

COMPANIONS IN TRIBULATION: -

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NOTE: - All Bible texts are taken from the King James Version; and the compiler has supplied all emphasis throughout this Study Document.

The Bible says that those who walk in the patience of Jesus Christ, and who have the word of God and the testimony of Jesus, are companions in tribulation. John the beloved is a brother to all such. These are the saints of God.

Revelation 1:9: - "I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Revelation 14:12: - "Here is the patience of the saints: here [are] they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

Why are the saints "companions in tribulation"? Answer? Satan hates them and makes war with them through any conceivable avenue, bringing tribulations and trials to try and discourage the faithful.

Revelation 12:17: - "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Whilst we remain faithful to God in this fallen world, we will have tribulation.

John 16:33: - "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

Knowing that tribulation is the sure result of maintaining your walk upon the pathway of the saved, we need to try to conquer the fears and the discouragements, that come from Satan's warfare against us. What gives us the strength to keep going? Faith, patience and our hope in the Word of God. These are the essential spiritual elements that we must guard and foster in our lives.

REMEMBER YOUR FAITH, AND BELIEF IN GOD'S LOVE FOR YOUR LIFE: -

The first spiritual element that we need to foster is our faith in God's loving care to his own people. When Satan pushes us into a corner, it is good to know that our Lord Jesus places all power and authority in heaven lovingly on your side.

Our faith is based upon our belief that God will never forsake his loved ones, in their trials and tribulations.

Deuteronomy 4:30, 31: - "When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, [even] in the latter days, if thou turn to the LORD thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice; (For the LORD thy God [is] a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them."

We need to be thoroughly persuaded or convicted that God loves us and that we can never be separated from his loving care.

Romans 8:35 - 39: - "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? [shall] tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that

neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

TRIBULATION WORKS PATIENCE: -

The second spiritual element that we need to acquire is patience. The realistic Christian, who hears the words of Christ in John 16:33, knows that tribulation will follow the faithful all the days of their lives. The Christian will therefore adopt an attitude that will help him succeed in the face of adversity. The saving patience of the saints can only be developed through trial and tribulation. This is how all the saved will learn patience. We need to learn the vital lessons of being patient in the will of God. This encourages a faithful and steadfast obedience to God, through thick and thin, instead of a character that wants to be indulged with every desire all at once. The carnal man is used to getting his own way. Tribulation helps us to realize that we need to trust in a higher power, because, by ourselves, we are hopelessly powerless against the wrath of Satan. Tribulation teaches us patience as we start to live in God’s will, according to his timing. Tribulation works patience, patience works vital experience, and experience brings an unshakeable hope. Patience requires a discipline of character. Romans 5:1 - 5: - “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only [so], but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”

We must try to learn to achieve good spiritual results from the bad that is continually heaped upon us. Instead of despising tribulation, we should try to use the experience to further develop our faith, hope and patience. We need to bring good out of bad, and gain success from apparent defeat. In this way we overcome Satan and all his efforts to discourage. James 1:3, 4: - “Knowing [this], that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have [her] perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”

By learning from the Bible about the holy men of old who also had to learn patience, we are encouraged by their walks.

James 5:10, 11: - “Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.”

Patience brings hope.

Romans 8:24, 25: - “For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, [then] do we with patience wait for [it].”

By learning patience through our trials, we are defeating Satan, and our own souls are kept safe.

Luke 21:17 - 19: - “And ye shall be hated of all [men] for my name's sake. But there shall not an hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls.”

Through patience we will inherit all the promises. Patience is therefore a worthwhile spiritual grace to develop.

Hebrews 6:11, 12: - “And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”

Hebrews 10:35 - 39: - “Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if [any man] draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.”

Jesus exhorts us to hold fast to our crown in patience.

Revelation 3:10, 11: - "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

HOPE IN GOD'S WORD: -

This is the third main spiritual element we have to guard and protect. We need to be careful how we hear, and work with God's Word. It **is our hope in the truth of God's Word** that gives us the courage and endurance to keep going in the steps of Christ. By turning to God's Word in our distress, and by hearing, understanding and obeying truth, we will not fall away.

