parents told you to be patient, what were you supposed to do? Go off in a corner and wait? No. Do something drastic in anticipation of the promise being fulfilled? No. What then were you supposed to do? I guess I don't know about all of you, but I was supposed to go back to work and get done what I needed to get done.

As Christians who are hoping and anticipating this glory and heaven that awaits us, we are not supposed to remove ourselves from the world. Neither are we supposed to forsake our work with others for a supposedly holier calling like the monks of Luther's time who sequestered themselves away from the poor and the needy. Rather, while we wait we're supposed to wade into the tough times the world has to offer, holding on to our hope in Christ by the Spirit and help those who need it. So be patient, but be actively patient.

Pastor *Chris Jh*

