

10.

Be patient in tribulation...

Romans 12:12b

Our culture does not prize *patience*. In fact, it prizes the *extraordinarily quick*. One of the stories that I have made a rite of passage for each of my four children is the story of *the Hare and the Tortoise*. It is a story that extols patience. But it is a counter-cultural story. You will have already have been conditioned from birth to “hurry up”. Thus, when we read the Bible commanding us to be *patient in tribulation*, we generally have little to no idea what it means! But understanding this key to successful discipleship will help us to build better lives and a stronger church.

Note First Corinthians 13:4. I once challenged a couple whose marriage was in trouble and were now separated. After years of neglect, the wife had had enough. In essence, the husband had actually violated his marriage vows even though he appealed that he had not been ‘unfaithful’. Love had gone out of their marriage. I asked the husband if he loved his wife. He said he did. I then asked him if he was prepared to be *patient* for his wife’s heart to be healed? He again said yes. I then asked but what if it takes 12 months? To this he replied, *No*, and then walked out on his marriage.

1. Based on First Corinthians 13:4, how is love to demonstrated- especially in times of tribulation?
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2. What challenges might we as a church face in trying to apply First Thessalonians 5:14?
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3. In Revelation 1:9, note what John describes as the present conditions of the Christians of his day. Note also how he mentions they were able to deal with their circumstances-
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4. What promise did Jesus make to the church in Revelation 3:10 and why did He make it?

5. How likely is tribulation for the believer according to what Jesus said in Matthew 13:21? What does this tell us about being a Christian?

Amen.