

ENDURANCE.

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." – James 1:12.

For some years past we have been led to see by faith, with increasing clearness, the great reward promised to the overcoming Church of Christ. When first its glory began to dawn upon our minds, inspired by it, many of us said, Yes Lord, we will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. Soon we found that the way leads through opposition, persecution and great self-denial. But, nothing daunted, we said, Yes, we know it and are ready for it; esteeming the glory to follow as worthy of all it might cost.

Under the inspiration of a living faith in the glorious promises, it was comparatively easy to strike off the fetters that bound us to the former customs and ideas, and to take the first steps in the race set before us.

All this was well – a good start. Our hearts were light and buoyant; God's Word was full of a new and blessed import; our sky was all aglow with glorious promise, and we scarcely heeded the thorns that began sharply to prick our feet. But how is it today? Some have been one, two, five, or ten years in the narrow way. Has a reaction followed the glowing enthusiasm of your first love? As yet the glory does not appear, except to the eye of faith, but the way grows more and more narrow, the feeble flesh grows weary in the difficult journey, and temptations all around call us away from the course of sacrifice to present gratification.

To those thus tried and weary with the burden and heat of the day comes the encouraging assurance of the Apostle James: "Blessed is the man that endureth." Everything now depends upon

your power of endurance. Can you hold out to the end? It is not so hard to run well for a day, a week, a month or a year; but when the years lengthen and the end is indefinite, here is the test of endurance, of faithfulness; but O! with what joy shall that one meet his Lord who has for a long time patiently endured.

These daily trials that you meet are your testing; you stand every moment before the judgment seat of Christ. Every little victory, as well as every great one, will be in your favor in the final decision, as to whether you are worthy or unworthy of the high position to which you are called. And when you are tried, when your trial is complete, you shall receive the promised crown of life.

That we may be strengthened for continued endurance, the Apostle directs our attention to the word of truth by which we first received this glorious hope, (v. 18,) adding, "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any man be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth [to do so], he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."*

It is only by continual looking into God's word, and the continual putting in practice of that which we thus learn and keep fresh in mind, that we can hope to endure unto the end. If we keep continually looking and doing we will find that the same blessed hope will continually inspire fresh zeal in the way. It will strike its roots deep down in our hearts and its fruit will daily appear in our lives. "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the

joy that was set before him, endured." (Heb. 12:2.) "Faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it." (1 Thes. 5:24.)

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