

Proverbs 25:16

Sunday 12/9/2018

We have your Bibles this morning. I want you to turn back to Proverbs 25. As you know, over the last couple of weeks, we have been looking at the first and second verses in our three-verse section. We have been coming through this and just looking at it in natural sections so we do not miss anything, and yet we can break it down to help you understand it.

We remember that week one, we talked about verses 14, 15, and 16. We are going to be in verse 16 today. We talked about the spiritual gifts under the verse of somebody boasting themselves of a false gift. Then last week we looked at verse 15, which I think is one of the great keys to your own personal life, and that is the aspect of developing patience in our life under the concept of forbearing, which is also called longsuffering in the Bible—the ability to suffer long.

I talked to you about how so many times people liken that to some kind of spiritual gift, saying you have the gift of patience and someone else does not. But we now know that is not true.

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.

It also talks about how the trying of your faith and the patience working in you is a perfect work. It helps develop you. It helps you become more balanced in everything that you do for the Lord. Patience and forbearing is not a gift in any way, sense, or form. It is a character quality of Christ that we are told in 2 Peter 1:5 that we add these things to our faith.

And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

These are all things that, sadly, most of God's people today in the Church of Jesus Christ do not even know what these mean. These are key character qualities that everybody who is saved, as you grow, adds to their faith. These are things that as you grow up, as we have talked about so much, into Him, you become more like Christ every day of your life. We know that in almost every area of our life, no matter what level it is on, it is going to require patience at some point. Everything. We goofed around with it last week about some silly stuff, but you get the point.

Mainly, I focused on three main areas last week that I think cover a lot of different scenarios.

1. We talked about patience in our own personal life and our walk with God. I gave you one of the great verses in the Bible for me, anyhow, in Psalms 123:1-2.

Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens.

Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the LORD our God, until that he have mercy upon us.

It is a great verse. It is simply saying that when your patience comes from you waiting on the Lord with your eyes, you stay looking at the book, the promises, the Word of God, the things that He gave you, the principles. You stay focused on those, and that is how you wait on Him. You wait by watching the principles and applying the promises that He has given you, knowing full well that in His time He will bring it to pass. That is how you learn patience.

2. Then we talked about patience in the ministry. Whether you are building a church as a pastor or you are involved in a ministry with a pastor, touching people's lives, allowing God without any interference from us, letting God do His perfect work in our lives and being impatient with that. Our learning what our job is and then understanding what His job is, and being patient, doing what our job is, but allowing Him the freedom to do what He does and then put it all together, never getting in a hurry. Just enjoying what God has given you here, not focusing on what you do not have. Look around you. Look at the blessings God has put in your life. Look at the things of people, the places that God has done tremendous things with you. You have been a part of. You focus on that. You thank God every day for that. And you do not worry about what you do not have or who you do not have, knowing that God will give you the desires in your heart and you just do your job and God will bring everything into your world that He wants you to have.
3. Then the third one, we talked about patience in dealing with people in the ministry and how that will be a challenge. People will be a challenge for you. You are going to find that they do not always want to do what is right. You are going to find that you can invest in their lives and help them and do things for them. And then, because they are so unthankful and they are so into themselves, when they do have problems, they turn around and try to blame you for it. You have all experienced that.

I have to tell you, one of my greatest blessings in my life in the church here is the people ministry. Not only for what it does for others, but what it does for you. Watching you respond to what is being taught and God developing you to do the work here together with me. There is no greater blessing than that for me. Me watching you get into the place in your life where you really make a difference in our church. I have heard pastors, been around pastors all my life, and they always hate to lose people when people leave their church. They do because to them it is always a numbers game.

But I have learned over the years, building my ministry biblically as best I know how, that you always focus on what you have. So many times we fret over people in your church who do not make a difference. It does not matter whether they come or they do not. We have got people in our church that show up every six months, every three weeks, every five weeks, every eight weeks, or whenever it is convenient for them, whenever they do not have something else going on. I am totally okay with that if that is what you want to be. But I am not under the illusion that it matters whether you are here or not. The ones that it matters are the ones who come here, know what God has given us here, grab the burden because you are trained and you are taught, you learn how to use what God has given you, and you make a difference not only in this church, but you actually make a difference in people's lives. That is the key.

I learned that the hard way. I grew up in a church where, in the era of churches, every Saturday morning you went out to make visits. You visited people that came to your church. It was not enough that you had a bona fide Thursday night visitation where you went out and called on people that visited the church. But they wanted you to go out on Saturday morning, take at least three or four hours, and go out and really, they thought that knocking on doors would rarely ensure that people would come to