

## Words for 2019: Patience

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I have never asked God for patience for I fear the things I would have to go through to develop that spiritual muscle. Yet, the last twelve months of my life have been a constant lesson in patience. This past year has taught me that patience is forged over the hot coals of trials. Those trials strengthen us for the long journey of faith. In preparing this devotion, I came across a great explanation of the biblical understanding of patience.

George Matheson wrote, "We commonly associate patience with lying down. We think of it as the angel that guards the couch of the invalid. Yet there is a patience that I believe to be harder—the patience that can run. To lie down in the time of grief, to be quiet under the stroke of adverse fortune, implies a great strength; but I know of something that implies a strength greater still: it is the power to work under stress; to have a great weight at your heart and still run; to have a deep anguish in your spirit and still perform the daily tasks.

Lord I pray that you will give me the strength to still work for you and the Kingdom while it breaks my heart, my spirit is downcast, my hope waning. Give me the patience to live a courageous life which gives honor and glory to you. That is the patient spirit I desire in 2019. It is patience grounded on hope in a benevolent God and a compassionate Savior.

Prayer:

Dear Lord,

This has been quite a journey and the end is not in plain sight. Through all the trials of life, Lord, you are my refuge and strength. In hard times You are an ever-present helper in times of trouble. Help me cling to You and the truth of Your word. When the journey seems insurmountable, I know, Mighty One, that You are by my side. When my hope wains, Father, Your grace is sufficient. As the prophet Nahum reminds me, "*The Lord is good, a stronghold in a day of distress; He cares for those who take refuge in Him.*" (Nahum 1:7) In Jesus' name. Amen