

S.O.H.L.

WEEKLY MINISTRY MEDITATIONS

Pronounced "Soul"

March 4, 2013

Abusing God's Patience & Grace

ROMANS 2:4-7 NKJV – (4) Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? (5) But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, (6) who "will render to each one according to his deeds": (7) eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality;

2 PETER 3:9 NKJV – (9) The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Have you ever ignored the press of conviction upon your heart? Maybe you rationalized your wrongdoing with this thought: "*if God were really upset, He would put a stop to my wrongdoings by disciplining me.*" **Psalm 50:21** reminds us that the silence of heaven does not mean approval. Remaining in sin is an abuse of the Lord's patience.

When God seems slow to react, our hope is that He is overlooking our transgressions--we'd like to continue in sin because the momentary pleasure is more appealing than obedience. But, thankfully, the Father knows our weaknesses, our innate carnality, and the state of our spiritual growth. Therefore, He measures His response. Motivated by love and a desire to gently restore His children to righteousness, God refrains from doling out immediate punishment. Instead, He waits for the Holy Spirit's prodding's to impact the believer's heart. The weight of conviction is actually an invitation to turn from wrongdoing and return to godliness.

However, we are a stubborn people. There are times when we persist in sin because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed quickly (**Ecclesiastes 8:11**). In this dangerous situation, it's possible to immerse ourselves in sin and harden our hearts against the Lord, resulting in the Holy Spirit's call to repentance falling on spiritual ears rapidly going deaf.

As we learn and understand more about God and His ways, we are increasingly responsible to live righteously. The Lord is not slow; He is patient. Do not abuse His patience with callous disregard for His statutes. Repent and be holy in the sight of the Lord.

SCRIPTURE READING

JOHN 5:19

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

God gives special grace for each trial we face.

