

Persistence and Patience

Persistence is the ability to continue in a course of action or mindset over time, even if there is opposition or difficulties.

Patience is the ability to accept the way things are right now, even if there is no apparent change in the outlook.

In what ways are persistence and patience in conflict with each other?

(There are many Scriptures about persistence and patience, here are just two.)

Persistence

Luke 18:1 – 8

The Parable of the Persistent Widow

¹ Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. ² He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared about men. ³ And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.'

⁴ "For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care about men, ⁵ yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually wear me out with her coming!'"

⁶ And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. ⁷ And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? ⁸ I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

You can see that the woman in the parable was a great example of persistence, but most people would not describe her as patient. That is what is implied by the opening question at the top. In a way, persistence and patience are in conflict with each other. That may be because we think of patience as being totally passive, whereas Scriptures like the psalm quoted above describe it more in terms of faith in God and his character.

1. Which does God want us to have in our prayers: patience or persistence (or both)?



2. How can you personally balance those two?

Meditate and pray about having both of these attributes in your life. Share with others about your convictions and ask them to pray for you as you grow in both.

NOTE: You might want to research other Scriptures about persistence and patience, and, while you are at it, add the thought of perseverance, which in many ways combines both attributes.

John Sullivan
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