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# Sermon Notes

July 19, 2020

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

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## Waiting Patiently 2 Peter 3:1-15

### Patience

- ❖ The godlike patience God grows in us is a tiny shadow of His own, long-suffering patience
  - the Lord's patience is a massive, mind-boggling topic
  - the glory of God's patience shines out of almost every page of Scripture
- ❖ The more we see and understand about God's patience, the greater, richer, and more vibrant our worship of Him will be

### Holding Back... For Now

- ❖ A time is coming when God will act in judgment to destroy the world by fire (vv. 7, 10)
  - God is holding back His judgment so more people will turn to Him and be saved
  - God's patient delay causes many to dismiss the deadly, sobering reality of what lies ahead
  - this is reflective of the same attitude people had during the 120 years in which Noah was building the Ark

- through Noah, God gave people a warning and time to repent and turn from their wicked ways
- Matthew 24:37-39
- people then and now believe everything will keep on going as it always has

- God sends wake-up calls (like the Corona Virus!), but people tend to ignore the warnings

- ❖ God is jealous of His glory, worship and His people

- God will not bear forever the oppression of His people and the boasts of His enemies

- God **WILL** vindicate His glory and pour out punishment on all who do not obediently glorify Him

- ❖ Despite these truths, the Lord is **SLOW** to anger (v. 9)

- “divine timekeeping”

- v. 15, *count the patience of our Lord as salvation*

### God's Pattern of Patience

- ❖ God makes His long-suffering patience known in both the Old and New Testaments
  - Exodus 34:6, Numbers 14:18, Psalm 86:15
  - God's patience is inseparably intertwined with all of His attributes
- ❖ Patience linked with power (Nahum 1:3)
  - God's patience is a manifestation of His power
  - God's patience is a restraint He places on Himself

- God is SLOW to anger because He is GREAT in power
- God has a power of patience as well as a power of justice
- ❖ The Lord patiently endures sin *not wishing that any should perish*
  - in the wake of Adam and Eve’s rebellion
  - during the 120 years before the Flood
  - with His chosen people, Israel
    - though they turn to idolatry and immorality
    - God speaks before He strikes
    - God offers corrective discipline rather than rejection and condemnation
  - God waits 40 years following Israel’s rejection of His Messiah before sending the Romans to destroy Jerusalem
  - in light of a long list of sinful behaviors (Romans 1:24-31) that deserve death, God continues to show His goodness to the very ones who rebel against Him
- ❖ God’s patience is not an indication that He lacks power!
  - on some occasions, God chooses to act immediately
    - Korah, Dathan and Abiram (Numbers 16)
    - Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5)
  - for now, God desires to *make known his power, [by enduring] with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction* (Rom. 9:22)

- ❖ God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Eze 33:11)
  - “God is quick to build up; but slow to pull down.”
  - BUT... God’s patience over sin does not equal an acquittal from sin
- ❖ Because of what Jesus accomplished on Calvary’s cross, God has mercy on all who turn to Him and seek forgiveness
- ❖ There is much to praise God for when we pause to reflect on how patient the Lord has been and continues to be with us
  - dwelling on God’s patience keeps us mindful of God’s great affection for us and, in turn, fuels our affection for Him
  - the truth about God’s patience should work to soften our hearts, make our consciences more tender, and strengthen us when we grow weary in well-doing

### Personal Application

1. Take time to reflect on the way(s) God has exercised His patience toward you both before and since you became a Christian. How will you let your inventory of these blessings work to deepen your worship, soften your heart and strengthen you for extending patience to others?
2. As Jesus suffered on the cross, He prayed for His Father to forgive His enemies. How does the power of Christ alive and at work in you enable you to bear patiently with those who resist His grace and stand opposed to His Word and His ways?