Matthew 13:20, 21 & 23: - "But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth **because of the word**, by and by he is offended.... But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth [it]; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

Tribulation and affliction in an uncertain, trying and sometimes frightening world, should bring us closer to the certainty and trusted Word of God.

Psalms 119:71, 72: - "[It is] good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes. The law of thy mouth [is] better unto me than thousands of gold and silver."

God's Word comforts us in affliction. It restores hope and revives courage.

Psalms 119:49, 50: - "Remember the word unto thy servant, **upon which thou hast caused me to hope**. This [is] my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me."

The scriptures bring hope, where nothing else can.

Romans 15:4: - "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."

Just take a look at David's writings. While in his distress, he comforted himself in the hopes and truths contained in God's Word. Even though he speaks out his fears, he counter attacks his fears with constant affirmations and truths from the scriptures. This is how we can grow spiritually, and succeed, amidst the bitterest battles with Satan. Even though we can be fearful, we can counter fear with faith in God's immutable Word. Discouragement can be conquered through God's Word.

Psalms 119:81 - 88: - "My soul fainteth for thy salvation: [but] I hope in thy word. Mine eyes fail for thy word, saying, When wilt thou comfort me? For I am become like a bottle in the smoke; [yet] do I not forget thy statutes. How many [are] the days of thy servant? when wilt thou execute judgment on them that persecute me? The proud have digged pits for me, which [are] not after thy law. All thy commandments [are] faithful: they persecute me wrongfully; help thou me. They had almost consumed me upon earth; but I forsook not thy precepts. Quicken me after thy lovingkindness; so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth."

Psalms 119:114 - 117: - "Thou [art] my hiding place and my shield: I hope in thy word. Depart from me, ye evildoers: for I will keep the commandments of my God. Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live: and let me not be ashamed of my hope. Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe: and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually."

God's Word brings us back on track in times of discouragement, as it reminds us of God's love towards us, and his wonderful plan of redemption for us as individuals.

Psalms 130:1 - 8: - "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD. Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications. If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But [there is] forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, **and in his word do I hope**. My soul [waiteth] for

the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: [I say, more than] they that watch for the morning. Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD [there is] mercy, and with him [is] plenteous redemption. And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.”

Satan should never be allowed to tear away our hope of eternal life. Don't allow Satan to come between you and God's Word.

Colossians 1:3 - 6: - “ We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love [which ye have] to all the saints, for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; Which is come unto you, as [it is] in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as [it doth] also in you, since the day ye heard [of it], and knew the grace of God in truth.”

COMPANIONS IN TRIBULATION ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER: -

Companions in tribulation are in a world where they are exposed to trouble on every side, fightings against Satan's onslaught without, whilst fighting fears within. Paul experienced all the frailties that we experience today. He was comforted in the fact that his fellow companions understood, and cared for him.

2 Corinthians 7:4 - 7: - “Great [is] my boldness of speech toward you, great [is] my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation. For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without [were] fightings, within [were] fears. Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus; And not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more.”

We must help one another to continue in the faith.

Acts 14:21, 22: - “And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and [to] Iconium, and Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples, [and] exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.”

We should remember and encourage one another, that as we suffer for our faith as Jesus did, we shall also have the consolation of Christ, which is the final reward and comfort, because we have walked with Jesus.

2 Corinthians 1:3 - 7: - “Blessed [be] God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, [it is] for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, [it is] for your consolation and salvation. And our hope of you [is] stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so [shall ye be] also of the consolation.”

Remember that God loves you as his own, and that is why he tries to bring out your best.

Hebrews 12:5 – 13: - “And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected [us], and we gave [them] reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened [us] after their own pleasure; but he for [our] profit, that [we] might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.”

In that you are suffering under the hand of Satan's warfare, this shows that, in your continued faithfulness, you **will be accounted worthy** of the kingdom of God.

2 Thessalonians 1:3 - 5: - "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth; So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: [Which is] a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer."

Those that will be saved, will be those who have come out of the tribulation of this world as victors, through the wonderful plan of redemption through Christ. They have maintained their faith, their patience, and their hope in God's Word, in spite of what Satan threw at them in their brief, mortal lifetimes.

Revelation 7:13 - 17: - "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."